

Little Brat's 721

Chapter 721: I Used to be Called Ning Li

Lu Yi was secretly shocked.

Did Shen Zhijin have to personally take his assistant in, just because it was his assistant's first time here?

Wasn't this a little too—

Naturally, since this was what Shen Zhijin had said, he could not object. However, he was secretly just a little curious about that particular assistant.

“Alright, we'll do as you say.”

The waiting time seemed to be exceptionally long.

January in Hong Kong City was still very warm. The sun shone down, and the lush leaves on both sides of the road cast a mottled shadow on the ground.

Lu Yi gradually became more anxious as he waited. It was one thing for Shen Zhijin's assistant to be late, but the person was actually quite late.

He turned to look at Shen Zhijin, only to see that there was not a hint of impatience or dissatisfaction on his handsome and elegant face.

After another ten minutes, a black car drove along the road.

Shen Zhijin's brows relaxed.

“She's here.”

Lu Yi hurriedly looked over. When he saw the expensive car, he could not help but be stunned.

Why was this assistant of Shen Zhijin's so ostentatious?

The car was parked at the roadside parking space. Then, Lu Yi saw a slender and tall girl get out of the driver's seat.

She was wearing a white short-sleeved shirt, black pencil pants, a baseball cap on her head, and a black backpack slung over one shoulder.

Then, she looked up.

A beautiful and clean face came into view.

Lu Yi was stunned.

Shen Zhijin's assistant was extremely young. Was she even twenty years old?

And why did she look familiar?

Shen Li walked over and spotted Shen Zhijin. She looked at her phone in surprise.

"Why are you here so early? Have you been waiting for a long time?"

He had said that he would be here at nine o'clock, so she had specially come ten minutes earlier. She had not expected him to already be here.

Shen Zhijin smiled.

“No, I just arrived.”

She had said that she would come here in advance to wait for him. He had wanted her to get more sleep, so he had deliberately delayed their meeting time by half an hour.

“This is the researcher from Mill Laboratory, Lu Yi.”

Shen Zhijin personally introduced him, so Lu Yi naturally extended his hand and smiled.

“Hello, I’m Lu Yi.”

Shen Li shook his hand.

“Hello, I’m Shen Li.”

Lu Yi could already see that the way Shen Zhijin treated this assistant was more than what was ordinary, so his attitude was much more polite.

“Professor Shen, the meeting starts at 9:30. Shall I take you two there first?”

Shen Zhijin nodded.

Lu Yi took a step ahead and led the way.

He glanced surreptitiously at Shen Li a few times. Thinking that it might not be easy to get close to a big shot like Shen Zhijin, he thought that it would also be a good idea to have a good relationship with his valued assistant.

So, he smiled and said, “Shen Li, I thought you looked familiar when I saw you. Have you been to Hong Kong City before?”

Shen Li's lips curled into a smile.

"I came here once last year."

"Oh, oh, I see..."

Lu Yi searched his mind and confirmed that he had indeed never seen her before.

Yet, she looked familiar. Well, it was probably an illusion...

As Shen Zhijin walked, he gave Shen Li a guided tour of the place, including the main research direction of Mill laboratory, various testing equipment, and several major simulation experiments that were being carried out.

He gave a detailed introduction to everything, and Shen Li listened attentively.

Only Lu Yi was left in a daze. The more he listened, the more surprised he became.

Shen Zhijin had an extremely high status in the international physics community. He had extremely high standards and strict requirements.

It was an extremely rare honor to be personally led on a tour by him.

Wasn't he placing too much importance on this assistant?

However, now was not the right time to ask about this.

Lu Yi suppressed his surprise and pointed ahead.

“The conference room is on the third floor just up ahead. Please, you may go in.”

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When Shen Li and the others arrived at the conference room, there were already four other consultants around the large oval-shaped conference table.

Shen Zhijin greeted them one by one before sitting down.

Each science advisor was allowed to bring an assistant to participate in the conference. Shen Li looked around and saw that apart from the conference table in the middle, several chairs had also been placed against the wall.

The assistants were sitting behind their respective boss' seats.

She followed behind Shen Zhijin.

In the conference room, several pairs of eyes fell on her.

Surprise, curiosity, and confusion.

Many people knew that for the past two years, Shen Zhijin's assistant had always been Yan Qiu. He would usually bring him along, especially when he attended such occasions.

Today was different and everyone was surprised that he had brought along such a young girl.

However, perhaps because there were several big shots present, the atmosphere was serious and solemn, so no one discussed these things.

Everyone stayed in their own seats and prepared for the meeting.

At 9:30, the meeting officially began.

Shen Li took out her notebook and looked up.

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At 11:30, the meeting temporarily ended.

Shen Li saw that Shen Zhijin was still discussing something with an old professor and estimated that it would be a while before they would be done. So, she walked out of the meeting room first, intending on waiting for him outside.

However, just as she reached the corner, she heard her own name mentioned.

“What’s the background of that girl, Shen Li? How is it that she came with Professor Shen?”

“I’ve never heard of her. Logically speaking, Yan Qiu should be the one who accompanied him on this trip, right? Who knows how he was changed to such a person?”

“I just heard from Lu Yi that when she came this morning, Professor Shen specially waited for her outside the door for quite a while.”

“Really? Professor Shen treats her that well?”

“Of course it’s true.”

“... That’s really impressive. To be valued so highly by Professor Shen, she must be very capable in doing scientific research. However, why haven’t I heard of this name before?”

Shen Li could hear the voices of two other participating assistants together with another that she had never heard of. It must be someone from Mill's laboratory.

Just then, her cell phone rang.

Those people finally realized that someone was there and immediately quieted down.

Shen Li lowered her head and canceled the boring promotion.

When she raised her head again, she noticed those people walking over.

When they realized that it was Shen Li, the expressions on their faces became a little awkward.

The one standing in the middle quickly adjusted his expression and smiled.

"Please don't misunderstand. We're just talking about the thesis. If you're interested, you can tell us about yours. We can discuss it together and improve together, right?"

A boy who looked to be in his early twenties nodded as well. His expression seemed to be a little conflicted.

"Yes, the boss said that my thesis could potentially be submitted to The Astronomical Journal and Astronomy and Astrophysics, but their review mechanisms are different so I haven't thought about it yet."

As he spoke, he asked Shen Li, "What do you think?"

Shen Li shook her head.

"I've never opted for these two before, so I'm not very clear."

When he said this, the expressions of the people across him became a little subtle.

“These two are the first-class core journals of astrophysics. You’ve never considered them before?”

Shen Li nodded.

“Yes.”

She paused and said honestly, “I only published one Universe sub-journal and one Universe main journal.”

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There was dead silence after she said that.

Their expressions froze on their faces.

Shen Li smiled.

“Oh, I forgot to tell you. My name used to be Ning Li.”

Chapter 722: My Father’s Surname is Shen

When they heard this name, a look of shock flashed across their faces.

“You’re Ning Li?!”

They had never heard of Shen Li before, but Ning Li was well-known to them!

She was the youngest person to have published her work in the Universe in a hundred years!

When her thesis was published, it had caused quite a stir in the astrophysics world.

Even though they had never seen her before, they were definitely familiar with this name.

Shen Li had only just confirmed her identity last month. Thus, only the teachers and students at Xijing University knew that she had changed her name.

These people did not know her before, so it was not unusual that they did not know about it.

Naturally, it was a huge shock for them to hear it now.

“Ning Li?!”

Suddenly, a surprised voice came from behind.

Shen Li turned around and saw Lu Yi standing nearby and looking at her in shock.

No wonder he felt that this girl looked very familiar! It turned out that she was Ning Li!

“You... you changed your name?!”

Shen Li nodded at him lightly.

Lu Yi could not help but ask, “But... but why did you change your name to Shen Li?”

This was too sudden. She had even changed her surname?

Shen Li's lips moved slightly. Just as she was about to speak, she heard a voice call out to her.

"Ah Li."

All of them looked over and saw Shen Zhijin and the other two scientific consultants standing together, looking over at them.

Shen Zhijin's gaze swept over the others before finally landing on Shen Li. Only then did his expression become gentle.

"What would you like to eat for lunch?"

Shen Li said, "I'm fine with anything."

Shen Zhijin said, "The laboratory has arranged for us to have a working meal. If you're not used to it, you can order some takeout."

Shen Li smiled.

"I'll just eat the same as you."

Everyone who was waiting by the side was dumbfounded.

The boy who had asked Shen Li which journal she would opt for could not help but whisper, "Although Ning... I mean, Shen Li's research ability is indeed very strong, but Professor Shen is really treating her extremely well, right? Didn't we also follow our bosses here? However, we don't have such treatment!"

Logically speaking, ordering a separate meal was actually a small matter, and did not take much effort.

However, that also depended on the occasion and when.

This meeting would last two days, and all the arrangements during this period had already been decided.

Shen Li... Why was she so special?

A caucasian consultant next to Shen Zhijin smiled and said, "Shen, you're so good to your assistant. You're making it seem like we're not treating ours well enough."

Shen Zhijin also smiled.

"In the past, while we were in Gran, your daughter liked to eat soy milk cake from a certain shop. So, you took a half an hour detour just to bring it to her. Now, all I want to do is order takeout for Ah Li, so why can't I?"

The consultant's smile instantly froze on his face.

The people around him were also dumbfounded.

This... the meaning of these words...

Everyone's gazes moved back and forth between Shen Li's and Shen Zhijin's faces, unable to hide their shock.

Shen Li looked at Lu Yi as the corners of her lips curved slightly.

"Of course, the reason I changed my name to Shen Li is because my father's surname is Shen."

...

Eventually, Shen Li followed Shen Zhijin and the others to have a working meal.

After a short break, the meeting continued at two o'clock in the afternoon.

This time, more gazes fell on Shen Li.

However, it was obvious that the gazes were very different from before.

Shen Li was not very concerned about this and remained very focused throughout the meeting. After all, this was a very rare opportunity.

It was not until six o'clock in the afternoon that the arrangements for the day finally came to an end.

Shen Zhijin was staying in the hotel next to Mill Laboratory. A room had originally arranged been arranged for Shen Li, but she did not stay there.

Shen Li accompanied Shen Zhijin to have dinner before returning to the Gu family.

The next day's meeting went on as usual.

It was not until the afternoon, when everything was over, that Shen Li mentioned the matter of dinner to Shen Zhijin.

"Dad, Grandma said that when you are free, she would like to invite you to a meal."

As Shen Li spoke, she sized up Shen Zhijin's expression.

"I think today would be quite appropriate. What do you think?"

Shen Zhijin looked at her for a while and smiled.

“Okay.”

...

Half an hour later, Shen Li drove back to the Gu residence.

She parked the car and got out with Shen Zhijin.

The butler, Qi Yang, was already waiting at the door. When he saw the two of them, he immediately went forward to welcome them.

“Mr. Shen, Miss Ah Li.”

Shen Zhijin nodded slightly at him.

“Uncle Qi.”

Qi Yang silently sighed.

At first, he had thought that Shen Zhijin would never set foot here again in this lifetime. He had not expected such a day would ever come.

His lips moved, but in the end, he lowered his voice.

“The two of you can go in. Don’t let the Old Master and the Old Madam wait anxiously.”

Shen Zhijin pursed his lips slightly.

Shen Li tugged on his sleeve.

“Dad, shall we go in?”

Shen Zhijin replied with an “Mm” and walked forward.

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The Gu family had long known that Shen Li would be bringing Shen Zhijin back for a meal, so they had already made arrangements.

In the living room on the first floor, Old Master Gu and Old Madam Gu were sitting together and chatting about something.

“Grandpa, Grandma.”

Shen Li called out loud as she walked in.

The two elderly people turned back to look at Shen Li and Shen Zhijin who was beside her.

The spacious living room fell into silence.

Old Madam Gu was the first to speak with a smile on her face.

“Zhijin, you’re here.”

Shen Zhijin paused for a moment, and his clear voice became much gentler as he spoke.

“Mother.”

Old Madam Gu's eyes were slightly red.

Shen Zhijin looked at Old Master Gu again.

"Father."

Old Master Gu had been sitting there without moving ever since he had come in.

Hearing this, the old man paused and put down the teacup that he was holding.

The atmosphere was silent.

Shen Li said softly, "Grandfather, I'm very hungry."

Old Master Gu then stood up, his weathered and deep gaze falling upon Shen Zhijin.

"Alright, since you're here, let's eat."

Chapter 723: Tangtang Went Home

Although the atmosphere was still a little cold, they finally sat down at the table.

As Shen Li sat next to Shen Zhijin, she looked at the food on the table and said in surprise, "Yam glutinous rice porridge? Dad, don't you like this a lot?"

Old Madam Gu smiled and said, "Zhijin, quickly try it. Does it taste the same as before?"

Something seemed to flash in Shen Zhijin's eyes, and the corners of his lips curled into a faint smile.

“Thank you.”

“What for?” Old Madam Gu shook her head with a smile. “Old Ding knew that you were coming over tonight, so he specially cooked it.”

Old Ding was the head chef of the Gu family and had been in the Gu family for many years.

Shen Zhijin was filling up a bowl to serve Shen Li, but when he heard this, he paused.

Shen Li also subconsciously looked over.

She had never asked too many questions about the relationship between the Gu family and Shen Zhijin.

However, as they spent more and more time together, she gradually realized that the gap between them was very deep, but at the same time, there was also a deep bond between them.

The entire Gu family must have liked him in the past. Otherwise, how could even Old Ding have remembered his tastes so clearly?

After all, so many years had already passed.

Moreover, if it were not for Old Master Gu and Old Madam Gu’s acquiescence, this bowl of porridge probably would not have even been on the table.

Shen Zhijin placed the bowl of porridge next to Shen Li before helping himself to some.

Shen Li took a sip and smiled.

“It’s delicious.”

When Old Madam Gu saw that she was happy, she was happy too.

“Ah Li has been attending meetings with Zhijin for the past two days. How do you feel?”

Shen Li savored the taste of the porridge as she nodded.

“I feel great. I gained a lot of knowledge. In the middle, Dad even took me around on a tour of Mill Laboratory.”

Ordinary people were not qualified to enter such a top laboratory, much less bring any guests in.

But of course, Shen Zhijin had the right.

Old Madam Gu could not help but laugh.

“I heard from Qi Yang that the laboratory’s specifications are very high. Did you benefit from your father’s influence?”

Shen Li blinked.

“Well, yes! Wouldn’t it be normal for me to benefit from my father’s influence?”

Old Master Gu looked over and said plainly, “You could have told your family earlier that you wanted to go. Your uncle is also one of the investors of that laboratory.”

Shen Li, “...”

She stirred her spoon as she softly muttered, “Then why didn’t you mention it before...”

How could she have thought of this?

Shen Zhijin said, "Tangtang has previously published a paper in the Universe. She was already eligible to enter."

Old Master Gu's expression softened a lot.

"That's more like it."

What kind of laboratory was it that their Ah Li could not enter?

Shen Li listened quietly at the side as she realized that her grandfather's sentence was not directed at Shen Zhijin, but at Mill Laboratory...

She glanced at Shen Zhijin out of the corner of her eye. Seeing his calm expression, it looked like he already expected her grandfather to say something like that.

It had to be said that even though it had been many years since they had interacted, her father still knew her grandfather quite well...

"Actually, this visit was mainly because my assistant was temporarily replaced with Tangtang. The communication with Mill Laboratory had not been done properly in time, so they did not officially invite Tangtang over to visit."

Shen Zhijin said, "I talked to the person in charge of their laboratory before. They have long wanted to invite Tangtang over, but she was busy with her final exams at that time, so I didn't tell her about this."

Shen Li looked at him in shock.

"Dad?"

He had turned it down on her behalf just like that?!

That was Mill Laboratory...

“Yes, she can go to the laboratory whenever she wants, but Ah Li’s exams could not be delayed.”

A rare look of agreement appeared on Old Master Gu’s face. He was obviously very satisfied with Shen Zhijin’s approach.

Shen Li, “...”

She picked up a small piece of rib and began to feel as if there was a barrier in communicating with these two people.

Old Madam Gu seemed to see what was going on and began to give some advice.

“Zhijin, no matter what, you should at least have told Ah Li about it first.”

Shen Li immediately nodded in agreement. “Yes—”

“That way, Ah Li could have chosen a time that she likes. Now, you can see that it’s a little rushed this time.”

Shen Zhijin thought for a moment and nodded seriously.

“You’re right. I’ll take note of it for next time.”

Shen Li was speechless and thought, ‘Never mind, forget I said anything.’

Old Madam Gu then asked about school.

Shen Li had been following Shen Zhijin's research team ever since she entered Xijing University. Over the past few months, Shen Zhijin had a good understanding of her situation in school.

He carefully chose his words carefully as he spoke.

Old Madam Gu nodded repeatedly. Although Old Master Gu did not speak much, his mood was clearly much better than before.

After the meal, the icy aura that they had started with had mostly disappeared.

Old Madam Gu finally asked, "Zhijin, Ah Li said that you've been staying at the hotel that was arranged by the laboratory in Hong Kong City for the past few days?"

Shen Zhijin nodded.

Old Madam Gu wanted to say something but hesitated. In the end, she looked to Old Master Gu.

Old Master Gu was silent for a long time before he finally said slowly, "Tomorrow morning, you... should take Ah Li to see Yin Yin."

Shen Zhijin's body stiffened and his fingers trembled slightly.

Shen Li had come on New Year's Day and a whole week had already passed since then.

This whole time, he had always thought that the Gu family had already taken her to pay their respects to Yin Yin.

It turned out that they had not. They had been waiting for him.

His throat tightened, as it felt extremely dry.

After a long while, he said softly, "Okay."

"Father, Mother, thank you."

...

At nine o'clock in the morning the next day, Shen Zhijin led Shen Li to Seven Treasures Mountain together.

It was very close to Suyue Mountain, with a stone path that extended up the mountain path. The surrounding trees were lush, and the place was quiet.

Shen Zhijin held a bunch of red camellia in his arms, as Shen Li followed behind him.

The two of them walked silently all the way until they finally reached the halfway point of the mountain.

A stone tablet stood quietly there— That was Gu Tingyin's grave.

Unlike the quiet and solemn silence that they had expected, the stone tablet was surrounded by a large expanse of camellia plants that had been planted there.

Red, white, silently, and blooming abundantly.

The mountain wind blew, rustling the flowers and causing them to sway.

Shen Zhijin stood in front of the stone tablet with his gaze fixed on it for a long time.

Shen Li stood beside him, silently accompanying him.

“Yin Yin.”

After a long time, Shen Zhijin finally spoke.

His speaking speed was slower than usual, and his clear and clean voice had also become low and gentle, as if he was afraid of disturbing someone’s dream.

“I’ve brought Tangtang to see you.”

As he spoke, he handed Shen Li the bouquet of camellia.

“Tangtang, go and give the flowers to Mommy.”

Shen Li took it and moved forward to place the bouquet down.

She looked at the name carved on the stone tablet.

Gu Tingyin.

Unfamiliar, but familiar. Far away, yet close at hand.

She had heard this name from so many people before. At that time, she had not known that this was her closest relative.

Bitterness surged up and blotted out the sky and the earth.

Countless images and sounds flashed past.

A tear fell and landed on the camellias.

Her lips moved slightly, and she finally called out softly.

“Mommy.”

She had never thought that she would ever call this name again in this lifetime, yet it turned out that she would still never really have this opportunity again.

Shen Zhijin gently caressed her hair, and a faint smile appeared on his elegant face.

“Yinyin, Tangtang finally came home today.”

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Chapter 724: Your Girlfriend Didn't Come With You

January 8th.

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This was the day the young miss of the Gu family would officially return home.

The acknowledgment ceremony would be held on Crescent Island.

Hong Kong City was near the sea. Lanjiang River ran through the city and into the sea. The islands, big and small, were scattered around.

Crescent Island was especially famous.

That was because the island belonged to the Gu family. It was separated from Suyue Mountain by the Lanjiang River and was only connected by a suspension bridge.

Crescent Island was shaped like the crescent moon, hence its name. It was small in size and had only an ancient castle on it. It was one of the top private clubhouses belonging to the Gu clan.

Because it was privately owned, Crescent Island was usually not open to the public. If anyone wanted to get onto the island, they would either have to cross the bridge or the river.

However, no matter which route they took, they would have to go through the layers of checkpoints set up by the Gu clan.

This time, the Gu clan had specially arranged for the family acknowledgment banquet to be held here. This was enough to show how much they valued this young lady.

Preparations had already begun on Crescent Island had already begun to prepare for the relevant matters.

On the 8th, it had become even more lively. Even the air seemed to be filled with joy.

Although the family's acknowledgment banquet would only officially begin at seven o'clock in the evening, even from noon onwards, guests had begun to arrive one after another.

Time passed slowly. By afternoon, all kinds of luxury cars had already crossed the suspension bridge one after another.

The banquet hall was filled with flowers. The river breeze and the fragrance of the flowers intermingled, bringing with it an intoxicating sweet fragrance.

Anyone could tell that the Gu family had really put in a lot of effort this time.

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At 6:30 pm, another car stopped in front of the Crescent Island Castle.

The uniformed usher immediately stepped forward to open the car door and bowed slightly.

“Mr. Yan, Second Miss Yan.”

A slightly plump middle-aged man got out of the car. It was Yan Baocheng.

After him, Yan Fei also got out of the car.

She was wearing a nude pink dress today. Her silky black hair was draped over her shoulders and she wore delicate light makeup. She looked fresh and gentle.

“Please come in—” the waiter said respectfully.

“There’s no rush.”

Yan Baocheng waved his hand and did not enter immediately. Instead, he turned around to look behind him.

“We’ll wait for Zhen Zhen to come over.”

The smile on Yan Fei’s face did not change. She was not surprised by Yan Baocheng’s words, but the look in her eyes became colder.

Before she had come, Yan Zhen had stated that she was not willing to share a car with Yan Fei. Yan Baocheng had no choice but to get someone to drive another car, especially for her, which would follow behind them.

This matter embarrassed Yan Fei greatly.

However, all she could do was endure it. After all, was it not her fate that she was an illegitimate daughter?

Over the years, dramas similar to this had happened many times. Every time, Yan Baocheng would make a big deal out of a molehill.

He seemed to dislike Yan Zhen for failing to live up to his expectations. He was always furious at her, yet he never really punished her.

Yan Fei knew very well that in his heart, Yan Baocheng still favored his first wife's daughter.

After all, in a place like Hong Kong City, the identity of an illegitimate daughter was still considered the original sin.

No matter how outstanding she was, she could never rid herself of her background. Even if a marriage alliance were to happen, the aristocratic families would still be more inclined toward Yan Zhen— even if she was useless and nowhere near as comparable to Yan Fei in any aspect.

After being on the losing end several times, Yan Fei knew that it was best for her to wait quietly on the sidelines.

Soon, a silver-gray supercar drove over.

Yan Zhen pushed the door open and got out.

She was wearing a short, red strapless dress today. Her hair had been styled into big curls, and she was looking very flamboyant.

Noticing her arrival, Yan Baocheng called out to her.

“Zhen Zhen, it's time to go in.”

Yan Fei also called out, "Sister."

Yan Zhen walked over. Without even sparing a single glance at Yan Fei, she immediately entered the door.

Yan Baocheng frowned.

"She's really getting more and more unruly!"

Yan Fei lowered her eyes to hide her expression as she softly advised, "Dad, let's go in as well. The banquet is about to begin."

Yan Baocheng frowned.

"If only she was half as sensible as you... Forget it, let's go in!"

As he spoke, he led Yan Fei forward.

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The luxurious and spacious banquet hall was already filled with luxuriously dressed people and was bustling with activity.

Many people looked over when they noticed the members of the Yan family enter.

Many people's gazes fell on Yan Fei and were somewhat amazed.

Yan Zhen's reputation was not looked upon well in Hong Kong City. Everyone knew about the mess between her and Zhong Haoqi, so they could not be bothered to pay attention to her.

However, Yan Fei was different.

Her appearance, her education, and her personality were all excellent.

Although her background was somewhat frowned upon, on the surface, she was still the second miss of the Yan family and attracted the favor of many young masters of aristocratic families.

Several people went up to talk to Yan Baocheng and praised Yan Fei.

Only then did Yan Baocheng's mood improve a little, and he looked more and more satisfied as he looked at Yan Fei.

Yan Fei chatted with these people for a while. Then, knowing that these people wanted to chat with Yan Baocheng, she consciously stepped aside.

Sun Shiqi and a few others were standing together. When they saw her, they immediately waved at her.

Yan Fei walked over.

"What are you guys talking about?"

Sun Shiqi lowered her voice and smiled.

"I was telling them about the day I ran into Ning Li at the horse race track riding horses with the two young masters of the Gu family."

Yan Fei was stunned for a moment and her eyes flashed.

"That Ning Li really went to such an extent to please the Gu Family?" Zuo Ling could not help but snicker. "However, it is true that it's a rare opportunity for her to climb up the social ladder. Of course, she wouldn't want to miss it."

Yan Fei took a glass of fruit juice from the side.

“You can’t say that. Second Master Lu is very protective of her. With him around, she’d be able to live quite well.”

Zuo Ling pursed her lips.

“Look at what Second Master Lu’s background is. He may just like her for the moment. Is she really able to enter the Lu Family? Moreover, if she could really keep Second Master Lu under her control, why would she need to use so much effort to please the Gu family? In my opinion, perhaps it’s because she knows that she can’t stay with Second Master Lu for long that she thought to find a way out for herself?”

Yan Fei sipped her fruit juice but did not comment.

Sun Shiqi said with a smile, “Exactly. You didn’t see good she was at coaxing the two young masters. I’m afraid this skill is something we can’t learn.”

Zhuo Qianqian looked around.

“Strange, it’s already very late. Why isn’t she here yet?”

Sun Shiqi shrugged, a subtle smile on her face.

“Well, look at what day is it today. It’s the day the real young miss of the Gu family acknowledges her family. In what capacity would she be here? Wouldn’t she feel embarrassed?”

Just then, a voice came from behind them.

“Did you just mention Ning Li?”

The small group of people were startled and immediately turned back to look. Only then did they realize that there was another person behind the sofa next to them.

It was Xu Yini.

She was wearing a backless blue wraparound dress and her hair had been tied up. She looked beautiful but arrogant.

“Miss Xu, I didn’t expect you to come as well.”

Yan Fei reacted quickly and immediately greeted her with a smile.

Xu Yini glanced at the small group of people.

“After receiving the Gu family’s generous invitation, it’d be rude of us not to come.”

Yan Fei nodded in understanding and then answered her question.

“We were just... talking about her just now.”

Of course, Xu Yini had heard what they said just now. The reason she had asked this question was just to make sure.

She could not help but laugh coldly.

Lu Huaiyu’s girlfriend was really too much. She was even this shameless in Hong Kong City.

At that moment, the hall suddenly fell silent.

A tall and straight figure had appeared at the door.

He was wearing a custom-made black suit with a white shirt. He looked elegant and noble.

It was Lu Huaiyu.

Everyone's eyes were involuntarily drawn to him.

The banquet hall was resplendent, but it could not compare to him.

Xu Yini walked towards him.

"Huaiyu."

Everyone's gaze was focused on him.

Xu Yini met his cold gaze and asked casually, "Didn't your girlfriend come with you today?"

She laughed and said with an implied meaning, "I don't think she would still need to accompany the two young masters of the Gu family to ride horses today, right?"

1

Chapter 725: Why Should Outsiders Welcome Tangtang Home on Behalf of the Gu Family?

The huge banquet hall gradually became quieter. When everyone heard her question, they exchanged glances and meaningful smiles.

In the past few days, there had been a rumor amongst the socialite circles of Hong Kong City. It was said that Lu Huaiyu's girlfriend, Ning Li, had just rushed to Hong Kong City to curry favor with the Gu family the moment her university vacation had started.

Not only had she won the favor of Old Master Gu and Old Madam Gu at the horse race last August, but this time, she had even come over directly to accompany the two young masters of the Gu family on horseback. She was extremely attentive.

Xu Yini's words seemed to be meant as a greeting to him, but in fact, they were full of sarcasm.

If all this effort was not to climb up the social ladder, why would Ning Li have put in so much effort?

Even though she came from a disreputable family background, she was Lu Huaiyu's girlfriend now. Such behavior was extremely unseemly.

Low discussions could be heard from all directions.

"I heard about this as well. I have to say, that Ning Li is quite skillful. She's capable of winning the hearts of everyone in the Gu family."

"How interesting. As the girlfriend of Second Master Lu from the Capital, how can she display such low behavior? She's completely humiliating Second Master Lu."

"You guys don't understand. After all, a girlfriend is just a girlfriend. With Second Master Lu's fortune, what kind of woman does he want? If he's happy, he could lift a person to the sky. If he's unhappy, he's also capable of trampling people into a quagmire in the blink of an eye. If he could connect with the Gu family, he would have an additional path as well, right?"

"To be honest, there are as many people who want to be on good terms with the Gu family as there are carp fishes crossing the river. However, I've never seen anyone who wants to push their luck to such an extent."

This statement, in fact, was biased.

There were indeed many people who wanted to curry favor with the Gu family. Many people used all kinds of methods to gain the Gu family's favor. Ning Li's actions were really nothing.

It was just that the Gu family did not give those other people a good opportunity, which made Ning Li especially special.

3

If no one was able to gain the Gu family's favor, then the situation would have been acceptable. However, Ning Li had to be the one exception.

That was indeed very enviable.

Someone laughed in a low voice and teased, "It's only possible for Ning Li to be in this position just because she bore a slight resemblance to the fourth young miss of the Gu family while she was riding a horse. Today, a true daughter of the Gu family is coming back. How should she handle the situation? I'm guessing that she doesn't dare to come because she feels too embarrassed and guilty, right?"

2

A series of noises came from all directions.

Xu Yini's lips curled up into a mocking smile.

It had already come to this point. The gossip would surely reach Lu Huaiyu's ears.

He had always been so proud and arrogant. How could he tolerate his reputation being dragged down by a short-sighted, lowly, and overly-eager girlfriend?

Sure enough, Lu Huaiyu's expression turned cold, and a thin layer of ice seemed to have fallen between his brows.

A cold and refreshing aura emanated from his body, and his pair of phoenix-like eyes, which were as deep as the sea, carried a threatening coldness and oppression. He looked extremely cold and dangerous.

When Xu Yini saw him like this, she subconsciously shrank back, and the feelings of unease and fear surged up from the bottom of her heart.

Lu Huaiyu's aura was really too strong. Even his normally unrestrained and arrogant demeanor was enough to make people subconsciously look up to him and not dare to approach him.

Now that he was angry, he was even more frightening.

However, on second thought, since his anger seemed to have been caused by Ning Li, Xu Yini felt a secret sense of satisfaction in her heart, smothering all the previous feelings of uneasiness.

1

Her red lips curled up into a smile.

Lu Huaiyu might have feelings for Ning Li, but the gap between them was still too big.

That was not something that Ning Li could make up just by holding a few big shows and drawing a few paintings.

After this, Lu Huaiyu should understand that Ning Li was not worth his—

“Xu Yini.”

Lu Huaiyu finally spoke, his voice cold and without the slightest bit of warmth.

“It looks like you still do not remember my previous warning at all.”

1

His voice was extremely cold, and every word he said was crisp and clear, carrying a bone-chilling chill.

The smile on Xu Yini's face suddenly froze, and her heart suddenly thumped.

In the next moment, Lu Huaiyu's words fell clearly.

"You don't have the right to call me by my name like that."

1

...

The entire banquet hall went dead silent.

Everyone was stunned.

Everyone knew that the Xu family and the Lu family were family friends. Xu Yini had been in love with Lu Huaiyu for many years.

Although she could no longer pursue him and Lu Huaiyu already had a girlfriend, the relationship between the two families was clear. The friendship that had lasted for many years was clear.

No matter what, they still had to be civil to each other on the surface.

2

However, who would have thought that Lu Huaiyu would not refrain from disrespecting Xu Yini in public?!

No, this was not as simple as just disrespecting Xu Yini. It was as if Xu Yi's face and dignity had been mercilessly ripped off in front of everyone!

Xu Yini had taken the initiative to strike up a conversation. When she had called out "Huaiyu", everyone had thought that they were very close. Who would have thought that Lu Huaiyu would respond in such a way?

'You don't have the right to call me by my name like that.'

This sentence was like a resounding slap to Xu Yini's face!

The color quickly drained from Xu Yini's face. Her limbs were cold and her entire body was stiff.

The smile on her face suddenly froze. A huge sense of humiliation surged up, causing her face to tense up and burn.

She did not even know what kind of expression she should put on at this moment. Thus, the frozen curve at the corner of her lips gradually pulled into an embarrassing line. It was like a low-quality mask that had silently cracked at a certain moment until all that was left was a miserable mess.

"Also, as far as I know, my girlfriend indeed didn't accompany Gu Siqi and Gu Sicheng to go horseback riding today."

Lu Huaiyu knew that this morning, Shen Li had accompanied Shen Zhijin to Seven Treasures Mountain to pay tribute to Gu Tingyin.

Therefore, he had deliberately given them more time to be alone and had only flown to Hong Kong City in the afternoon.

“She had other matters to attend to.”

Lu Huaiyu had one hand in his pocket. His posture was noble and languid. He tilted his head slightly and looked at Xu Yini with an extremely cold gaze, which was full of arrogance and pride,

“But, what does this have to do with you?”

Xu Yini’s fingernails dug her nails deeply into the palms of her hands, causing her to feel pain.

However, at this moment, she no longer cared about this physical pain.

Countless gazes had fallen on her, either mocking or ridiculing her. They were all watching her being turned into a joke!

Her throat tightened. She wanted to say something, but she could not open her mouth.

Just then, a gentle voice sounded out.

“Second Master Lu, Miss Xu probably only asked this out of concern as a friend.”

The hall was very quiet. This sentence had been heard by many people.

Yan Zhen rolled her eyes when she saw this. She fiddled with her manicure and sneered.

1

“Since you know you can’t get on Second Master Lu’s good side, you decided to try and please Xu Yini instead. You’re really something. You don’t even care if she likes you or not!”

Lu Huaiyu turned his head to look.

Yan Fei felt a chill run down her spine as he looked at her. She forced a smile and subconsciously lowered her voice.

“... It’s rare for Miss Ning to come to Hong Kong City as a guest. We all welcome her, so we couldn’t help but ask a few more questions. Second Master, please don’t take it to heart.”

As Yan Fei said this, she had thought that it might make Lu Huaiyu unhappy. Unexpectedly, Lu Huaiyu suddenly smiled.

She was instantly stunned. She was at a loss and inexplicably felt nervous.

“Second Master Lu—”

Just then, a deep and weathered voice came from outside the door.

“Tangtang has returned home. Why would we need any outsiders to welcome her on behalf of the Gu family?”

Chapter 726: The True Daughter of the Gu Family... Shen Li

At the sound of the voice, everyone subconsciously turned their gazes towards the door.

Old Master Gu was dressed in a tang suit. He had white hair, yet he looked hale and hearty.

That earlier sentence had come from his mouth.

He looked out towards the banquet hall. He had an intense gaze that seemed to have some deeper meaning. Even such a calm and simple sentence from his mouth seemed to carry a heavy weight. It carried absolute dignity and strength which pressed down on everyone’s shoulders!

Everyone could not help but hold their breath, as if even the air had frozen.

His gaze lingered on Yan Fei for an extra second.

In just one second, it instantly made her heart tremble, and break out in a cold sweat with a “swoosh”!

Old Master Gu had been decisive in his ruthlessness all his life, so how could she withstand his aura?

Her face instantly turned pale.

However, she soon noticed something and was shocked.

Old Madam Gu was standing beside Old Master Gu while Gu Tingfeng and the other members of the Gu family were behind him.

All the members of the Gu family had arrived.

However, that was not the most important thing. The most important thing was...

There was a young girl standing beside Old Madam Gu!

At that moment, countless pairs of eyes in the banquet hall were all looking in this direction.

Everyone’s attention was involuntarily attracted by that particular young girl.

She wore a black embroidered qipao, with a slender waist that was barely a handful.

Her black hair had been tied up, which showed off her slender swan-like neck. The pearl clasp at the collar flickered with a faint luster.

The side of the qipao stretched all the way up to her thighs. As she walked, most of her slender jade-like legs were hidden, revealing only a hint of jade-white.

The qipao clung closely to her body, and spread out into perfect and mesmerizing lines. The rich color made her skin look even more delicate and fair, which dazzled everyone's mind.

She wore no accessories on her whole body, except for a jade bracelet on her snow-like wrist.

She raised her eyes and looked over. Her peach-blossom eyes were clear and bright, and there seemed to be tiny stars floating in the depths of her eyes.

Everyone could not help but hold their breaths, and their minds were swayed by this stunning beauty that had suddenly entered.

It turned out that even though she was a young girl, she could still be covered in amorous feelings, as she had the perfect blend of purity and charm.

There was no need for any words. Just by standing there, she had already surpassed any scene on this earth.

...

Lu Huaiyu had already turned around to look when he heard Old Master Gu speak.

The moment Shen Li's figure had appeared in front of them, his eyes had darkened instantly. They were like a bottomless sea, filled with a whirlpool of temptation and danger.

It was as if sporadic flames were falling into the bottom of his heart until even his chest was burning hot. It spread crazily around his body almost uncontrollably, and even his fingertips were burning hot.

The hidden greed and desire seemed to pierce through the barrier at this moment, clamoring both silently but loudly at the same time.

As if sensing his burning gaze that seemed to have been quenched, Shen Li raised her eyes and looked over.

Their eyes met.

Lu Huaiyu stared at her, his thin lips slowly raising into an arc.

Then, he raised his hand, as if seemingly unable to endure the heat, and his slender fingers pulled at his tie.

However, the fire at the top of his heart did not seem to want to dissipate. Instead, it burned even more fiercely.

He looked at her, the tip of his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth, exhaled lightly, and smiled.

This was not an acknowledgment of kinship.

This was a seduction of his soul.

...

Tonight, the Gu family was holding a banquet, and all the celebrities had gathered there.

The females of each family were competing with each other, with their own beauty.

However, the moment Shen Li had appeared, it seemed as if she had instantly snatched away all the colors, causing everyone present to appear dull.

She was indeed the brightest star tonight.

After the silence, someone finally came back to their senses.

“That’s... Ning Li?!”

“It’s her. I saw her once at the horse races last year. I can’t possibly be wrong.”

“This... I’ve only heard of her beauty before, but I never thought she’d be so stunning...”

Many people looked at her, their faces still filled with amazement.

However, some people also noticed something more crucial.

“Wait, why is she standing next to Old Madam Gu? Is she... here with the Gu family?”

The moment these words came out, it hit them like a bolt of lightning, which caused everyone to be shocked to the spot.

That’s right!

Rather than saying that she was accompanying Old Madam Gu, it seemed more appropriate to say that the Gu family was accompanying her!

Someone said, “... Just now, what did Old Master Gu mean by that sentence?”

His voice had been so full of power. Everyone present had surely heard it clearly!

“Why do we need outsiders to welcome Tangtang home on behalf of the Gu family?”

Yes, everyone knew that the young miss of the Gu family, Tangtang, had returned.

When Old Master Gu said that, it had to have been in response to Yan Fei's previous sentence.

What had she said at that time?

Oh yes, she had said that Miss Ning rarely came to Hong Kong City as a guest, and everyone welcomed her.

— Miss Ning.

— Tangtang returns home.

Yan Fei suddenly realized something, and her mind went blank with a bang!

She widened her eyes in disbelief as she looked at the slender figure surrounded by the members of the Gu family. She seemed to hear roaring in her ears.

Old Madam Gu gently patted Shen Li's hand. She still had a gentle smile on her face as she said, "Brother Ci, it's a good thing that Tangtang is back. Thus, it's always good to have another person to welcome her back as well, isn't it?"

As she spoke, her gaze fell on Yan Fei and Xu Yini. Her voice was gentle as she said, "Moreover, Second Miss Yan and Miss Xu are old acquaintances of Tangtang. It's wonderful that everyone could come together to celebrate Tangtang's return today."

2

The hall was so quiet that one could even hear a pin drop.

This time, it was not only Yan Fei and Xu Yini, but everyone present was now shocked by the huge amount of information contained in these words and almost lost their rationality!

Ning Li!

It was actually Ning Li!

The person that the Gu family had made so much fuss over and had so actively welcomed Tang Tang back home was actually Ning Li! ?

In the past few days, there had been countless rumors about the beloved young miss of the Gu family.

Countless people had tried to guess her identity, and countless people had tried to find out her background, but to no avail.

Everyone had been waiting for tonight, for when the Gu family was to bring her here, to officially acknowledge her as their relative, and for the pearl to be returned to their family.

However, who would have thought that Tangtang... was Ning Li?!

Had she not been born in the city?

Was she not poor and lowly?

Had she not been covered in mud, a lowly and bitter person?

How could... How could she have become the high and mighty young miss of the Gu family in the blink of an eye?!

Just then, someone in the crowd sucked in a breath of cold air, unable to conceal their shock as they spoke.

“The bracelet on her hand... belongs to Old Madam Gu!”

2

Upon hearing this, many people could not help but look at Shen Li’s wrist. Because they were so shocked, they became numb instead.

Yes, that was indeed Old Madam Gu’s bracelet.

And now, it was on Shen Li’s hand.

All doubts had now been shattered. This was the symbol of her identity!

No... or rather, the Gu family that surrounded her was the proof that was the most irrefutable!

When he heard Old Madam Gu’s words, Old Master Gu seemed to agree that it made sense. He turned to look at Shen Li.

“Tangtang, what do you think?”

The corners of Shen Li’s lips curled up slightly. She smiled courteously.

“Naturally, I’m very happy when guests come to our house.”

“Second Miss Yan, Miss Xu, welcome.”

2

Chapter 727: Welcome, Guest

It felt like the scene seemed to have been deliberately slowed down. Even the sound seemed to slow down until it broke down into bits and pieces and mechanically and coldly fell on Yan Fei's ears.

"Welcome to my home, guest."

1

Yan Fei's mind was in turmoil, and her mind was in a daze.

Shen Li's words continued to echo in her ears. They were so light and heavy at the same time that they almost suffocated her.

Who was the host?

Who was the guest?

A moment ago, she had said that she would welcome Shen Li to Hong Kong City as a guest in front of everyone, but in the end—

The Gu family was the number one family in Hong Kong City, and Crescent Island was the private property of the Gu family. As the only daughter of the Gu family, this was, of course, Shen Li's home!

Moreover, tonight's family acknowledgment banquet was being held for her. Who else was more qualified than her to stand here and say "Welcome"?!

Many people around also thought of this as they looked at her, their eyes full of ridicule and mockery.

This was the Gu family's territory. How could an outsider like her have the right to criticize?

And the welcome... ? Was there anyone in this world who would welcome the arrival of the master of a home?

What a laugh!

When Yan Zhen heard that Shen Li was actually the Tangtang that belonged to the Gu family, she had originally been completely shocked. However, upon noticing Yan Fei's constipated expression, she instantly felt happy.

She flipped her hair and laughed out loud.

1

Last year at the horse race event, she had also gotten into an altercation with Shen Li. However, compared to the mess that Yan Fei had caused today, it really was not as bad.

At the very least, she had not caused any unhappiness to this precious daughter in front of the Gu family.

This "younger sister" of hers was probably used to pretending to be gentle and considerate. She had to put on a show of never competing for anything in order to show her kindness and consideration. Today, she had not been able to hold herself back and had made a fool of herself again.

Who would have thought that she would end up figuratively facing the barrel of a gun?

Why had she not been more aware of what this place was?

The Yan family was of a lower status than the Gu family, and this was the Gu family's territory. She was merely an illegitimate daughter of the Yan family who did not have much status herself, yet she had taken herself so seriously!

Many people heard Yan Zhen's laughter, including Yan Fei.

A strong sense of shame surged up in her heart, almost causing her to tremble all over.

At this moment, she finally realized how much she had lost!

“Second Miss Yan,” Gu Siyang was standing at the side and asked with a lazy smile, “Are you not feeling well? Why does your face look so ill?”

Yan Fei forced a smile to try and make her expression look better.

“I... I’m not...”

“Didn’t my cousin say that you are all her friends? She welcomes all of you here so you don’t have to be nervous.”

Gu Siyang raised his chin and smiled brightly.

“Crescent Island is now under my cousin’s name. Since she has already said that she welcomes all of you, you should just relax! Furthermore, today is the day that my cousin has officially come home. This family acknowledgment banquet is just to make her happy! There’s no need to stand on ceremony! Just go ahead and have fun!”

Every word he said was full of enthusiasm and sincerity.

However, in Yan Fei’s eyes, it was like a slap to her face!

“Cousin, how did they all know that we went horse riding together?”

Gu Sicheng had stuck his head out with a questioning face.

Earlier, he seemed to have vaguely heard someone mention this matter, but was it really something very strange or extraordinary?

When this childish voice rang out, it immediately caused the expressions of many people, including Yan Fei, to change.

Shen Li raised her eyebrows and smiled.

“Maybe it’s because the two of you were too rowdy while you were riding the horses?”

“No!”

Gu Siqi immediately refuted this.

“We clearly listened to you, Cousin!”

Gu Tingchuan looked at the noisy brothers with annoyance before raising his eyes to sweep over the banquet hall from a certain direction.

Sun Shiqi and several others immediately felt uneasy. Subconsciously, they lowered their heads and avoided Gu Tingchuan’s gaze. At the same time, they took half a step back to try and hide within the crowd.

Gu Tingchuan then snorted coldly and said in a deep voice, “That’s because they all know that the two of you begged cousin for a long time before she finally came to teach you how to ride a horse.”

This sounded like a sound reason so the two brothers nodded in agreement.

Gu Sicheng said crisply, “That’s right! Cousin is usually too busy. She’s always doing scientific research with Fourth Uncle at school. Now that she’s finally back, of course, we just had to seize the opportunity!”

Fourth uncle.

The sudden appearance of this term shocked everyone.

Yes, they had almost forgotten that since Shen Li was the daughter of the fourth Miss Gu, then her father—

“That would be... Shen Zhijin?!”

Someone exclaimed in shock.

Hearing this, many people subconsciously looked in that person’s direction.

“Shen Zhijin? Who is that?”

Previously, because Old Master Gu and Old Madam Gu had appeared together with Shen Li, everyone’s attention had been attracted in their direction. Thus, no one had paid much attention to what was behind them.

Now that they looked more carefully, they saw that there was another man who had come with the Gu family.

He looked to be less than 40 years old. His face was handsome and clean, with a tall and upright posture. He looked cold and elegant, but there was also a faint sense of detachment.

Hearing Gu Sicheng’s words, Old Madam Gu smiled and said, “Tangtang is usually busy working together with Fourth Uncle. However, she has spent a lot of time with you since she came back this time.”

Shen Zhijin smiled.

“She’s supposed to be on vacation. Of course, Tangtang should relax.”

The conversation shocked everyone.

“It really is Shen Zhijin! The only son of academician Shen Zhou, the international astrophysics big shot, the president of the National Physics Association, and the Vice President of Xijing University!”

Of course, among the people who had come tonight, including all the gentry from all walks of life, there were some who knew of Shen Zhijin.

The person who had spoken could not help but gasp, “So, he’s Ning Li’s father?”

Hearing this, Shen Li’s peach blossom eyes narrowed slightly as the corners of her lips curved slightly.

“I’m sorry, I forgot to mention one thing. My name isn’t Ning Li now, it’s... Shen Li.”

Shen Li, Shen Tangtang.

— The Shen was from Shen Zhijin. She was the Gu family’s Tangtang.

After a short period of dead silence, someone finally remembered something.

“... Wait a minute, back then, the fourth miss of the Gu family had married Shen Zhijin...”

This marriage had caused quite a sensation back then. Everyone had said that the two of them were a match made in heaven, and the relationship between the two families had been extremely good.

However, after the fourth miss of the Gu family passed away, the Gu family had never mentioned Shen Zhijin again. Since then, Shen Zhijin had almost never come to Hong Kong City again as well.

The relationship between the two parties had been broken, and as time passed, many people had gradually forgotten about it.

That is, until now. Shen Li had returned home.

Only then did everyone finally remember that this time, not only had she returned to the Gu family, but she had also returned to the Shen family.

...

After being hit by one shock after another, Yan Fei's legs almost went completely weak and she could not stand steadily.

She felt as if her whole body had just been fished out of the water. From her forehead to her back, she was drenched in a cold sweat and she was completely drained of energy.

At the side, Xu Yini's beautiful face had turned red and then white. It was exceptionally interesting.

Her lips moved and she spoke with difficulty.

"... So, you are... Shen Li?"

1

Chapter 728: Pearl in the Palm

In just one night, Ning Li had become Shen Li.

Even though it was only a difference of one word, what it represented was a completely different life!

One was at the bottom of society, covered in muddy weeds, while the other was held in the hands of the Gu and Shen families, a truly precious and dazzling pearl.

Xu Yini could hardly believe what she had just seen and heard. Her mind had gone blank, leaving only a noisy buzzing sound, which almost gave her a splitting headache!

How could this be... How could this be?!

Shen Li raised her eyes slightly and looked straight at Xu Yini. As her eyes met Xu Yi Li's incredulous gaze, the smile on her lips deepened.

"Miss Xu seems to be very surprised?"

The word 'surprised' was an understatement!

It was more than that. She was shocked and speechless. This situation seemed completely absurd!

Xu Yini felt her entire body go numb and stiff!

Shen Li tilted her head slightly, as if she suddenly had remembered something.

"Oh, that's right. The last time we met at Luye, I forgot to mention this to Miss Xu."

It would have been better if she had not brought this matter up now. The moment she mentioned this, the scene from that day instantly appeared in Xu Yini's mind.

That's right. At that time, Luye had just received a box of Veron oysters. She had specifically asked for it, but had been flatly rejected.

Their head chef had even stated that it had been specially reserved for a certain distinguished guest.

At that time, she had felt that it was completely laughable. What other distinguished guest could be more valuable than her?

It was only when Gu Siyang had brought Shen Li over that she realized that it had been prepared for this particular young master of the Gu family. The whole situation had ended on bad terms.

Gu Siyang also clapped his hands together fiercely.

“Oh, did you mean the time when Second Uncle specifically asked all the major docks to send you fresh seafood so that you could pick out which flavors you liked?”

Hearing this, Gu Tingchuan seemed to sense something was off and frowned.

“Siyang, what’s going on?”

Gu Siyang chuckled.

“Ah, it’s nothing much. Didn’t you ask all the major piers to pick out the best fresh seafood and send it to my cousin for a taste test? Miss Xu happened to be there at that time and had picked out a box of Veron oysters. However, because it had been prepared for my cousin, I didn’t give it to her.”

As he spoke, he shrugged.

“Miss Xu was quite unhappy about this matter.”

Xu Yini’s body swayed. She felt a dull pain in her chest and her eyes started to lose focus.

It turned out that the box of Veron oysters had specially been sent to Shen Li.

It turned out that all the piers in Hong Kong City had specially prepared a box of oysters each to be sent to Shen Li. The box of oysters that no one else had been able to obtain had only been one of them.

At that time, she had even mocked Shen Li by saying that Shen Li was using trickery to get the young master of the Gu family to protect her. Now that she thought about it, she felt extremely embarrassed. It was only right and proper for him, Gu Siyang, to protect his cousin!

Gu Siyang's words were tactful, as if it was merely a trivial matter. However, Gu Tingchuan was astute enough to immediately guess most of what had happened.

His face darkened, and his already serious face became even more fierce.

"That had originally been meant for Tangtang. No one else could possibly snatch it away."

These words were clearly aimed at Xu Yini.

Seeing that he was about to get angry, Yun Jingrou tugged at him and smiled at Xu Yini.

"Miss Xu, please don't mind it. The subordinates are inflexible about the rules, hence, that's why there was a misunderstanding. After all, it's just a meal so it's not a big deal. As for the Veron oysters, a lot of them were sent over from Kuiyi Pier today as well. Also, if Miss Xu still has other favorites, you can ask the other piers to pick out the good ones and send them over."

As she spoke, she suddenly paused.

"Oh, but there are a few piers that belong to Tangtang now. She has to give her nod of approval for it to work."

1

These words stunned everyone.

Even Shen Li was quite surprised. She turned around and looked.

“Second Aunt, you mean –”

Yun Jingrou blinked.

“Didn’t I tell you to pick the ones that you liked previously? The five piers that you liked the most have already been transferred to your name. In this way, it will be convenient for you to eat whatever you want in the future.”

1

Shen Li’s heart was slightly shaken.

Many people present could not help but gasp.

The second master of the Gu family, Gu Tingchuan, was in charge of the Gu family’s shipping business. All seventeen piers had been under his name.

Now, he had directly transferred five piers to Shen Li!

Shen Li understood and immediately looked at Gu Tingchuan.

She did not need to think to know that such a big decision had definitely been Gu Tingchuan’s idea.

It turned out that he had asked each pier to send a serving of seafood that day. He had not only wanted to find out what her tastes were like, but he had also wanted her to pick the pier!

Gu Tingfeng frowned slightly when he heard that.

Gu Siyang moved closer to his father and lowered his voice.

“Dad, you still lost to Second Uncle even though you gifted Crescent Island!”

Gu Tingyun raised his eyebrows. He had not expected Gu Tingchuan to have used such a trick.

Perhaps he had been agitated by the painting incident last time?

He sighed softly.

“Tangtang.”

Shen Li seemed to have sensed something and looked over.

“Third Uncle?”

Gu Tingyun looked regretful.

“The gallery that I’ll be building for you will be completed by the end of the year at the earliest.”

Shen Li, “... That’s alright...”

“I can’t display the few paintings that I’ve taken previously so I’ll leave them at home for now. You can see where to place them later.”

Shen Li, “... Alright... Thank you, Third Uncle.”

Gu Tinglan watched from the side and laughed.

The procedures at the Dutian Racecourse were still being processed. Thus, it would be better to tell her later when it was done.

These were all things that belonged to Fourth Sister anyway.

However, even if Gu Tinglan did not say anything, the movements of the few masters in front of her were already shocking enough.

The entire Gu family had doted on the fourth miss of the Gu family back then.

Shen Li was her only daughter. She had been wandering outside for many years and had suffered countless hardships.

Naturally, they had to make it up to her.

But this was too...

Old Master Gu looked around and said, "Today is the day that Tangtang officially returns home. Thank you all for coming to witness it together."

As he spoke, his tone paused slightly.

"Especially Tangtang's friends. Please enjoy yourself to your heart's content."

1

Chapter 729: Settling Old Scores

Of course, everyone understood who these friends of "Tangtang" he was referring to.

For a moment, countless gazes fell upon Yan Fei and Xu Yi, their expressions unclear, yet seeming to be mocking the two.

Old Master Gu and Old Madam Gu led Shen Li to the center of the banquet hall.

Of course, based on today's scenario, wherever Shen Li was, that would be the center.

The Gu family's Shen Li was definitely the center of attention tonight.

...

The atmosphere gradually became livelier, and the banquet hall quickly returned to a more festive atmosphere again.

However, within this lively atmosphere, while some people were laughing heartily, there were others who were not so happy.

Yan Fei stood rooted to the spot. Almost subconsciously, her gaze followed the figure that was being surrounded by the Gu family members. Her mind continued to feel muddled.

She could not understand how the young miss that the Gu family had gone through so much trouble to find could have ended up being Shen Li!

If she had known this... If only she had known earlier...

How could she have said those words in public and turned herself into a laughing stock?!

Without even looking closely, she knew just how many people were secretly watching her make a fool of herself!

Yan Zhen grabbed her handbag and walked over. When she brushed past Yan Fei, her footsteps paused slightly. Then, she snorted and turned her head to look at her.

“How wonderful.”

Instantly feeling extremely embarrassed and humiliated, Yan Fei gritted her teeth.

Yan Zhen sized up her expression.

“Hey, why do you look so unhappy? Didn’t Old Master Gu invite all ‘Tangtang’s friends’ to have a good time? It sounded as if you and this young miss of the Gu family are quite close. So, why are you making such a face?”

These words finally provoked Yan Fei.

She suddenly turned her head to look at Yan Zhen. Her usually gentle and generous mask had been torn off, and her eyes were filled with hatred and resentment.

“How are you better than me?! The matter between you and Zhong Haoqi hasn’t even been settled yet!”

Hearing her mention Zhong Haoqi, Yan Zhen’s expression changed.

However, she did not get angry. Instead, she sneered.

Then, she tilted her head slightly and looked behind Yan Fei.

“Dad.”

Yan Fei’s whole body stiffened!

Yan Zhen glanced at her, feeling happy.

“Did you hear that? She has caused you so much trouble, yet she still doesn’t know how to repent!”

The matter between her and Zhong Haoqi had been bad, but she had not offended the Zhong family because of it.

On the other hand, Yan Fei... Old Master Gu’s displeasure had been very obvious!

She held her handbag as she sauntered around for a while before sneering.

1

“So, this is your good daughter.”

Of all the people she had to offend, she had managed to offend the most precious one in the Gu family!

Without even mentioning Old Master Gu, just judging by the attitudes of those few masters earlier, it looked like she, Yan Fei, would not be able to have a good life in the future!

It would be fine if this misfortune were to fall upon her alone, but if she were to implicate the Yan family—

Yan Fei clearly realized this as well. She hurriedly turned around and saw that Yan Baocheng’s face was so gloomy that it seemed as if water could drip out of it.

She had never seen him show such an expression to her. She could not help but become nervous.

“Dad—”

“Go over now and apologize to Shen Li!”

Yan Baocheng’s tone was determined.

Yan Fei choked and her lips turned pale.

In the current situation, what was the use of her apologizing for the past? She was now being looked down upon and being ridiculed by others!

She stood rooted to the ground without moving.

Yan Baocheng’s brows were tightly knitted together. His lowered voice was filled with surging anger.

“Are you not going? If you’re not going, then take yourself back home right now!”

There had been so many people in the banquet hall, yet she had to jump out to involve herself!

To think that he had thought that she was obedient and sensible in the past. Who would have thought that she was so inconsiderate and had even caused so much trouble!

Yan Fei had never been scolded like this by him before. Her eyes immediately turned red.

Many people around were paying attention to the situation here. Those gazes made Yan Fei feel extremely uncomfortable.

She wished that nothing had happened tonight and that she had never ever come here!

Yan Zhen looked in another direction and said in a sympathetic tone, "That's the only child of the fourth young miss of the Gu family. She's the proper young miss of the Gu family. Why would you feel wronged by apologizing to her?"

She had not even looked at her own background.

Yan Fei's face was white as snow.

"Besides, didn't you see that the eldest Miss Xu has already lowered her head? Even if you want to ride on someone's coattails, you should look more carefully or you will implicate the Yan family for no reason."

Yan Fei finally could not take it anymore. She turned around and quickly left.

"You—"

Yan Baocheng had originally wanted to force her to apologize, but he never would have guessed that she would really leave just like that!

His expression was extremely unsightly as he said coldly, "Useless thing!"

...

"Eh, is the Second Miss Yan leaving?"

Gu Siyang glanced in that direction.

Shen Li looked in the direction he had pointed out and indeed saw Yan Fei's back view as she left in a sorry state.

She took a sip of peach juice, not feeling particularly surprised by this result.

After that, she seemed to have sensed something and turned her gaze slightly, just in time to meet the gazes of Sun Shiqi and the others.

Almost at the moment their eyes met, a strong sense of unease and nervousness flashed across their faces. Then, they immediately lowered their heads in guilt and did not dare to look at her again.

The corners of Shen Li's lips curved slightly.

...

The atmosphere in the banquet hall was resplendent and lively.

However, Xu Yini remained standing where she was, feeling as if her entire body had turned cold.

She looked wooden, as if she had lost her soul. Her mind seemed to be filled with a lot of thoughts, yet it also seemed to be blank.

Right at that moment, Lu Huaiyu turned around to leave.

Subconsciously, she raised her head and saw him walking towards Shen Li.

The girl that she had once thought was so lowly that she belonged in the mud, the girl that she once could not even bother to spare a glance at, was now shining brilliantly and dazzling.

Now, Lu Huaiyu was walking towards her. His steps were slow and firm, just like every time before.

This was the person that he had always chosen.

"Miss Xu."

A voice sounded, and Xu Yini came back to her senses.

“... Third Master Gu?”

Gu Tingyun’s smile was gentle as he looked at her.

“It was me who insisted on inviting you here this time. I didn’t expect such a misunderstanding to happen. How about this, allow me to bring you to Tangtang so that you may explain things clearly? It’s better to settle your grievances than to let them fester. What do you think?”

Xu Yini did not know what he meant, but seeing that he seemed to be somewhat apologetic, she subconsciously nodded her head.

Today’s situation did not look good for her and the Xu family.

Gu Tingyun’s brows relaxed before he led Xu Yini over.

At that moment, Lu Huaiyu had just arrived beside Shen Li and his burning gaze fell on her. However, just as he was about to speak, he heard a voice come from behind.

“Tangtang.”

He raised his eyebrows slightly and turned around to look. He saw Gu Tingyun walking over with Xu Yini.

Shen Li felt a little strange when she saw this.

“Third Uncle?”

Gu Tingyun had a faint smile on his face,

“Tangtang, actually, I was the one who invited Miss Xu here. I thought that there was some misunderstanding between the two of you earlier and I could use this opportunity to clear the air. After all, friends are hard to come by, right?”

Shen Li looked at him hesitantly. What did he mean?

Then, Gu Tingyun looked at Xu Yini.

He smiled warmly.

“Well, now, about the scandal between Tangtang and George, and the scandal between Tangtang and Lin Fengmian... You can start to explain about them now.”

4

Chapter 730: Sorry

Xu Yini’s heart skipped a beat when she heard the calm and gentle voice. Her head snapped up to look at Gu Tingyun!

He had intentionally not lowered his voice, so it quickly attracted the attention of many of the people around him.

Some people even started to whisper among themselves.

“What did Third Master Gu mean by what he said just now?”

“Tsk, what else could it mean? He meant it literally! Don’t you guys know? In the past, Ning... Shen Li had been exposed when she went to Lin Fengmian’s private apartment and spent an afternoon there. Then, she was shown getting into the car of the Crown Prince of G&S, George, one night and leaving together. When the incident was exposed, everyone said that Shen Li had improper relationships with these two people and was cursed at for a long time!”

“I remember that too! In fact, after the matter had been clarified, everyone had found out that she and Lin Fengmian were like siblings. She had gone there to take care of Lin Fengmian who was injured. As for George, I don’t need to tell you how much the G&S Group values Ning, right? On that day, George had been taking her to the rehearsal for their big show.”

“I always thought that it was just the media that had found it out on their own, but now upon hearing Third Master Gu’s meaning... Do you think it’s related to Xu Yini?”

“Speaking of this, I suddenly remembered that the news at that time was in an uproar. Then, in the end, the media that had broken the news first suddenly took the initiative to release a video to clarify the situation. I heard from a media friend that a few staff members related to the news, including a management team, had been fired. Now that I think about it, it was probably Third Master Gu who made that move at that time?”

“He definitely didn’t run away. If Third Master had not specially invited Xu Yini over today, why would he have wanted her to make an explanation to Shen Li in person? Huh, in what way is he asking her to explain? He’s clearly asking her to lower her head and apologize!”

All kinds of discussions came from all directions.

Even if Xu Yini did not want to hear it, she still could not stop the mocking and gossipy words from entering her ears, which completely humiliated her!

Gu Tingyun’s expression remained gentle.

“Hmm?”

It was obvious that he was waiting for her to speak.

The atmosphere was stiff and cold. Xu Yini’s mind was in a mess. She could only subconsciously deny it.

“I... I didn’t... I don’t know what you mean...”

Gu Tingyun raised his brows slightly. A hint of regret could be seen on his face.

“Miss Xu, I have a friendship with the Xu family and I admire you very much. That’s why I specially invited you here. I thought that if there was any misunderstanding, we could just clear the air here. However... If you don’t want to say it, then my good intentions have truly been wasted, haven’t they?”

Xu Yini’s face was red and white as she gritted her teeth.

Because of her anger, her lips were trembling slightly.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

Gu Tingyun did not say anything. Instead, he merely looked at her indifferently.

Even though he did not say anything, with that attitude, who would not understand what he meant?

Third Master Gu had said that Xu Yini was the one who had done those things, so that meant that she was the one who had done it!

Countless gazes fell on Xu Yini, causing her to feel as if a spotlight was shining on her back.

She had never thought that she would end up in such a situation!

This time, the Gu family had extended her an invitation to Hong Kong City to celebrate the return of the young miss of the Gu family.

Logically speaking, the Capital and Hong Kong City were thousands of miles apart. Moreover, the Xu family and the Gu family had not had many interactions before. Thus, it was unusual for them to have invited her.

However, the welcome celebration on New Year's Day had been an extremely extravagant sensation.

Everyone knew that the Gu family had put in a lot of effort this time. They had specially used their connections to invite many of the aristocratic families and well-known people to attend the family recognition banquet.

The Xu family was one of the top aristocratic families in the Capital, and she was the only young miss. After thinking about it, she had felt that it was reasonable for her to receive an invitation.

So, she had come.

However, she had never expected that the precious Tangtang that the Gu family held in their hands was actually Shen Li!

The Gu family had invited her this time because they had wanted her to not only personally congratulate Shen Li, but also to lower her head and apologize to Shen Li!

The Shen Li that she had looked down on in the past was now on equal footing with her!

In addition, Hong Kong City was the Gu family's territory, and Gu Tingyun had made up his mind to help avenge Shen Li. How could she resist?

In all the years that Xu Yini had lived, she had always been pampered.

However, ever since she had met Shen Li, it seemed like everything had gone wrong.

Today, this was even more embarrassing!

"Speaking of this matter, I had always thought that Second Master Lu had been the one to make a move. I didn't expect Third Master Gu to be the one behind it..."

“Huh, who in the Capital doesn’t know that she was forced to leave the entertainment circle because she had offended Second Master Lu? Actually, there was once before when Second Master Lu had withdrawn all business cooperation between the Lu family’s business and her. He had only gone as far as that out of respect for the Xu family. It could be considered as just a partial ban. In the end, she had still not been able to take it lying down and had offended him even further. Now, with the addition of Third Master Gu, how could she still jump?”

“Whether it’s Second Master Lu or the Gu family, they are both famous for protecting their own. This is especially so, since Shen Li is the only daughter of the late fourth Miss Gu, and she suffered so much in the past. It would be strange if the Gu family did not settle the score with Xu Yini properly!”

...

Xu Yini turned her neck stiffly and her gaze fell on Lu Huaiyu.

He was standing beside Shen Li with a lazy posture and a casual smile on his lips.

Xu Yini felt chills all over her body.

Previously, she had also thought that it had been Lu Huaiyu who had done all those things, but now it seemed that it had not been him!

He had never been the only one who was protecting Shen Li!

Gu Tingyun seemed to be a little impatient from waiting. He lowered his voice slightly and said with a smile, “Perhaps Miss Xu is still young, so she’s embarrassed to speak. Actually, this is understandable. How about this, allow me to speak for you. If I get anything, please feel free to correct it at any time. Let’s explain everything clearly to Tangtang together. We’ll turn the conflict into an amicable friendship, and everything will be perfect. How about it?”

The expression on Xu Yini’s face was now beyond description.

When the people around them heard this, they secretly exchanged glances with one another.

Third Master Gu was truly ruthless!

Xu Yini was young, but wasn't Shen Li younger than her? Clearly, she was the one who had done something wrong in the first place. Wouldn't it be natural for her to apologize?

Moreover, if she did not say it herself, Third Master Gu would speak for her. That would be even more shameful than her saying it herself, right?

This was a clear statement from Third Master Gu: The Gu family knows exactly what you have done, Xu Yini!

The Gu family actually did not care whether Xu Yini herself said it or not— What they wanted was for her to apologize!

If these words could be understood by others, of course, Xu Yini could also understand them.

If she were to really allow Third Master Gu to speak on her behalf, then she—

“Thank you, Third Master Gu, for your kind intentions,” Xu Yini's face was stiff as she enunciated each word slowly, “But there's no need. What happened earlier—”

She suddenly stopped and felt something surging wildly in her chest, making her feel stifled and aggrieved!

She took a deep breath, feeling as if every word had to be squeezed out from between her teeth with great difficulty.

“... Earlier, I had mistakenly believed in other people's words and misunderstood the relationship between Shen Li, George, and Lin Fengmian, which caused the subsequent series of troubles... I... I didn't have any malicious intentions. However, I realize that I've caused you quite a bit of trouble, so today, I apologize to you. I'm sorry!”