

Little Brat's 991

Chapter 991: Do You Have Any Objections?

When Cheng Xiyue heard him say this, someone immediately came to his mind.

“Gambler?”

Lu Huaiyu tilted his head and looked out of the window.

Cheng Xiyue scoffed.

“That’s true. Other than this person, who else could it be?”

Actually, it had been a very long time since Lu Huaiyu had heard this name. However, when Cheng Xiyue mentioned it, all the related memories were still extremely clear and vivid.

Cheng Xiyue could not help but say, “You might think that he is interesting, but he might not think so about you. Thinking back, how did you set him up back then? If I were him, I would definitely put you at the top of the assassination list for the rest of my life.”

Lu Huaiyu seemed to laugh as he said, “If you are willing to gamble, you must be willing to admit defeat.”

Cheng Xiyue simply wanted to roll his eyes.

There was nothing wrong with these words, but when they came out of this man’s mouth, it was inexplicably annoying.

“Moreover, I never really thought of recovering this debt in the first place.”

“But didn’t he still return it to you on time?”

“That’s why I feel that this person is very interesting.”

Cheng Xiyue was extremely speechless at Lu Huaiyu’s words.

“Could it be that you find it so interesting because it’s rare to meet someone who’s capable of competing with you, and yet, you’re able to come out on top?”

Lu Huaiyu raised his eyebrows.

“Well, I’ve never denied my admiration for him.”

“So, it’s because you admired him that you set him up to owe you a huge amount of debt? Haven’t you thought about it? Is he willing to accept your kind of admiration?”

Cheng Xiyue felt that he could not communicate with him on this. After thinking for a while, he snorted again.

“After that incident in Leland, he also disappeared without a trace. Until now, there’s been no news about him and it’s probably because of you.”

Lu Huaiyu’s phoenix-like eyes narrowed slightly.

“Actually, it might not be completely silent.”

Cheng Xiyue was stunned. “What do you mean?”

Lu Huaiyu’s well-defined, slender fingers tapped lightly on his knees twice.

“Last year at the Hong Kong City Jockey Club, there was an SSS level member who placed bets three days in a row. Every time he won a match, he would put all the principal and prize money back into the next match. Relying on this, in a short three days, his capital of ten million immediately rose to nine digits.”

A trace of shock flashed across Cheng Xiyue’s face.

“Really?”

“Gu Tinglan himself said it.”

“F*ck... F*ck! Then this—”

Cheng Xiyue took a deep breath.

“In that case, that really does seem like Gambler’s style... Could it really be him? However, it’s hard to be sure just by gauging from this. After all, the Hong Kong City Jockey Club has more than ten SSS-level members. Moreover, there were so many people betting on the horse race, so it might not be—”

Lu Huaiyu smiled faintly.

“I forgot to tell you that the day Gambler returned the money was the day after the horse race ended.”

This time, Cheng Xiyue was completely shocked.

The style was similar, and although it could be said to be a mere coincidence, the timing of the return of the money was really too subtle. It would be very difficult not to think that.

After all, that had been a huge sum of money.

Calculating it, that day would definitely have been the day that the horse race prize money had arrived.

And it just so happened that Gambler had chosen to return the money on that exact day.

This—

Cheng Xiyue was quiet for quite a while, barely able to digest the huge impact of the news.

Even though there was no conclusive evidence, this was truly a coincidence. Moreover, if even Lu Huaiyu said so, it proved that in his heart, he had basically confirmed this fact.

After a long while, Cheng Xiyue finally spat out a sentence.

“In that case, it looks like the two of you share a fate?”

Lu Huaiyu did not speak.

Just then, the car arrived at Skyleaf City where Shen Li was standing outside the community’s door.

Lu Huaiyu lowered the car window.

“Ah Li.”

Cheng Xiyue did not continue the topic from before and parked the car properly. He tilted his head and smiled at Shen Li.

“Sister Ah Li!”

Shen Li got into the backseat and greeted the two people.

“Second Brother, Brother Xiyue.”

Cheng Xiyue turned his head to look at her and said with a smile, “It’s been a long time since we’ve seen each other, and Sister Ah Li has become beautiful again.”

Lu Huaiyu’s gaze was extremely indifferent as he looked at him lightly.

A chill ran up the back of his head, and Cheng Xiyue immediately shivered.

Wow, this man... What was wrong with him just catching up with Sister Ah Li?

This protective instinct of his was just too strong.

Shen Li rolled her eyes before saying, “How long will Brother Xiyue be here for this time?”

“A week,” Cheng Xiyue said, finally able to sit properly again as he drove forward, “But I don’t have a lot of things that I need to do. I’m just going to treat this as a vacation.”

The Eldest Master Cheng had always treated himself very well. He was completely unequivocal when he said that he was on vacation.

“Right, I still have to make a trip to Jinse Bay tomorrow to visit Elder Mei. Old Master Cheng is very worried.”

Old Master Cheng and Elder Mei had also been good friends for many years. Although they did not see each other often now that one was in the Capital and the other was in Yunzhou, they would still contact each other regularly.

It was then that Cheng Xiyue’s expression became very sorrowful.

“Oh right, Sister Ah Li, the last time I came, you hid the fact that you are Elder Mei’s disciple very well!”

At that time, Mei Yanqing had undergone surgery. Since he had come to the Capital on a business trip, so he had specially gone to visit him. However, he had ultimately been thrown out of the room, together with the fruit basket he had brought.

Later on, he had brought up this matter in front of Shen Li, but she had not said anything and had kept it a secret.

If not for the fake version of her painting appearing in One Gallery earlier and her coming out to verify her identity, who knew how long this relationship between her and Elder Mei would remain hidden?

Every time he thought of this, Cheng Xiyue would feel very resentful.

Shen Li paused for a moment and explained, "It's mainly because my seniority is a little awkward, so—"

Cheng Xiyue thought for a moment, and his expression eased slightly.

"Ah, that's true."

The youngest senior brother above Shen Li was Yu Pingchuan, and he was already over 50 years old.

Not to mention the others.

For a young girl like Shen Li to mix in here, the style was indeed unique.

"But, Lu Er, why were you helping Sister Ah Li hide it from me as well?" Cheng Xiyue turned his focus to Lu Huaiyu instead.

Even if he did not say it explicitly, it would still have been possible to occasionally hint at it, right?

However, the moment these words came out, the car instantly quieted down, and the atmosphere became delicate.

Lu Huaiyu looked at him emotionlessly.

Shen Li silently shrank back into her seat.

Cheng Xiyue was stupefied. "What's wrong? Don't tell me that you didn't know about this matter back then either? Could it be that Sister Ah Li didn't even tell you?"

The air in the car was almost frozen.

Shen Li said softly, "That... I hadn't found a suitable opportunity to talk to Second Brother yet at that time..."

Cheng Xiyue was speechless.

F*ck.

Had he been that unlucky for the past eight lifetimes that he would now step on Lu Er's sore spot?!

Lu Huaiyu looked at Cheng Xiyue and smiled slightly, but the tone of his voice was cold.

"Yes.

"Do you have any objections?"

Chapter 992: As Long as She Was by His Side

Objections?

How could he have any objections?

He had to have guts too!

Realizing that he had made a huge mistake, Cheng Xiyue seriously considered the possibility of jumping out of the car. He hesitated for a long time trying to decide which way he would die faster before finally accepting his fate.

“... That... I was only talking about it in passing! After all, we’d have to pick a suitable time to properly talk about such an important matter, wouldn’t we? Hahaha!”

Young Master Cheng’s extremely embarrassed laughter reverberated through the car.

Lu Huaiyu’s expression remained calm.

Shen Li coughed lightly.

Cheng Xiyue wanted to cry but his tears could not.

He really had not done it on purpose!

How could he have imagined that even Lu Huaiyu had not known about this matter?

Clearly, little sister Ah Li liked him a lot. So, why would she hide such an important matter from him?

Cheng Xiyue silently quieted down. This time, he not only regretted having invited Lu Huaiyu out to eat, but he even regretted calling Shen Li.

However, this kind of quiet and tense atmosphere could not last for too long because it was really too suffocating.

Thus, after a while, Cheng Xiyue cleared his throat and tried to cover up for himself.

"I think, it is indeed hard to comment on this matter. After all, it involves Elder Mei and other people! Moreover, Sister Ah Li has always been obedient and sensible. She would not willingly hide it from you, Lu Er! But even though she hid it, there's no need to go overboard..."

As he spoke, he glanced to the side.

Then, he saw a faint smile appear on Lu Huaiyu's face.

Cheng Xiyue's eyelids twitched, and he subconsciously looked at the rearview mirror.

The young girl sitting in the backseat had already lowered her head to play with her phone, pretending not to hear.

"..."

Very good. It looked like it was not just this matter that Shen Li had hidden from Lu Er.

Yet, he had even specially singled out this matter to mention?

Cheng Xiyue was silent for quite a while.

"Lu Er, I suddenly don't feel very well. Why don't we just forget about this dinner tonight?"

Lu Huaiyu turned his head to look at him. A faint smile appeared on his handsome and noble face.

“Not well? Is it very serious?”

Cheng Xiyue’s expression was solemn as he nodded in deep pain.

“It’s very serious. I think it might be fatal soon.

“So...”

A look of concern appeared on Lu Huaiyu’s face.

“Then I’ll help you contact the hospital after we finish eating later.”

Cheng Xiyue was dumbfounded.

Fifteen minutes later, the three of them finally arrived at the barbecue shop.

Lu Huaiyu got out of the car first before going to open the car door for Shen Li. After that, he took her hand and walked inside.

“This shop is newly opened. I’ve heard that the food is pretty good. Their specialty is grilled lamb chops. Would you like to try it later?”

Shen Li followed along beside him and obediently nodded when she heard that.

“Alright.”

The two of them chatted in this way as they went in, leaving Cheng Xiyue behind, who got out of the car last, feeling very disgruntled.

No.

Was it not Sister Ah Li who had hidden that matter from Lu Er?

Why was it that these two people were completely fine, and he was the only one who was miserable?

This feeling was further deepened while they were ordering the food.

They entered a four-seater private room. Shen Li and Lu Huaiyu sat on one side while Cheng Xiyue sat on the opposite side alone.

Lu Huaiyu was helping Shen Li with the order.

“Grilled squid?”

Shen Li nodded and raised her finger again.

“Second Brother, do you want the five-flowered beef?”

Lu Huaiyu then made a tick on the menu again.

They obviously knew each other’s tastes well.

After listening for a while, Cheng Xiyue began to feel hungry. He decided to ask, “Lu Er, please help me add a serving of tenderloin.”

Lu Huaiyu made a tick for a serving of onion rings.

Cheng Xiyue was sitting across from him and saw it clearly. He could not stop his eyes from twitching!

This man was too vengeful!

So, since he could not bear to bicker with Sister Ah Li, he was aiming all his dissatisfaction at him?

He wanted to fight back, but he really did not have the guts. After hesitating for a long time, he could only turn to Shen Li to plead, "Little Sister Ah Li, how about adding another serving of roasted shiitake mushrooms?"

Lu Huaiyu ticked on an especially spicy green pepper.

Cheng Xiyue was speechless.

Finally, he tactfully shut his mouth.

...

Cheng Xiyue's first dinner in the Capital during this visit was truly very "sumptuous."

In the middle, Shen Li went out to the bathroom.

After she left, Cheng Xiyue finally could not hold it in anymore.

"Lu Er, this double standard of yours is a little too much!"

Lu Huaiyu looked a little surprised.

"Why? Is this only the first day that you've known that?"

Cheng Xiyue was lost for words.

He really could not say anything.

“I was truly just asking casually!” Cheng Xiyue felt that he was really going to die from the injustice.
“Moreover, if you really care about this matter, you should just tell Sister Ah Li directly!”

Actually, in Cheng Xiyue’s view, this was completely understandable.

No one would want to become the person who had a secret hidden from them.

Especially, Shen Li was really very special to Lu Huaiyu.

Lu Huaiyu smiled.

“This matter isn’t that important.”

After all, she herself was far more important than any of these matters.

Cheng Xiyue was momentarily stunned.

“Really?”

Lu Huaiyu was famous for having an aloof, proud, and hard-to-discipline temperament.

No one dared to lie to him, no one dared to hide a secret from him.

It was only with Shen Li that he had the most patience and favoritism.

If she did not say it, he would not ask, much less mind her not mentioning it.

Lu Huaiyu was quiet for a few seconds, then leaned back and said with a faint smile, "I know that she's hiding something from me, but isn't it the same for me?"

Cheng Xiyue's expression changed slightly, and his voice lowered.

"... But this really can't be blamed on you..."

Lu Huaiyu's gaze was calm as he enunciated each word.

"Whether she says it or not, as long as she's here, it's fine."

As long as she was here with him, it would be fine.

...

Shen Li exited the restroom and walked towards the barbeque shop.

From the corner of her eyes, she suddenly saw a somewhat familiar figure.

She focused her eyes and looked over, her pupils slightly squinting.

Shi Yang?

He seemed to have just come out of a Hong Kong-style restaurant. There were a few other people with him, but it was clear that he was the center of attention.

Soon, she saw another familiar person among the other people.

Tao Siwen.

Chapter 993: Reluctant to Part

Did these two people... know each other?

Shen Li's gaze swept over the two of them.

One was an artist, while the other was a businessman. Moreover, one was refined and noble, while the other was shrewd and calculative. No matter what, they did not seem to be very compatible people.

However, this was still their own private matter, after all. What the specific situation was, outsiders had no way of knowing.

Shi Yang was talking to a man who was beside him. His gold-rimmed glasses masked the expression in his eyes, and he carried himself in a refined and amiable manner. He seemed to be chatting quite happily.

The group of people very quickly left.

Shen Li withdrew her gaze and returned to the barbeque shop.

...

Half an hour later, Cheng Xiyue drove the two home.

Along the way, he mentioned that he would be going to visit Elder Mei the next day. He then chatted with Shen Li about the matter between her and Elder Mei.

"Right, little sister Ah Li, I still don't know how you became Elder Mei's disciple," asked Cheng Xi Yue, very curiously, "Would it be convenient for you to reveal it?"

He was not the only one who wanted to ask this question. It was likely that many people really wanted to know about this matter as well.

Not much needed to be said about Mei Yanqing's position in the world of art. The number of people who wanted to be accepted under his tutelage was truly as many as the number of carp crossing a river.

However, ever since Yu Pingchuan, he had never taken in another disciple.

As time passed, everyone had stopped thinking about it.

Who would have known that after so many years, Elder Mei would take in Shen Li when he was almost 80 years old?

This was also why the news that Shen Li was Elder Mei's disciple had caused such a huge commotion.

Shen Li smiled.

"There's nothing inconvenient about it, however, it was also just a coincidence. At that time, I was drawing a picture of someone in the park, and coincidentally met my master who had gone to Lincheng for some relaxation. After he saw the drawing I did, he took the initiative to look for me and asked me if I wanted to learn painting from him."

Cheng Xiyue was a little confused when he heard that.

"And then?"

"And then I agreed and formally acknowledged him as my master," Shen Li said casually.

Mei Yanqing was the Mount Tai Beidou¹ of the domestic painting world. It had been on his own initiative to ask to take in a disciple, so surely... not many people would have rejected him, right?

Cheng Xiyue was dumbfounded.

An opportunity that others could not even beg for had easily been handed to her on a silver plate, just like that.

It was extremely difficult for so many people to receive any sort of praise from Elder Mei, but she had been quite lucky. After all, wasn't it actually Elder Mei who had taken the initiative to look for her and offer to take her in as a disciple?

It was too infuriating to be compared with.

Cheng Xiyue could not help but sigh.

"... But Elder Mei really has sharp eyes. Out of so many people, he only picked you. Most painters who are much older than you, much less those around your age, haven't even achieved the level of fame and standards as you, right? You immediately became famous from the first painting."

"I was lucky," said Shen Li as she looked out of the window, seemingly recalling something, "The first painting was sold at a price that was tens of times higher than the starting price."

At that time, she was still a greenhorn and had not had any fame.

The paintings of nameless artists usually did not sell for a high price.

It was only because the paintings were really good that the Yunzhou Art Association had decided to send them to be auctioned off.

The starting price had been set very low, but the final price had increased by a hundredfold.

Since then, "Tree's Shadow" shot to fame.

At that time, even Shen Li herself had not expected the painting to be able to fetch such a high price.

Later on, her works had been auctioned off one after another, and the price had reached new heights. Soon, she had her own place in the art world.

“Speaking of which, I still have to thank the person who bought my first painting,” she said.

Cheng Xiyue was stunned and subconsciously stole a look at Lu Huaiyu.

‘What’s going on? Does Sister Ah Li not know that that painting had been bought by Lu Er?’

Lu Huaiyu’s expression remained calm and unperturbed.

However, he was undoubtedly demanding a tacit agreement.

Cheng Xiyue’s eyes widened slightly, and he only reacted after a long while.

It was no wonder that when they had been eating together, Lu Huaiyu had said the same thing.

It was true!

Both of these people were still hiding quite a lot of things from each other, even until now!

Young Master Cheng let out a long sigh, feeling tired and loveless.

When Shen Li did not hear any movement from him in quite a while, she turned to look forward.

“Brother Xiyue? What’s wrong?”

Feeling the vicissitudes of life, Young Master Cheng said, "Nothing. It's just that I suddenly felt a little redundant."

Shen Li was perplexed.

Lu Huaiyu tilted his head and smiled faintly.

"Why do you need to belittle yourself? At the very least, you have self-knowledge, which can be considered an advantage."

Cheng Xiyue did not know what to say.

He was still single. Why on earth had he been so stubborn as to ask this couple out for a meal?!

...

Cheng Xiyue sent Shen Li back to Skyleaf City first before proceeding to send Lu Huaiyu home.

He held the steering wheel, feeling extremely uncomfortable:

"It's fine when we're in Yunzhou, but why am I still working as your chauffeur when we're in the Capital?"

Lu Huaiyu leaned back in his seat and closed his eyes. Clearly, he did not want to answer this meaningless question.

"Speaking of which, since you already know that Sister Ah Li is Tree's Shadow, why haven't you told her that you're the person who bought her first painting?" Cheng Xiyue said before shaking his head, "No, that's not right. Which of the paintings that she released for sale is not in your hands?"

Only then did Lu Huaiyu slowly open his eyes to say, “She knows that I have some of them in my possession.”

“Some, compared with all. How can that be considered the same? You—”

Cheng Xiyue snorted lightly and suddenly stopped.

He looked at Lu Huaiyu and opened his mouth.

That’s right.

It was precisely because it was different that he did not say it.

If he did, then many things related to it would be dragged out.

What Lu Huaiyu wanted to hide was not just those paintings.

After a long time, Cheng Xiyue finally said in a low voice, “Lu Er, I’ve never seen you so worried about gains and losses.”

Lu Huaiyu’s gaze was calm and profound, but he did not say anything.

He had already placed that book and that hand painting there.

It was not that he did not dare to gamble, he was just...

...not willing to.

...

Near the end of the semester, Shen Li's classes had already been suspended.

She took the textbook to the laboratory.

Because the previous topics had been completed ahead of time, she now had more time and freedom. She only needed to choose a new topic within a month.

This was still the standard that Shen Zhijin had set for her.

In fact, if she had been working with other teachers and project teams in the Institute of Physics, those two articles in Universe would have been enough for her to retire early.

On the other hand, Fu Niannian and Tang Yi were extremely busy.

Shen Li would do some reading in the laboratory. Occasionally, she would help them with their experiments and process data.

The laboratory was completely silent. There was only the sound of the machine running and Fu Niannian tapping on the keyboard.

Shen Li flipped through her book in silence.

Yan Qiu walked in with an obvious smile on his face.

"What are we having for dinner tonight? It's on me!"

Fu Niannian raised his head.

"Yo, Eldest Senior Brother, why? Is this your last meal before you leave?"

Yan Qiu pointed at him.

“Very good, there will be no place for you tonight.”

Fu Niannian was very sensible.

“Hey, hey, Eldest Senior Brother, I was just joking! Why don’t you take it that it’s because you’re going to graduate and we can’t bear to part with you?”

Yan Qiu moved forward and patted him on the shoulder to comfort him.

“Second Junior Brother, there’s no reason to miss me.

“Your dear eldest senior brother... which is, me... will be staying on in school.”

Chapter 994: Intention to Cover Up

“Staying on in school?”

Tang Yi looked over curiously.

“Yes, our school is recruiting this year, so I’ll be staying on as a lecturer.”

Yan Qiu was clearly in a good mood.

“You don’t need stand on ceremony with Teacher Yan tonight!”

Fu Niannian flung his hand away in disgust. He was really disgusted by this “Teacher Yan.”

Tang Yi quickly accepted the situation and gave a thumbs up to Yan Qiu.

“That’s great, Big Senior Brother!”

Xijing University was the top institution in the country, and the standards for staying on in the university were extremely strict. Moreover, even if an average student were able to stay in the university, they had to start from the position of a counselor or a professor’s assistant.

There were very few people who could immediately become a lecturer.

This was all thanks to Yan Qiu’s article in ‘Universe’.

Of course, he had also been personally guided by Shen Zhijin. As Shen Zhijin’s assistant, while he was doing his Ph.D., he was also in charge of a lot of work which meant that he was much more outstanding than the others.

He really did have the qualifications.

“Then Eldest Senior Brother, which subject will you be lecturing in later?” Tang Yi continued to ask.

Yan Qiu replied, “The details haven’t been decided yet, but the probability is that it’ll be ‘Spherical Astronomy’ for undergraduates.”

Shen Li was stunned.

“Senior Brother, I believe that this will be a class that I’ll be attending next semester.”

Yan Qiu suddenly clapped his hands, a pleasantly surprised expression on his face.

“That’s right! I almost forgot that Little Junior Sister is still an undergraduate student!”

Shen Li did not know what to say.

“That will be a good relationship!” Yan Qiu was even happier. “When that time comes, I’ll be able to go to class with Little Junior Sister!”

This was quite a novel feeling.

Shen Li was also very happy.

“Then it’ll be more convenient to ask for leave in the future.”

Yan Qiu was dumbfounded.

Fu Niannian looked at Shen Li with admiration.

“Junior Sister, would you actually need to ask for leave even though you’re not in class? You’re giving Eldest Senior Brother too much face.”

Ignoring the other classes, the specialized classes were all in the same area as the physics department. Which teacher did not treat Shen Li like a treasure and spoil her?

Shen Li was silent.

Yan Qiu wanted to say something, but after thinking about it carefully, he realized that what Fu Niannian said made sense, so he gave up.

“Forget it. In any case, in the future just let it be known that Little Junior Sister will be attending my class. The two of you— if you’re envious, just say so.”

Tang Yi shook his head. "Eldest Senior Brother, we're not envious."

Yan Qiu sneered. "What's there to be ashamed of?"

Tang Yi insisted. "No, we're really not envious."

Yan Qiu clicked his tongue. "Just keep your mouth shut. Teacher Yan will understand."

Tang Yi paused for a moment before finally speaking bluntly.

"Eldest Senior Brother, when the time comes, if you really teach 'Spherical Astronomy', can you guarantee that you'll be better than Junior Sister?"

The smile on Yan Qiu's face froze.

Fu Niannian gave him a rare look of sympathy.

"It's fine. It's not the first time junior sister has crushed you, right?"

Yan Qiu was so devastated that he was at a loss for words.

He was silent for a while. Then, he looked at Shen Li and said seriously, "Junior Sister."

"Yes?"

"I've decided. If it's really my turn to teach this class next semester, you'll be my assistant, right?"

"..."

“What assistant?”

A cold and distant voice sounded. When they turned around, they saw that it was Shen Zhijin.

Fu Niannian laughed and said, “Boss, Eldest Senior brother said that he would like to invite Little Junior Sister—”

Yan Qiu coughed lightly.

“I said that if I happen to be Little Junior Sister’s lecturer in the ‘Spherical Astronomy’ class next semester, I’m hoping that I’ll be able to have discussions with Little Junior Sister if I encounter any problems.”

Shen Li stayed silent.

Fu Niannian and Tang Yi both gave him a look that was difficult to explain in one word.

Yan Qiu was fearless.

What a joke. He even dared to ask his boss’ daughter to become his assistant, even if it was just a joke!

Shen Zhijin heard this and thought for a moment before nodding.

“Yeah, actually it’s fine now. Ah Li just finished reading that book when she was at home on May Day.”

Yan Qiu thought, ‘I was careless.’

In the end, Fu Niannian and Tang Yi still managed to take advantage of Yan Qiu that night.

...

On Wednesday night, after Shen Li finished her dinner, she was reading a book in her room when her phone suddenly lit up.

She picked up her phone and took a look. It was a message from Zhao Xuan.

He had always been extremely efficient in his work. He had sorted out a document and sent it to Xiang Yao as quickly as he could.

Shen Li opened it.

The content of this document was very detailed. All the information related to Xiang Yao that could be found was gathered here.

Even the operation of his parents' company, as well as all the large amounts of consumption that could be found, were all clear.

Shen Li carefully read through it for a long time.

Zhao Xuan was right. Xiang Yao's family was indeed pretty good, but it could not be compared to a wealthy family like the Yu family.

However, over the past few months, Xiang Yao had clearly become rich.

More precisely, it had started the month that the incident with Yu Cheng had happened.

Xiang Yao's family was considered nouveau riche. He himself was a typical ignorant and incompetent second generation of the rich. He had even bought his college diploma overseas.

After returning to China, he had been in an idle job at his parents' company. However, he rarely went to work.

Most of his time was spent eating, drinking, and playing outside, hanging out with the other second generation of the rich.

The situation at his family's company was the same as before, but his expenses had obviously increased in the past few months.

No matter which way she looked at it, it did not seem right.

In the end, Zhao Xuan had even compiled a relationship chart with Xiang Yao, listing all the names of people who had close relationships with him.

After Shen Li finished reading the document, she realized that she had not seen Yu Yu's name.

She sent a message back to Zhao Xuan.

[Are there no members of the Yu family in Xiang Yao's network?]

Zhao Xuan replied very quickly.

[Yes. He only interacts with Yu Cheng, but he has no connection with the rest of the Yu family.]

Of course, this was only on the surface.

Shen Li looked at her phone, deep in thought.

Zhao Xuan was very capable. If even he could not find any connection between Xiang Yao and Yu Yu, this proved that the connection between them was buried deep in the dark.

In fact, if she had not overheard Xiang Yao and Yu Yu on the phone that day, she would not have connected these two unrelated people.

[Okay, I got it.]

Although Zhao Xuan did not understand why she wanted to find out about Xiang Yao, his instincts told him that she valued this matter.

[President Shen, do you need me to look into anything else?]

Shen Li thought for a moment.

[There's no need.]

She put down her phone and turned on her computer.

Xiang Yao had suddenly become more generous. It was evident that he had other ways to earn money.

The room was silent. The faint light from the computer screen shone on her face, making her skin appear even fairer and her eyes even darker.

Very soon, three months' worth of bank cards under Xiang Yao's name appeared before her eyes.

Shen Li scanned them one by one.

There was nothing unusual.

Then, she checked Yu Yu.

All the accounts under her name were also clean.

There was no proof of money exchange between the two of them.

Shen Li leaned back in her chair and stared at the screen, the corners of her lips curling up slightly.

She was really cautious.

However, this Second Miss Yu probably forgot that there was a saying, "The more you cover it up, the more it becomes apparent."

Chapter 995: Together

Yu Yu had been having a hard time lately.

There had been no progress on the matter concerning Yu Cheng. Previously, she had promised that she would find a way to get help from the Xu family. However, it seemed that this tactic would not work now. Her situation in the Yu family was becoming more and more tenuous.

On the other hand, Xiang Yao's crazy extortion had also made her exhausted.

After the phone call the other day, she had thought of a way to raise the money and called Xiang Yao. Only then had he finally stopped causing trouble.

However, Yu Yu knew very well that this was only temporary.

Once he spent all the money, he would definitely come looking for her again.

No matter how much money she had, she would never be able to withstand his extortion!

A lot of things were not going well. Yu Yu was so anxious that she could not even sleep well.

All she could do was force herself to put all her energy into work.

The only thing she was glad about was that Yu Media was still in her hands. As long as she managed it well, she still had a chance to turn things around.

Currently, Yu Media's biggest investment was "Fantasy God Chronicles".

She had high hopes for this film. All the funding applications related to it had been given the green light. During the process, she had even made time to visit the director and main creator on the set. In short, she was putting in 120,000% of her energy.

She began to eagerly wait for the release of "Fantasy God Chronicles".

...

Shen Li's exam Monday was spread out over two weeks in total.

The exams for subjects such as College English and others were the first to be completed in the first week. The remaining professional courses were left to the second week, which was on the days from the end of June to the beginning of July.

During the graduation season, Shen Zhijin was also very busy. Shen Li often noticed that the lights in the study room were still on even around 11 p.m. or midnight.

That afternoon, she finished an exam and went to the laboratory to read for a while. That night, she went home with Shen Zhijin.

"Tangtang, how was your exam today?" Shen Zhijin asked.

Shen Li nodded.

“It was okay.”

In fact, there was never any suspense about Shen Li’s results. However, every time, Shen Zhijin would still ask her about it.

Hearing her say this, he lowered his chin slightly. Then, he paused for a moment and asked again, “Oh right, your birthday is in two days. How do you want to spend the day?”

This was the first birthday that Shen Li would be celebrating since she had returned to her family.

Shen Li had clearly already made up her mind and said, “There will be an exam that morning, after which I’ll be free in the afternoon and the next day, so I plan to return to Hong Kong City.”

Shen Zhijin looked at her quietly.

“You want to spend the time in Hong Kong City?”

The corners of Shen Li’s lips curved.

“I want to spend some time with Mom.”

Shen Zhijin lowered his eyes slightly and did not speak for a long time. His handsome and aloof face was as calm as ever, but he also seemed to be lost in his thoughts.

Actually, when he heard that Shen Li wanted to return to Hong Kong City, he had already guessed what she was thinking.

June 26th was her birthday.

And after that, June 27th marked the beginning of his loss.

Shen Li asked, "Dad, why don't you come with me?"

Shen Zhijin came back to his senses and looked up at her again. His gaze fell on the dimples at the corners of her lips. His brows relaxed and he smiled.

"Okay."

...

The next day, Shen Li took some time to go to the art association.

After entering the main door, she walked towards the building. Soon, she saw two men walking on the steps in front of her.

The figure on the left looked familiar. It was Shi Yang.

The one on the right seemed to be his assistant, who was saying something to him.

"... Teacher Wu Qing's art exhibition is about to start. He really hopes that you'll be able to attend as a guest."

Shi Yang nodded and said in a refined and polite manner, "It should be fine. When is it?"

The assistant said, "The day after tomorrow."

Shi Yang suddenly paused in his footsteps and said, "I already have other arrangements for the day after tomorrow. I don't think I'll be able to go."

The assistant was stunned. "Then... the day after that?"

Shi Yang shook his head and said gently, "I will be quite busy during those few days. I seem to remember that his art exhibition is going to be held for a week, right? Let's just wait for the last day to go."

It could also be considered as helping to wrap things up perfectly.

The assistant immediately said, "Alright. I will go and communicate with Teacher Wu Qing in a while."

Whether it was the first or the last day, Shi Yang was already giving him face by being able to go. The other party would be more than happy and would not be picky about it.

Shi Yang replied with a "Hmm".

Suddenly, he seemed to have sensed something. He turned around, only then spotting Shen Li standing behind him, not too far from him.

"Shen Li?"

Shen Li greeted him with a polite and calm tone of voice.

"Teacher Shi Yang."

A gentle smile appeared on Shi Yang's face.

"Why are you here today?"

Shen Li said, "I'm here to settle some matters."

She did not reveal the details. Shi Yang smiled and did not continue to ask any further questions. He merely nodded in response.

Both parties walked in one after another before walking to either side of the corridor.

Shi Yang took a few steps and turned back to look. He saw Shen Li enter one of the rooms and asked, "I heard that in the past, Shen Li's paintings were sold and auctioned by the Yunzhou Art Association?"

The assistant had not expected him to suddenly ask this, but he still nodded. "Yes, have you forgotten? Elder Yu is the chairman of the Yunzhou Art Association."

Shen Li had been born in Lincheng and later went to Yunzhou for her third year of high school. These two cities were close neighbors. During those two years, Shen Li's paintings had been taken care of by the Yunzhou Art Association.

Shi Yang smiled.

"That's true."

"However, ever since Shen Li's identity as Tree's Shadow had been exposed, all her related businesses had been transferred here. Because of this, many people were especially happy at that time!"

The assistant talked about these things with relish. After all, Shen Li's identity was really special, and her paintings could always be auctioned at a high price. Everything related to her could easily attract everyone's attention.

Shi Yang was the vice-chairman of the art association, but there were three other vice-chairmen in the art association as well. He was not responsible for this part of the content, so it was normal that he was not clear about it.

"So it looks like she has a painting to auction now?"

The place that Shen Li had headed to just now was in charge of this part of the business.

The assistant also looked in that direction. "It should be. It's been a long time since she's produced a painting."

Shi Yang withdrew his gaze and smiled faintly.

"I admire her paintings too. It's a pity that I haven't managed to see them often. I can't miss it this time. Remember to let me know when the news of her painting participating in an auction is confirmed."

His assistant had heard Shi Yang mention that he liked Shen Li's paintings before, so he immediately agreed.

"Alright."

...

"The Bo Xing Auction House in the Capital is preparing to hold an auction in July. The specifications are very high. We're planning to send your paintings to this auction. What do you think?"

In the office, the staff was very earnestly discussing with Shen Li.

Shen Li was young, but her seniority was extremely high. In addition, her status in the art world was not low, so every time she came here, everyone in the art association treated her very respectfully.

Shen Li nodded, but she was not particularly concerned about this.

She had come today for another matter.

"By the way, I heard that some time ago, another gallery had exhibited a fake painting by Teacher Yu?"

Chapter 996: Status

The staff member's expression became much more serious.

"Yes. Fortunately, Teacher Wang Yan went there and recognized that there was something wrong with the painting. Otherwise, it would have caused quite a bit of trouble."

Shen Li had been busy with her exams recently, so Yu Pingchuan had not told her about this matter. She had accidentally heard about it from Wei Songze.

Later, she called Yu Pingchuan, and only then had she known that Wang Yan was the one who had seen through the fake painting.

The fake painting had also been very closely imitated and was almost exactly the same as the original. Wang Yan was Yu Pingchuan's disciple and was very familiar with his painting. That was when he had realized that something was wrong.

"Have you found any clues?"

"This..." the staff member shook his head awkwardly. "This is very similar to the time when the high-quality copy of your painting appeared in One Gallery. Currently, we have already ordered people to investigate the matter, but..."

There was no need to finish the sentence. Naturally, Shen Li understood.

Since it was a high-quality imitation painting, its origin was obviously not legitimate.

The person who had done this would definitely not easily let her leave any evidence.

They were in the open while the other party was in the dark. It was naturally difficult to investigate this matter.

Shen Li pondered for a moment.

“I understand.”

For some reason, she felt that both of these fake painting incidents might have some kind of connection with each other.

Of course, without any evidence, these could only be considered as speculations.

“Inform me if there’s any progress after this.”

The staff quickly said, “Okay.”

Shen Li stood up and left.

...

On the way back, Shen Li received a call from Fang Yunyi.

“Ah Li, it’s your birthday the day after tomorrow. How do you plan on celebrating it this time?”

Fang Yunyi was in a cake shop. While talking to Shen Li on the phone, she looked at the exquisite and beautiful birthday cakes on the counter as she carefully selected them.

This rose mousse cake seemed to be pretty good!

This crown feather ice cream cake was also very dreamy!

Eh? The little princess on the Black Forest Cake was so cute!

Shen Li was a little surprised. She had not expected Fang Yunyi to remember her birthday.

“Aunt Fang, I’m going back to Hong Kong City to celebrate my birthday the day after tomorrow.”

Fang Yunyi let out a soft “Ah”.

“I was going to help you celebrate your birthday...”

That’s right. How could she have forgotten about this?

This was Shen Li’s first birthday after being acknowledged by the Gu family. Of course, she had to accompany the Gu family and Shen Zhijin.

Shen Li said softly, “I’m sorry, Aunt Fang.”

“What’s there to be sorry about?” Fang Yunyi flipped her hair back and quickly adjusted her attitude. “Then, are you free tomorrow? Why don’t you come to the house and we’ll help you celebrate in advance?”

Shen Li did not know what to say.

It seemed that Fang Yunyi had made up her mind to help her celebrate this birthday...

However, tomorrow was the one-year anniversary of her relationship with Lu Huaiyu.

As if she had guessed what she was thinking, Fang Yunyi said, “Ah Li, how about this? Come to our house at noon and we’ll help you celebrate and have a meal together. Then you’ll still have the rest of the time left to do whatever you wish, okay?”

Her tone was inquisitive, but it did not hide the hope in her voice..

Shen Li could not refuse.

“Okay, thank you, Aunt Fang.”

Fang Yunyi immediately heaved a sigh of relief. Her brows relaxed and her eyes became bright and lively.

“Then it’s settled. I’ll talk to Huaiyu later.”

After hanging up the phone, she stretched out her hand and pointed forward with a faint smile.

“That’s the one.”

...

After Shen Li returned to school, she received a call from Lu Huaiyu.

“Second brother?”

“Ah Li, are you coming to my home for your birthday tomorrow afternoon?”

“Yes. Has Auntie Fang already talked to Second Brother about it?”

“Yes.”

Lu Huaiyu’s tone was lazy, and there was a hint of a casual smile in his voice.

What he did not mention was that Fang Yunyi's actual words had been, "I'm going to help Ah Li celebrate her birthday tomorrow afternoon. It's up to you as to what you want to do."

Seeing that it would only be one lunch, Lu Huaiyu had agreed.

"I'll pick you up tomorrow then."

"Okay."

...

At 11 o'clock the next morning, Lu Huaiyu and Shen Li went to the Lu family home.

Old Master Lu was watering the flowers in the courtyard. When he saw Shen Li, he immediately came up to welcome her happily.

"Ah Li!"

"Grandpa Lu."

"Come in quickly!" Old Master Lu led her into the house. "It's too hot outside, don't linger in the sun!"

Shen Li followed him to the living room and looked around, but she did not see Fang Yunyi or Lu Zheng.

Feeling puzzled, a series of crackling sounds suddenly came from the kitchen, followed by an extremely panicked scream.

"Ah! Lu Zheng! It's moving! It's moving! Ahhhhh!"

A deep and calm man's voice sounded.

“Because it’s a live fish.”

Fang Yunyi panicked even further.

“A live fish! Why is it still alive?!”

Lu Zheng was quiet for a moment. “Because you specified for it to be fresh.”

“Oh, oh!” Fang Yunyi forced herself to calm down. “Yes, it certainly is fresh!”

Feeling helpless, Lu Zheng looked at the kitchen that was about to be turned upside down by her.

“Let me do it.”

Fang Yunyi immediately looked at him with extreme vigilance.

“I’ve already killed half of the fish. Aren’t you going too far by snatching the credit at this time?!”

Lu Zheng closed his eyes.

“I’ll tell Ah Li that you did it all by yourself.”

Fang Yunyi raised her noble head and was extremely disdainful of his actions.

“Lu Zheng, it’s fine if you lie to me, but do you want to lie to your daughter? Let me tell you, I’m definitely going to cook this dish today!”

Lu Zheng was speechless.

When Shen Li came to the kitchen, this was the scene that she saw.

The kitchen was a mess. A fish was dancing on the ground. Meanwhile, Fang Yunyi held the knife in one hand and looked at it as if she was facing a great enemy. It was as if she was considering how to kill the fish and cut it up.

Lu Zheng was standing not far away from her. She did not know whether he was thinking about how to kill the fish or to prevent the knife from falling on his wife.

Shen Li did not know what to say.

She paused before speaking up.

“Aunt Fang, why don’t I do it?”

Fang Yunyi heard this and immediately froze.

She slowly raised her head.

“... Ah Li, when did you come?”

Shen Li tactfully replied, “I just arrived.”

What was the difference? Couldn’t they all see this scene for themselves?

Fang Yunyi straightened her shoulders and returned to her usual elegant posture.

Of course, the prerequisite was to ignore the knife in her hand and the fish scales on her clothes.

“How can you possibly do such a thing?”

Then, she raised her wrist and handed over the knife in her hand. She said in a dignified and generous manner, “Lu Zheng, you do it. Huaiyu, you help.”

Chapter 997: Lu Huaiyu’s Medical Record

Fang Yunyi had wanted to try her best, but she had never expected Shen Li to catch her in such a brutal scene.

After thinking that the scene would be more exciting with a single slash, Fang Yunyi chose to give up without hesitation.

If she had known this would happen, she would have chosen a less difficult task!

Thinking of this, her gaze fell on the vegetables at the side.

She could not handle the fish, but she could definitely handle the vegetables!

“Ah Li, you go out and have some fun first. The meal will be ready in a while.”

Fang Yunyi waved Shen Li away.

Seeing that she seemed to be planning on continuing, Shen Li was silent for a moment.

“Aunt Fang, actually, there’s no need to go through so much trouble—”

“How can this be called trouble?” Fang Yunyi picked up the vegetable basket beside her and smiled. “I’ve always been very interested in cooking.”

Lu Zheng and Lu Huaiyu paused at the same time.

Fang Yunyi urged Shen Li again.

“You don’t have to worry about these things. Go accompany Grandpa, okay?”

If she did not successfully cook a dish today, she would never step out of the kitchen again!

Lu Huaiyu pressed the space between his eyebrows and looked down at Shen Li.

“You should go outside first.”

Seeing that he was also speaking up for her, a feeling of satisfaction shone in Fang Yunyi’s eyes.

In the next moment, Lu Huaiyu continued to say, “Mom’s cooking skills are pretty good. She’s not much weaker than Elder Yu.”

Shen Li did not know what to say.

She silently raised her eyes and looked at him.

From behind, Old Master Lu also called for her.

“Ah Li?”

Shen Li hesitated. Although Fang Yunyi looked very dangerous, with Lu Zheng and Lu Huaiyu around, there should not be any problems, right?

She finally nodded and turned to leave.

Fang Yunyi looked over, then picked up the vegetable basket with great ambition and went to wash the vegetables.

As she washed, she asked, "Oh right, Huaiyu, I forgot to ask. Does Ah Li like to eat vegetables?"

Lu Huaiyu paused.

"It's fine."

Did it matter whether she liked it or not?

In any case, it would be the same in the end.

Fang Yunyi nodded repeatedly.

"It's good to like to eat vegetables. It's good for your health."

Lu Huaiyu sighed softly and walked over.

...

Old Master Lu pulled Shen Li into the living room. There were many beautifully wrapped gift boxes piled up on the coffee table.

Old Master Lu showed them to her.

"Ah Li, this, this, and this are all gifts from Grandpa. The two blue ones are from Lu Zheng, and the rest are from Yunyi."

Shen Li was speechless.

It had not been long since she had last come to visit the Lu family home. That time, she had already brought home a bunch of gifts. Now, this time...

She hesitated and said, "Grandpa Lu, this is too much..."

"Huh? Is it too much? It's fine, it's fine! Don't worry about not being able to carry them all. We'll just put it in the trunk of the car later and let Huaiyu carry it home for you!" Grandpa Lu chuckled. Clearly, he did not think that this was a problem.

"..."

Shen Li decided to give up communication.

"Ah, that's right. Previously, we talked about traveling abroad. Has Ah Li chosen a place?"

Old Master Lu was obviously very enthusiastic and looking forward to it.

Shen Li paused for a moment and shook her head. "Not yet."

Old Master Lu did no mind and waved his hand around.

"There's no rush! This will be our first family trip. Of course, we have to choose carefully!"

Shen Li did not say anything.

"By the way, have I not shown you the prizes I won before? You'll definitely like them!"

Ever since the customized bookmark had fallen out of the book in front of everyone, Grandfather Lu had finally managed to change his mindset after experiencing shock, embarrassment, embarrassment, and shyness.

He was now extremely honest and proud, and he could not help but show off to everyone.

Of course, the main target of his showing off was his family.

He could not bear to show the others to them.

Shen Li thought back to [Ah Li No. 1]'s Weibo. Firstly, he reposted a lot. Secondly, after he received the gifts, he liked to post them, so really... she probably already knew what Old Master Lu had collected.

But of course, she could not say that.

Hence, Shen Li shook her head.

"I haven't seen it."

Old Master Lu was even more interested and led her to the study.

"It's all in the study room! I'll take you there to take a look!"

Shen Li wanted to politely decline, but seeing how happy Old Master Lu was, she swallowed her words.

Then, she followed Old Master Lu.

As soon as she entered, she saw her pillow on a pear blossom wood chair.

On it was her in a blue and white racer's uniform. She was holding a helmet in one hand, as the breeze lifted her hair. Her small face was slightly raised, making her look very sassy and cool.

Although she had seen this photo on Weibo before, seeing it with her own eyes now, the impact was beyond imagination.

She turned her eyes slightly. On Old Master Lu's desk, there was a pink mug.

On it, of course, was a print of her. There, she was wearing a white princess dress and holding a small scepter.

Shen Li held her breath and looked away again.

There was a pair of books on the bookshelf. It was her in a black leather jacket, black pants, and black boots.

Shen Li was at a loss for words.

Old Master Lu had been carefully hiding these things. Ever since his secret had been exposed, he had simply taken them out.

He was reluctant to use them, so he just put them there to make himself happy.

As Shen Li was looking at these things, Old Master Lu was looking at her with a face full of anticipation.

"Ah Li, what do you think? Don't they all look so good?"

Not only did they look good, but the quality was also good.

It could only be said that Sister Carp was indeed generous. Even though these were just small things, she was still very attentive. It could be seen that she was very particular about the workmanship.

The picture of her on the cover of the notebook that was on the table had her in a fluffy skirt and a gauze hat. She stared at the picture of herself, remaining silent for a few seconds.

“... It’s pretty good.”

When Old Master Lu heard her affirmation, he was even happier. He pulled open the drawer of the desk and chuckled.

“Ah Li, let me tell you, there are even more beautiful ones here!”

There were some that he really liked, so he carefully kept them here.

As he spoke, he took out a transparent acrylic card.

“Look! This is the original copy of your appearance in your showcase of “Embrace of a Star”!”

The little suit that Shen Li wore in that show was simple and concise. The cartoon Ah Li on this card also perfectly displayed that temperament. At the same time, because it was a cartoon image, there was a little crown on top of her head, she looked proud but also a little soft and cute.

“Besides these are also—”

Old Master Lu pulled open another drawer.

Shen Li suddenly saw a golden photo frame from the corner of her eye, which was particularly eye-catching.

She took a second look, and then—

She realized that it was the report card of her previous participation in the national physics competition.

Oh, right, Old Master Lu seemed to have printed it and framed it, but this was indeed the first time she had seen it with her own eyes.

It was even shinier than the picture itself...

At this moment, Old Master Lu also noticed her gaze and said happily, "Ah Li, look, does this frame match your report card?"

Shen Li did not know what to say.

"Old Master?"

Fang Qingyun suddenly walked over.

"You have a delivery."

"I'm coming, I'm coming!"

Old Master Lu turned his head and said to Shen Li, "Ah Li, please entertain yourself for a while first. I'm just going to receive the delivery."

Shen Li nodded and Old Master Lu left.

Shen Li looked at the report card again and soon saw a few similar things beside it.

She looked carefully and found that Old Master Lu had framed everything, including the final results of her exams.

She did not know whether to laugh or cry.

This was really...

Then, she saw that there was something under these things.

She pushed these aside slightly and finally saw it clearly.

Then, her gaze froze.

This was a psychological medical record.

There was a familiar name written at the bottom.

— Lu Huaiyu.

Chapter 998: Saving Ah Li

Shen Li's eyes were fixed on that piece of paper.

This medical record was from a private psychology clinic.

By coincidence, it was Gu Tinglan's.

She lowered her eyes slightly. The noon sun was extremely bright. It shone through the window and fell on her raven feather-like eyelashes, casting a faint shadow beneath her eyelids.

The weather in the Capital at the end of June was already quite hot. However, the blazing and bright light that enveloped her seemed to be separated by something.

She stood quietly, her fingertips having gone cold.

Lu Huaiyu had been to Gu Tinglan's psychology clinic.

The time had been April 16th, the day before his birthday.

What had she done on that day?

She had taken Wen Xiao to LY where the whole team had undergone their first training.

She had returned to Jinshui No. 1 Courtyard with Gu Siyang and had dinner with her first uncle and aunt.

She had brought back the sapphire cufflinks that she had specially gotten made for Lu Huaiyu.

It had been such an ordinary day. On the way back, she had still been thinking about what Liang Su had asked her.

She had said, "Ah Li, does Lu Huaiyu know how much you like him?"

She had not had an answer because she herself was not sure.

However, there was one thing that was beyond any doubt. Of course, she liked him.

Yet, even though she liked him so much, she still had not known that on this day, he had gone to Gu Tinglan's psychology clinic.

Knowing Lu Huaiyu's personality, this was definitely not an ordinary psychological consultation.

And coincidentally, Gu Tinglan was an internationally renowned psychiatrist.

What this meant was almost self-evident.

Shen Li's heart seemed to be tightly gripped by something. The oxygen in her chest seemed to be used up bit by bit, and she gradually began to feel a dull pain.

Stretching out her hand, she was about to take the medical record.

However, just then, the sound of footsteps and Grandfather Lu's happy voice came from outside.

"Ah Li! I just received another prize! Would you like to come and take a look?"

Shen Li withdrew her hand and quickly pushed the few photo frames back to their original positions.

The medical record was once again covered up.

She looked up and saw Grandfather Lu walking in with a delivery box. He smiled and said, "This time, I believe it should be a fan!"

Shen Li's lips curled up. "Is that so?"

Old Master Lu opened the delivery box. Inside was a very old-fashioned round fan. On it, a classical beauty, Ah Li, wearing a Han costume had been printed.

"This is new. It's different from the previous ones!" Old Master Lu did not know much about Han costumes, but it looked good and felt very fresh. "Ah Li, don't you think this is very beautiful?"

Old Master Lu held up the round fan. The style of painting was really strange, but seeing that he was happy, Shen Li nodded.

“It’s very beautiful. You’re really lucky.”

“I am, right? There were only ten winning spots this time!”

Old Master Lu could not put it down.

“Why don’t you take it to show Yunyi and the others?”

Shen Li agreed. Then, she raised her hand to close the drawer and followed Old Master Lu out.

As she was closing the door, she turned to look back. After a short pause, she gently closed the door.

Click.

...

Old Master Lu was very excited to have received a new prize. He walked around the house and showed it off to everyone.

Even the few people who were busy in the kitchen could not escape.

Lu Huaiyu finally came out of the kitchen. He spotted Shen Li standing at the dining table with her head slightly lowered, seemingly lost in thought.

“Ah Li?”

He walked over.

Almost at the moment that she heard his voice, Shen Li raised her head.

Lu Huaiyu stood in front of her, his brows slightly raised.

“What’s wrong? Why do you seem to be in a daze?”

Looking into his eyes which were clear and deep, Shen Li could see the reflection of herself.

Originally, his brows and eyes had been extremely clear, and his entire body had been exuding an untouchable coldness and nobility. It was only when he looked at her, his eyes would always be tinged with gentleness and indulgence.

All of this man’s patience and good temper were probably all only for her.

Lu Huaiyu saw that she had not spoken and that her clear black peach blossom eyes seemed to be covered with a layer of mist. She merely stared at him as he asked with a low smile, “Is it that beautiful?”

Shen Li came back to her senses and averted her gaze. She immediately nodded again as an answer to his question just now.

Lu Huaiyu looked down and saw the hair that she had curled up on her head. Her nose bridge was slender, her eyelashes flickered, and her tender cheeks were white and clear.

She even nodded, behaving very obediently.

Soon, Shen Li raised her head again and said, “Why did Second Brother come out?”

Lu Huaiyu pointed in the direction of the kitchen.

“Grandpa went to show off that small round fan to Mom.”

As he said this, he suddenly thought of something.

“Grandpa said that he took you to see his other prizes just now, is that right?”

Shen Li paused a moment before nodding.

“Yes, we went to Grandpa Lu’s study room. There are quite a lot of decorations.”

Lu Huaiyu had also been lucky enough to have been invited by Old Master Lu in to see it before. Therefore, when he heard Shen Li say that she had gone inside to see it, he immediately knew what was going on.

He remembered that when he had come over earlier, Shen Li had still been in a daze. He raised his hand to gently cup her face and said with a smile, “What, are you stunned?”

Perhaps it was because he had just washed his hands, but his fingertips were still cool.

Shen Li became alert and looked up at him again.

He did not seem to have thought of anything else.

After a moment, the corners of her lips curved up slightly.

“No.”

Fang Yunyi called Lu Huaiyu over and served the dishes so he headed over there again.

Shen Li quietly looked at his back, blinked her eyes, and followed him.

...

However, Shen Li was unable to help in the end. Instead, she was pressed onto the chair by Fang Yunyi.

“How can we allow a girl... the birthday girl to work hard?”

As Fang Yunyi spoke, she directed the other two men in the house as to what to do.

After a lot of effort, everyone finally sat down.

Old Master Lu sat in the main seat, Lu Zheng and Fang Yunyi sat on one side, and Lu Huaiyu and Shen Li sat opposite each other.

Shen Li’s gaze swept across the dining table.

The dishes were very sumptuous, but...

“Ah Li, guess which dish did I make?”

Fang Yunyi looked at her expectantly.

Shen Li looked at the dishes on the table that could almost be described as “distinct” and was silent for a moment.

Even without trying it yet, with just a glance, she could almost clearly identify which one had been prepared by Fang Yunyi.

It might be difficult to tell which one had been made by Lu Zheng and Lu Huaiyu, but this plate of green vegetables with a faint charred color was really easy to recognize.

She said hesitantly, “These green vegetables?”

“These are boiled green vegetables! I did indeed make it!”

Fang Yunyi’s eyes lit up, and she secretly gave Lu Zheng a look as if to show off, ‘What do you think? I told you that Ah Li and I are of the same mind. We are so connected as a mother and daughter, aren’t we?’

She quickly looked at Shen Li with eager eyes and said, “Ah Li, why don’t you have a taste? Or... what about this pan-fried lamb chop?”

Shen Li looked over there.

Oh, she was wondering why some blood was still evident there..

Lu Zheng paused.

“Ah Li, why don’t you try this jiwei shrimp?”

Lu Huaiyu added, “This braised eggplant is also good. Ah Li, don’t you like that a lot?”

Old Master Lu looked at Shen Li and said solemnly, “Ah Li, the jiwei shrimp and braised eggplant are especially nutritious. You should eat more.”

Chapter 999: She Made It Really Delicious

With such a strong hint, it was impossible for Shen Li not to know which one had been made by Fang Yunyi.

Facing Fang Yunyi’s eager gaze, she finally stretched out her chopsticks towards the plate of boiled vegetables.

Fang Yunyi was even more excited when she saw the first dish that she had chosen to make herself.

“Ah Li, what do you think? Is it delicious?”

The atmosphere at the dining table was silent. Everyone’s eyes were focused on her face.

Shen Li blinked slowly and nodded.

“It’s delicious. Thank you, Aunt Fang.”

Old Master Lu’s eyelids twitched.

Lu Zheng wanted to say something but he stopped himself.

Lu Huaiyu paused and helped her pick up some of the braised eggplant.

Fang Yunyi was very encouraged when she heard the praise. “Really? This was my first time cooking this dish!”

Shen Li’s eyes curved as she smiled.

After a moment, Lu Zheng said, “Let me try some.”

As he said that, his chopsticks came down on the plate of vegetables.

Old Master Lu almost immediately followed up with, “Yes, yes, it’s rare to be able to eat food cooked by Yunyi!”

Fang Yunyi was dissatisfied.

“Why are you competing with Ah Li!”

Old Master Lu coughed. “I think Ah Li seems to have lost some weight recently, so it’s better for her to eat more meat! Huaiyu, hurry up and give Ah Li some food!”

Shen Li said, “Grandpa Lu, there’s no need to go through so much trouble. I—”

“I think so as well.”

As Lu Huaiyu spoke, he picked up some Jiwei prawns, peeled them, and placed them on the plate beside her.

Fang Yunyi carefully looked at Shen Li’s small face.

“Oh, right. Ah Li has been taking her final exams recently, right? That means she needs to replenish her nutrition.”

She still needed to learn a few difficult meat dishes!

Shen Li thanked her and picked up a piece of the pan-fried lamb chop.

Yes, other than being burnt on the outside and raw on the inside, there were no other flaws.

Nervously and expectantly, Fang Yunyi looked over at her again.

Then, Shen Li nodded. “This dish of yours is quite delicious.”

Fang Yunyi was greatly encouraged.

“Really?”

But very quickly, she realized something.

“Huh? Wait a minute, Ah Li, how did you know that I made this?”

Other than the boiled green vegetables which she had admitted that she had prepared herself, she had not said anything else!

Shen Li paused and then said, “Second Brother told me just now.”

Only then did Fang Yunyi understand, and she looked at Lu Huaiyu with some disdain.

“But I said that I wanted to give Ah Li a surprise.”

Lu Huaiyu did not say anything.

However, Fang Yunyi did not continue to struggle over this. When she heard Shen Li say that the dish was delicious, she also felt a little curious. She lifted her chopsticks and reached out.

“Speaking of which, I haven’t eaten this yet. I wonder what the taste—”

Lu Zheng snatched away the piece of pan-fried lamb chop before her and took it away.

Fang Yunyi turned her head to look at him in surprise.

“Lu Zheng?”

Why was this person snatching food away from her?

Lu Zheng's expression did not change.

"Whether it's delicious or not, the chef doesn't have the final say. It's up to the diners."

Fang Yunyi was moved by his reasoning.

That was true.

"Then why don't you try it?"

Lu Zheng ate the piece of meat without changing the expression on his face and looked at Old Master Lu.

"Dad, Yunyi's skills have improved a lot. Would you like to try this?"

Old Master Lu's hand trembled slightly.

He had faced a hard time swallowing the previous mouthful of vegetable earlier. Now, this lamb chop, this lamb chop...

He glanced at Shen Li beside him from the corner of his eyes and immediately said, "Okay, okay!"

Aside from the initial tasting that Shen Li initially had, she was unable to get a second bite of the meat and vegetable dishes that Fang Yunyi had gone to so much effort to cook before it was finished by the men from the Lu family.

Fang Yunyi herself did not eat those dishes. Seeing that Shen Li had only eaten a little, she felt rather regretful. However, since Shen Li had said that it was delicious, it could be considered a complete success!

...

After eating, Shen Li cut the cake.

She heard that Fang Yunyi had personally ordered the cake. After having interacted with her a few times, Shen Li could be considered to have some understanding of her now. Therefore, when she heard that Fang Yunyi asking Lu Zheng to help bring the cake over, she had already mentally prepared herself.

However, when she really saw the exquisite and gorgeous three-layered birthday cake, she was still shocked.

Figurines of a small castle and a little princess wearing a gown had been placed at the top. The gown was covered with layers of fragrant rose petals, and placed beside it was finely chopped white chocolate. The extreme colors matched each other very well and were very beautiful.

Fang Yunyi inserted a candle in the shape of the number “19” and Lu Zheng lit it.

Fang Yunyi gently patted Shen Li’s shoulder and said, “Ah Li, quickly make a wish!”

Shen Li looked at the burning flame, feeling momentarily stunned.

Hearing Fang Yunyi’s reminder, she nodded, put her palms together, and closed her eyes.

After a moment, she opened her eyes and blew out the candle.

“Ah Li, Happy Birthday!”

...

Fang Yunyi was very satisfied with her performance today.

She flipped through the group photos of everyone and Shen Li today and said to Lu Zheng, “Lu Zheng, I think I’m quite talented in cooking.”

Lu Zheng paused for a moment and said, “Didn’t you always say that cooking was troublesome in the past?”

“That was in the past!” Fang Yunyi said as she raised her phone to show him. “I just ordered a few cookbooks. I will study them carefully in the future!”

Lu Zheng looked at the books and raised his eyebrows.

“Do you really think you’ll understand them?”

“Of course! You don’t understand. Raising a daughter is different from raising a son! I—”

As Fang Yunyi said this, she caught a glimpse of a glass bottle on the counter next to her, and she suddenly stopped talking.

Lu Zheng followed her line of sight. “What’s wrong?”

Fang Yunyi raised her hand, as her fingertips trembled slightly. She could not believe it.

“I... That’s the rose sea salt that I bought specially to make the pan-fried lamb chops... I didn’t put salt in the dish?!”

The bottle was new and had not been opened yet!

Lu Zheng was speechless.

Fang Yunyi quickly recalled the situation at the lunch table, and she felt terrible.

She had really forgotten to put salt in the dish!

But, Ah Li had even said it was delicious?!

It was no wonder that Lu Zheng and the others had not allowed Ah Li to eat it!

Lu Zheng was quiet for a while before he reminded her, "It's still not too late to return the goods now."

Fang Yunyi was outraged.

She glared at him fiercely, but then she remembered the situation today and felt that she was going to die.

"This was the first time I've cooked for Ah Li!"

How could she make it up to her?!

"Ah Li even ate it... and she said it was delicious..."

Fang Yunyi felt as if her heart had suffered a huge blow.

"No, I have to go and explain it to Ah Li!" She stomped her feet and walked towards the living room.

At this moment, Lu Huaiyu was already planning on taking Shen Li away. Meanwhile, Fang Qingyun was helping to put the gift boxes into the trunk of the car.

The two of them stood together as they chatted.

“Ah Li, it’s fine if you don’t want to eat something or to say that it’s not delicious, you know,” said Lu Huaiyu as he looked at Shen Li, his voice low and gentle.

Shen Li shook her head. “Second Brother, I think Aunt Fang’s cooking is quite delicious.”

Fang Yunyi stopped in her tracks.

Then, she saw Shen Li raise her head to look at Lu Huaiyu, the corners of her lips curving slightly.

“Did I not mention that Su Yuan never cooked for me before?”

Her voice was very soft.

“Aunt Fang’s cooking is really delicious.”

1

Fang Yunyi clenched her hands slightly.

Chapter 1000: Lu Huaiyu, Kiss Me Now

Of course, she knew who Su Yuan was.

1

Before even seeing Shen Li with her own eyes, she had already known many things about her.

That included her years in Lincheng, her experiences in Yunzhou, and her experiences in the Capital and Hong Kong City.

Fang Yunyi suddenly turned around, her head tilting slightly.

Just before leaving, she turned back to take a look before quietly walking away.

...

Lu Zheng was a little surprised to see Fang Yunyi coming back.

“So fast?”

As soon as he finished speaking, he noticed something and his eyes narrowed.

“Yunyi?”

Fang Yunyi lowered her head slightly before taking her phone out.

As Lu Zheng walked over, his intuition told him that Fang Yunyi was not in a good mood at the moment.

Hadn't she gone to talk to Ah Li? Now this was—

Looking at her more closely, he asked in a low voice, “Why are you crying?”

Fang Yunyi turned her face away. “No, I’m not.”

Lu Zheng spoke a little slower. “Yunyi.”

After a short stalemate, Fang Yunyi finally turned her head back to face him.

Her eyes, which were always cool and bright, were now slightly red.

She rarely cried.

Lu Zheng frowned slightly. Just as he was about to ask, Fang Yunyi called out to him.

“Lu Zheng.”

“You know, I was always destined to have a daughter.

“Now, she’s here.”

...

Lu Huaiyu left with Shen Li.

“Would you like to go somewhere to have some fun today?” Lu Huaiyu turned to look at her and asked.

Shen Li shook her head and interlaced her fingers with his.

“Let’s go back to Rongyue Mansion.”

Guessing that she might be tired, Lu Huaiyu nodded.

“Okay.”

Shen Li adjusted her posture, leaned against his shoulder, and closed her eyes.

Lu Huaiyu raised his arm and held her in his arms. He asked in a low voice, "Do you want to sleep for a while?"

Shen Li nodded.

Her mind was in a mess right now, and she needed some time to think and sort things out.

Lu Huaiyu patted her head gently.

"Go to sleep. I'll call you when we get there."

This was different from her previous life.

Shen Li thought about the time when Lu Huaiyu had taken her out of the sanatorium. He had hugged her tightly all the way and told her not to sleep... not to sleep.

What else had he said at that time?

A lot.

From that day to the time when she had gradually felt her body turn cold, he had told her a lot.

Some of it she still remembered, but most of it had been vague and now forgotten.

That was because it had already been very difficult for her to stay awake at that time, and she had only been able to catch a few words from him occasionally.

In the parts that she remembered, he had never mentioned that he had psychological problems.

In her second life, she had made different choices, so many things had gone in a completely different direction from her previous life.

However, as a whole, the relationship between Gu Tinglan and Lu Huaiyu had not changed.

In other words, in her previous life, Lu Huaiyu must have also gone to see Gu Tinglan.

The question was, why?

She had not been able to open the medical record, so she did not know the answer.

But...

There were signs.

In the beginning, Lu Huaiyu had gone to Yunzhou to recuperate and had stayed there for more than a year.

However, there was clearly nothing wrong with his body.

So, other than psychological problems, what else could it be?

He always took a nap in the afternoon, and his biological clock was out of order.

That afternoon in Bai City, he had held her hand and pressed her against the wall. He had whispered and flirtatiously asked her if she was okay, but then he had completely forgotten about it.

..

Before this, she had never thought much about it.

However, when she looked back now, she realized that something was wrong.

She did not know if it was because she was too slow, or whether Lu Huaiyu was too good at hiding things.

When he was with her, except for those few times, he had never shown any abnormalities.

He was beautiful, just like a stunning flower on a mountain.

He was as distant as the snow on a mountain, just like the moon to the world.

Who would think too much about it?

No one would.

All she knew was that Gu Tinglan and Lu Huaiyu were close friends, but she had never thought that a doctor-patient relationship existed between them.

That's right. Gu Tinglan used to fly all over the world and rarely returned to his home country.

But that day, he had suddenly appeared at the birthday banquet of the Cheng family's old master.

At that time, she had only thought that he was going to Lincheng to investigate some things, but she had never wondered why he had not gone to Lincheng directly, but had stayed in Yunzhou for a period of time instead.

He and Lu Huaiyu seemed to have just met at that time, so it was unlikely that he had deliberately stayed in Yunzhou for Lu Huaiyu's sake.

However, if it was for a patient, it was much more logical.

Shen Li leaned against his chest and closed her eyes, her mind full of thoughts.

After a long time, the car slowly came to a stop.

“Ah Li? We’re here.”

Lu Huaiyu called out to her.

When Shen Li opened her eyes, that peerlessly elegant face came into view.

She looked at him with a steady gaze.

Lu Huaiyu smiled as he lifted her up.

“What’s wrong? Are you not fully awake yet?”

Shen Li slowly shook her head.

She had not slept, so how could she wake up?

In Lu Huaiyu’s eyes, this denial was a certainty.

He coaxed her patiently.

“Would you like to go upstairs and sleep?”

Shen Li shook her head again.

She was not sleepy, and she did not want to sleep.

Lu Huaiyu was very patient with her. Seeing her like this, he only thought that the little girl was still half asleep, so he led her out of the car and let Fang Qingyun go back first. He held her hand as they went upstairs.

Shen Li followed by his side without saying a word. She was obedient and well-behaved.

Lu Huaiyu looked at her as he walked.

It was when the little girl was drunk and half-awake that she was the most obedient and soft.

The two of them came to the top floor, and Lu Huaiyu entered the password to enter the door.

He bent down to help her get her slippers.

“Would you like to go to the bedroom to rest? Do you still want to drink some water?”

Shen Li shook her head, but her feet did not move.

Lu Huaiyu thought that she was just acting coquettishly, so he also let go of her. He placed the slippers by her feet and helped her put them on.

She looked at him and suddenly said, “Lu Huaiyu.”

Lu Huaiyu straightened up and was about to take her inside when he heard her and turned around.

Encountering her gaze that was aimed straight at him, he chuckled softly, “Hmm? Does Miss Shen have any other orders?”

He was close at hand.

He was within reach.

The cool smell of cedar lingered at the tip of her nose, almost making her feel dizzy.

It did not matter.

It did not matter what illness it was.

She did not want to ask. If he did not want to tell her, she would never ask.

She just wanted to be sure that this person was fine.

“Kiss me.”

She could hear her own voice speak.

“Lu Huaiyu, please... kiss me now.”