

Pill Maker 211

Chapter 211: I Posted Anonymously

"I handed over the National Quiz Contest notes, which I received with your address under the sender's details, to the Principal without telling him the source. But after what you did today..."

Huo Yao shook her head without saying anything more. Then she straightened up and smiled ambiguously before turning to leave the classroom.

Lu Xia watched Huo Yao's receding back with a pair of widened eyes. There was a bit of fear flickering in them.

It was not hard to find out that the notes came from the Lu residence but how could she give them to the Principal?

However, neither the Principal nor the teacher had approached her in the recent past. This meant that Huo Yao genuinely hadn't divulged her name in front of them. But she couldn't believe that Huo Yao would pass up this perfect opportunity to malign her.

Lu Xia's mind was in chaos. Even though she didn't want to believe what Huo Yao said, she could not help thinking about it.

If Huo Yao did not give the Principal any details, this matter could be considered as finished. But the malicious post just had to appear now...

Lu Xia picked up her phone and logged into the forum. The moment she saw the post, which had now been locked by the administrator, her brain started buzzing.

Lu Xia sat helplessly at her table with a pale face.

All her classmates, who overheard the conversation, turned to look at Lu Xia quizzically.

They could not help feeling curious about how Huo Yao and Lu Xia were acquainted with one another. More than that, they were interested in the notes that Huo Yao mentioned. It all sounded so conspiratorial.

Chang Yingying did not have the self-awareness that she had gotten Lu Xia into trouble.

Instead, she looked at Lu Xia warily and said, "Xi Xia, don't think too much about it. Huo Yao asked for it..."

Lu Xia did not feel like hearing Chang Yingying's voice, so she interrupted her angrily. Pressing her temples with her fingers, she snapped. "Can you shut up and give me some space?"

If not for this dumbass, she would not be stuck in this situation.

Chang Yingying had never seen Lu Xia throw a temper. She bit her lip and spoke so softly that it was only audible to the two of them. "I was the one who posted it on the school forum anonymously. I just wanted to teach her a lesson for you."

Lu Xia closed her eyes with a look of self-ridicule. She had certainly not done her any favors. Instead, she had pushed her into the teeth of the storm.

"Enough. Say no more. I get it," replied Lu Xia impatiently.

Chang Yingying's lips parted, wanting to tell her that she had approached their homeroom teacher regarding it. However, she changed her mind when she saw how angry Lu Xia looked at the moment.

Forget it. She would tell Lu Xia about the matter when she was in a better mood.

*

After leaving the Rocket Class, Meng Ying kept talking nonstop as she headed back to their class with Huo Yao.

Huo Yao suddenly stopped and turned to look at Meng Ying. "Did you bring your phone with you?"

"Huh?" Meng Ying stopped walking and turned to look at Huo Yao. With a distracted air, she said, "Uh huh."

Huo Yao took her phone and asked for a password before signing in to the school forum without hiding it from her.

Meng Ying assumed that she wanted to look at the comments. She bit her lip and said, "These are just some fence-sitters who are desperate for gossip. Ignore them."

She had read only a few of the comments and became infuriated seeing people getting unruly and dissing Huo Yao.

"Mhm," replied Huo Yao gently as she looked at the screen and moved her fingers nimbly.

Before long, she returned the phone to Meng Ying.

Chapter 212: Made Plans

Meng Ying held her phone and said, "The post was getting out of hand. I saw the administrator locking it... Huh? Why is it unlocked now?"

Huo Yao started walking ahead indifferently.

**

Out of the blue, Huo Yao received a text from Min Yu: [Are you free after school?]

Huo Yao contemplated for a few seconds before she replied quickly: [I think so.]

[Old Mr. Yi concocted two new medicinal dishes and asked if you were free tonight to taste them.]

Huo Yao smiled and typed back with no hesitation: [I'm free!]

Studying and eating delicacies were the two things in the world that she could not say no to.

Min Yu: [See you at the school entrance.]

Huo Yao raised her brow and wrote 'okay' before putting her phone away.

*

Huo Yao spotted Min Yu's low profile black car with Zhuo Yun standing by the door, when she walked out of the campus. The moment Huo Yao came closer, Zhuo Yun greeted her. "Hello, Miss Huo."

His voice sounded respectful.

Huo Yao nodded gently.

Zhuo Yun opened the backseat door for Huo Yao. After she got in, he shut the door.

Min Yu looked sideways at Huo Yao with a gentle smile on his face. "Very punctual."

Huo Yao raised her brow and looked at him. "I should be on time since we made plans."

Min Yu sat with his hand on his knees. He told Zhuo Yun to start driving before chatting casually with Huo Yao. "How did that contest of yours go?"

He was referring to the National Quiz Contest.

Huo Yao leaned against the window lazily. "It was okay. I made it into the nationals."

"Congrats."

Huo Yao waved her hand. "It's nothing."

Her voice sounded a little cocky.

"What contest?" asked Zhuo Yun curiously while he drove.

"A pretty boring quiz contest," replied Huo Yao casually.

Min Yu's lips twitched when he heard what she said.

Ever since Huo Yao gave him those incense sticks, Zhuo Yun kept trying to improve their relationship. He paused before asking her again. "What's it called? Can I find it online?"

Huo Yao told him the name of the contest.

Zhuo Yun picked up his phone and searched it when they stopped at a red light. After learning roughly what the contest was about, he was at a complete loss.

Did he graduate too long ago, or did he not know things any better? How could Huo Yao say that a contest which offered a spot in Tsinghua University was boring?

"The nationals probably aren't taking place in this city, right?" Min Yu tapped his fingers on his knees from time to time.

"Yup, the next level will be held in the capital." Huo Yao slanted her head and looked at Min Yu without the slightest awkwardness.

Min Yu detected Huo Yao's gaze and a little uneasiness emerged on his typically cold face. He looked down before asking her softly. "When?"

Huo Yao pressed her lips and shared in a candid manner. "Next weekend."

Min Yu paused briefly before he said, "I happen to be going to the capital next week. If you're free, I can show you around."

Huo Yao thought about her fourth older brother's situation and waved her hand. "Probably not. I might not have the time."

Min Yu did not insist. "We can talk again about it closer to the day."

"Okay." Huo Yao turned to look out. "Aren't we going to that restaurant?"

"No, we're going to Old Mr. Yi's house," replied Min Yu indifferently.

Huo Yao's eyebrow shot up but she didn't say anything.

The car finally pulled up outside the Yi residence 40 minutes later.

The Yi residence was not some luxurious European styled bungalow. Instead, it was a grand residence built in antique Chinese style. Huo Yao stood at the entrance door and felt as though she had been transported back to the olden days.

Chapter 213: She Had Passed Up The Perfect Opportunity

It seemed that this family has been medicinal cuisine experts since generations.

Looking at the residence, a problem suddenly crossed Huo Yao's mind. She turned to look at Min Yu solemnly. "I didn't bring any gifts. Will I get chased away?"

Min Yu was completely tickled by this young woman. He shook his head and replied gravely. "Don't worry. Old Mr. Yi doesn't care about formalities."

Huo Yao touched her nose. Just as she was about to speak further, Zhuo Yun came over with two boxes of gifts after parking the car.

The butler led them into the main hall courteously. "Young Master Min, Old Master Yi is cooking in the kitchen. Have some tea first. He'll come over soon."

Min Yu nodded to him politely and the butler took his leave.

Huo Yao sat on the mahogany chair and raised her head to glance around. She complimented the surroundings genuinely. "The place is pretty interesting."

Min Yu poured some tea for Huo Yao and pushed the cup towards her. "Old clans have a lot of history. The Yi family's ancestors were palace medicinal cuisine chefs. Although times have changed, they still command an unshakable status in the city."

Huo Yao picked up the teacup and took a sip. Suddenly, she said sadly, "Why does it sound like I passed up a perfect opportunity?"

Min Yu looked at her.

Huo Yao coughed uneasily. "Nothing"

Before long, Old Mr. Yi walked up to them, clad in an apron with the freshly prepared medicinal dishes. An energetic old man followed him.

The old man was none other than Old Mr. Pei.

Old Mr. Yi placed the food on the table and greeted Min Yu before pointing to Huo Yao and telling Old Mr. Pei beside him. "This is the talented little lass I was telling you about."

He turned to look at Huo Yao and beamed. "This old geezer sells Chinese medicine. Just call him Old Mr. Pei."

Huo Yao's eyes landed on Old Mr. Pei. Although he sold Chinese medicine, judging from his aura, it probably was not as simple as that. She stood up to bow politely. "Hello, Old Mr. Pei. I'm Huo Yao."

He stroked his beard and nodded kindly to Huo Yao. "Hello."

Then he turned to look at Min Yu. "Looks like you're recovering well."

"Mhm. It's all thanks to the medicine you gave me," replied Min Yu.

Old Mr. Pei shook his head and smiled.

"Stop standing around. Time to ttry my new dishes. They will lose their texture if they turn cold," said Old Mr. Yi before turning to look at Huo Yao with his eyes gleaming particularly brightly.

Huo Yao did not hold back. She picked up her chopsticks and placed a piece into her mouth.

"How is it?" asked Old Mr. Yi quickly.

It was clearly apparent that he could not wait to hear her feedback.

Old Mr. Pei looked at Huo Yao in slight surprise. Old Mr. Yi rarely admired anyone. It was Old Mr. Pei's first time seeing him so impressed by someone so young.

Could she really be gifted in pharmacology?

Huo Yao put down the chopsticks and raised her brow. "Can I speak honestly?"

Old Mr. Yi's lips twitched. "I hate it when people lie to me."

Huo Yao nodded seriously. "Fine. If you add 100 grams of oriental raisins and 4 grams of musk kernel powder, it will be better."

"Oriental raisin and musk kernel, huh?" Old Mr. Yi touched his chin and went into a deep thought.

Huo Yao nodded before picking her chopsticks to eat unhurriedly.

Old Mr. Pei's eyes narrowed slightly when he heard Huo Yao's suggestion. After some time, he suddenly turned to look at Huo Yao in disbelief.

Chapter 214: She Wasn't Interested In Selling Medicine Or Cooking

“Young lady, it seems that you have a deep understanding of Chinese herbs. Is there a Chinese physician in your family?” asked Old Mr. Pei in astonishment.

The two men had discussed the various Chinese medicines in detail when Old Mr. Yi was coming up with this dish. Hence, Old Mr. Pei was keenly aware of the dish’s ingredients and its effects. At that time, he felt that the concoction was really flawless.

However, after he heard the ingredients which the young lady suggested, he found them to be a brilliant addition. She had plugged in all the minor flaws in the dish.

Someone who could notice such imperceptible deficiencies must be a Chinese medicine master.

Moreover, she had identified the issues after tasting the dish just once.

Huo Yao raised her head and replied unhurriedly. “Nope.”

The look of amazement in Old Mr. Pei’s eyes intensified. “But you look like you’re well-versed in Chinese medicine.”

Huo Yao pursed her lips and smiled before she replied without skipping a beat. “I know a little about Chinese medicine from reading some books. You are the real expert here.”

Old Mr. Pei stroked his beard as he looked at Huo Yao with a clear sense of disbelief. Would she not be considered an ultimate genius if she could come up with such precise insights after merely reading some medical books?

Old Mr. Yi stayed quiet for a minute. Then he shifted his chair closer to Huo Yao and blinked. “Little lass, are you really not interested in being my disciple?”

Huo Yao looked at Old Mr. Yi, who was clearly acting cute. Her lips twitched. Did old men these days like to behave in this manner as well?

How could he act adorable all the time?

“I’m really not interested in cooking,” rejected Huo Yao with a touch of desperation in her voice.

“Then what are you interested in?” asked Old Mr. Yi.

He seemed like he was prepared to give her whatever she wanted.

Huo Yao said nothing. Suddenly, Old Mr. Pei intervened sneakily. “What about Chinese medicine?”

Old Mr. Yi’s face went sullen. He turned to glare fiercely at Old Mr. Pei. “Ptooeey. How can you let a little lass like her sell medicine with you? Do you think it’s appropriate?”

Old Mr. Pei raised his chin and chuckled before he said, “Then is it okay for her to become a cook?”

“Leave now. It was my biggest mistake to invite you over today.” Old Mr. Yi could not stand it when Old Mr. Pei undermined him so blatantly.

Huo Yao looked at the two old men who were on the verge of breaking into a fight. She held her forehead with one hand and replied bluntly. “I’m sorry. Other than studying, I’m neither interested in cooking nor selling medicine.”

They did not have to fight over her so hard!

-_-||

Old Mr. Yi secretly sighed in relief. Then he turned to glare furiously at Old Mr. Pei.

It was all this old geezer's fault for stirring up trouble!

Old Mr. Pei looked at him, speechlessly: "..."

Zhuo Yun rubbed his nose as he witnessed these two highly respectable elders getting into an argument because of Huo Yao. His opinion of Huo Yao underwent a change again.

He thought about all the information which he had dug up about Huo Yao previously. Other than her dramatic birth history, she really was an ordinary girl who grew up with just her grandmother in a small town.

There was nothing special about her.

But, if she were really an ordinary middle school student, even if Min Yu was the one who brought her here, these elders would not have scrambled to take her in as their disciple, right? Also, judging from their attitude, they seemed to be rather serious about it.

It was absolutely mindboggling.

Something was clearly amiss, but he could not figure out what it was!

Chapter 215: Sometimes, You Shouldn't Know Too Much

Min Yu and Huo Yao left the Yi residence after dinner and gave Old Mr. Pei a lift on the way back.

Unexpectedly, Yi Lianfan came back to the Yi residence this evening. He happened to see his grandfather seeing some guests out when he came in.

He stood in the courtyard for a while and watched from a distance as those people left. For a second, he thought that he spotted someone familiar. However, they had already gotten into the car when he wanted to get a closer look.

Before long, Old Mr. Yi walked over. "You punk. Why did you come back out of the blue?"

Yi Lianfan shifted his eyes away from the car. His typical cold expression became warmer when he spotted his grandfather. "Didn't you text me about you coming up with two new dishes? I came over to sample them for you."

Old Mr. Yi would usually be touched to hear this, but all he did tonight was sneer. "What for? All you do is eat without giving me any real suggestions."

Yi Lianfan was speechless. "..."

Old Mr. Yi walked towards the house as he said, "I wanted to teach you how to cook, but you keep throwing the same excuse at me, saying you need to study. What's so great about studying?"

Even the little lass he wanted to take in as a disciple kept talking about studying. What was going on with youngsters these days? Were they not interested in learning skills and making a livelihood for themselves?

Each time Yi Lianfan's grandfather nagged him, it gave him a headache, so he changed the subject without replying. "Grandpa, where did those guests come from?"

Old Mr. Yi raised his brow and looked to the side. "Why? Do you know them?"

Yi Lianfan narrowed his eyes. "No, I don't. I only asked because we rarely have guests."

"Don't get nosy. Sometimes, you shouldn't know too much," said Old Mr. Yi in a serious tone.

Yi Lianfan replied with a nod of his head. "Got it."

Old Mr. Yi raised his hand and patted him on the shoulder. He said somewhat sadly, "You will take over the Yi family one day. Although I won't be around forever, I will help you take care of everything. You should do what you like while you have the time."

"There you go again. It's getting windy outside. Let's go in." Yi Lianfan held Old Mr. Yi's hand and helped him inside the house.

Old Mr. Yi shook his head and smiled without arguing with his grandson.

**

Since Old Mr. Pei was in the car as well, Huo Yao did not speak much. Instead, she leaned against the car window and rested her eyes.

Huo Yao opened her eyes when her phone pinged with a notification.

It was a text from her fourth brother asking what time she was coming home.

Huo Yao looked outside before looking at Zhuo Yun, who was talking to Old Mr. Pei. She contemplated for a few seconds and then said to Zhuo Yun, "Just drop me at the intersection up ahead."

Zhuo Yun instinctively looked at his boss through the rearview mirror.

Min Yu turned to look at Huo Yao. "Do you have somewhere to go?"

Huo Yao replied gently. "Yes. Don't worry, I can take a cab from here."

Min Yu looked at her but did not insist any further. "Take care."

Zhuo Yun had already pulled up by the roadside. Huo Yao waved her hand before opening the car door. "I'm off."

Zhuo Yun did not start the engine immediately after Huo Yao got off. Instead, he waited for her to hail and get into a cab.

Min Yu raised his brow. Zhuo Yun was getting smarter.

"That young lady..." said Old Mr. Pei, eventually, while sitting in the front passenger seat.

Chapter 216: Old Mr. Pei Would Like To Have Your Number

Zhuo Yun looked at Old Mr. Pei and said instinctively, “She was the one who...”

“She’s just a normal student.”

Before Zhuo Yun could say that Huo Yao was the one who gave them the incense sticks, Min Yu’s indifferent voice interrupted him from the backseat.

Zhuo Yun glanced into the rearview mirror.

Old Mr. Pei did not notice Zhuo Yun’s reaction and said, “The little lass knows Chinese medicine intensively. If she studies it, I’m sure she will do well.”

Min Yu’s cold eyes were looking outside the window. A long while later, he said, “Maybe.”

Old Mr. Pei hesitated for a second but then he firmed up and looked at Min Yu. “I have a favor to ask.”

“Go on.”

“It’s rare to encounter youngsters with good judgment about Chinese medicine these days. Young Master Min, is it possible to give me the young lady’s phone number?”

Old Mr. Pei looked a little embarrassed when he uttered these words. He wanted to say this when they were at the Yi residence, but he restrained himself out of fear that Old Mr. Yi might get angry with him.

Zhuo Yun’s lips twitched. This was really developing into large scale undermining.

Min Yu went quiet briefly before he said, “I’ll ask her.”

“Okay.”

Min Yu took out his phone and texted Huo Yao.

[Old Mr. Pei would like to have your contact number.]

Huo Yao replied not too long after.

Medicine Pill: [Okay.]

Min Yu raised his head and looked at Old Mr. Pei and said, “Will WeChat do?”

Despite Old Mr. Pei’s advanced age, he had kept up with the times. Naturally, he was well-acquainted with WeChat. He immediately beamed and said, “Yup. Just get her to add me. My WeChat ID is my phone number.”

Min Yu sent Huo Yao Old Mr. Pei’s phone number before long.

Medicine Pill: [Done.]

Old Mr. Pei took out his phone. A red icon badge was showing on his address book, which he tapped on. He quickly verified Huo Yao’s friend request and added her to his WeChat. Then he sent her a cute emoticon and wrote ‘hi’.

Huo Yao's lips twitched when she saw the emoticon which Old Mr. Pei had used. However, she sent him the same emoticon back out of courtesy.

They chatted casually for a bit and then called it a day. Huo Yao got out of the cab at the spicy hot pot restaurant, which was located just before their estate.

Huo Yao ordered two servings of the hot pot for a takeaway and went next door to buy cake. Then she headed happily to her estate with all the food.

Before long, she opened the door and entered the apartment.

"Ye-a-oo, you're back," said Song Ning in a muffled tone as she lay on the couch with a beauty mask on her face.

Her father was sitting there, watching the television. His eyes lit up when he saw spicy hot pot and a cake in her hands. "Did you bring me supper?"

Huo Yao placed two bowls on the dining table and replied bluntly. "Nope, it's not good for you to have supper, considering your figure."

Huo Jinyan lowered his head to look at his belly. "..."

This was absolutely hurtful.

Huo Yao looked at the living room, but Huo Xiang was nowhere in sight, so she reckoned him to be upstairs in his room. She took out her phone and texted him.

Before long, Huo Xiang came downstairs after receiving the text.

Huo Yao had already poured the hot pot into two bowls. One was spicy, while the other was non-spicy.

Huo Xiang came over and sat down in front of her. She placed the non-spicy portion in front of him. "Brother Xiang, eat up."

"Haven't you eaten yet?" asked Song Ning casually after removing her mask and standing up.

Chapter 217: Guarantee Full Recovery

Huo Xiang sighed inside his heart. The way his mother said it made it sound as though she was his stepmother.

Huo Xiang raised his head and wanted to speak up but was beaten by his father's next set of words.

"Honey, it's redundant to ask. He's a grownup. Can't he take care of his meals?" Huo Jinyan shook his head.

"I was just asking, okay?" Song Ning glanced at her husband. She headed back to the room, patting the mask on her face.

Huo Xiang: "..."

Ever since he moved back a few days ago, he was unsure whether it made any difference to his condition or not, but his heart certainly got wounded repeatedly.

Huo Yao watched her fourth brother wallow in self-pity. He looked adorable. She consumed the soup before turning to place the cake in front of him. "This bakery's strawberry cake is quite good."

Huo Xiang was just going to say that his little sister was the best.

"???"

Why on earth did she get him strawberry cake?

Did he look like a girl to her?

Huo Yao went back to eating her spicy hot pot and failed to notice the look on her fourth brother's face.

Huo Xiang picked up his chopsticks sadly. He let go of all inhibitions since he was famished. He placed a fish ball into his mouth and began eating ravenously resulting in the oil from the fishball splash on his clothes.

This was getting really awkward.

Huo Yao coughed but didn't look at him.

They ate quietly until Huo Xiang recalled something and looked at his little sister. "Yao, were the meds that you gave me very expensive?"

Tong Yu told him that those experts claimed that the medicine was priceless and wanted him to ask his little sister for the source.

"Not too much," replied Huo Yao casually.

After she finished her food, she leaned against the chair with a satiated look on her face. "I'll give you another bottle in a few days. I guarantee you'll recover fully after taking it."

Huo Xiang was stunned. He instinctively clenched the hand resting on the table and stammered. "Full... full recovery?"

Huo Yao blinked at him before getting up to clear the dishes. She smiled and continued to speak while walking towards the kitchen. "Brother Xiang, don't worry. I'm here."

Huo Xiang looked at his sister from behind. His mind was in a tizzy. He wanted to ask her what she meant, but a voice in his head told him to not overthink her words.

Huo Yao came out after doing the dishes to see Huo Xiang immersed in deep thought. She didn't probe him on it and only said, "Brother Xiang, I'm going upstairs."

Huo Xiang gathered his thoughts and looked up. "Oh, sure."

After Huo Yao went upstairs, he walked over to the living room to sit down on the couch. He looked at Huo Jinyan perplexedly. "Dad, do you think Yao sometimes sounds really... mysterious?"

"Mysterious?" Huo Jinyan narrowed his eyes.

Then he picked up a cushion on the couch and hurled it at his youngest son. "Your little sister even brought supper for you. How can you think that she's weird?"

Huo Xiang's lips twitched. He had clearly said 'mysterious'. Why did the word change to 'weird' while rolling off his father's tongue?

He was seriously starting to believe that his father was perpetually waiting for a chance to pounce on him.

Huo Xiang scratched his head and said, "Wasn't Yao raised by her foster grandmother in a small town since young? In theory, her friends should be limited to classmates and neighbors from that town, right?"

Huo Jinyan glanced at him. "What are you trying to say?"

Huo Xiang went quiet for two seconds before uttering softly. "Didn't she give me a bottle of meds? I checked it with an expert. As per him, the pills are priceless and super rare."

Chapter 218: Don't Be Biased

Huo Jinyan immediately recalled how his wife had almost stopped complaining about her migraine these days.

Although he was curious about where his daughter bought the medicine from, he did not want to quiz her if she was unwilling to volunteer the information.

Everyone had secrets and the right to their privacy. Moreover, their daughter had not lived with them for 17 years. After they finally got reunited, all he wanted was for them to be together, so it was unnecessary to get suspicious about other matters.

Huo Jinyan patted his belly gently and said, "Will your little sister do anything to harm you?"

Huo Xiang was taken aback at the question and automatically shook his head in negative.

"That's what matters, right? There's no point in being curious. She will tell us about it when she's comfortable." Huo Jinyan was pretty broadminded in his outlook.

Thinking about his eldest son, Huo Jinyan said in a serious tone, "Trust is important in a family. Distrust among family members will bring more pain than any hurt inflicted by outsiders. Xiang, I don't want you to have any bias or misconceptions about your sister."

Huo Xiang rarely saw his father speaking so gravely. Despite his surprise, he replied solemnly. "Yao has a good temper and cute personality. Why would I have a bias against her? Even if she has any shortcomings, she is still my little sister."

"Good!" Huo Jinyan paused and then corrected him. "Your little sister doesn't have any shortcomings. She's a million times more filial than any of you boys."

Huo Xiang choked. "It was just a figure of speech."

Huo Jinyan glanced at him. Huo Xiang was not allowed to badmouth his sister even metaphorically.

$$r(\ulcorner \text{ } \wedge \text{ } \urcorner)_n$$

“Oh yes. Why are you so free lately? Don’t you have to go to work?” asked Huo Jinyan. From the sound of it, he did not like having Huo Xiang around.

Since Huo Xiang was already accustomed to his father's incessant hints about moving out, his skin had gotten a lot thicker. He nodded and said, "No, I don't. The company has allowed me to take a long break."

Huo Jinyan narrowed his eyes and asked him. “You’ve been acting weird recently. Did something happen?”

"Nothing. I just wanted to take a breather," replied Huo Xiang without skipping a beat.

Huo Jinyan did not carry on probing.

In hindsight, if the medicine his daughter gave Huo Xiang was priceless, then what about his?

Huo Jinyan touched his chin, lost in his thoughts. Then he stood up and went to his bedroom.

The next day.

Shortly after Huo Yao reached school, an announcement was made through the PA system, telling all teachers and students to gather for the assembly. Since the assembly was usually held on Mondays, everyone found it strange that a second assembly was happening this morning.

Soon, the students and teachers assembled on the track. The Vice-principal was usually the one in charge of the assembly, but this time, the Principal stood on the podium.

Huo Yao and Meng Ying stood in the last row of their class.

"I have a feeling that we're here because of yesterday's post," whispered Meng Ying to Huo Yao, leaning forward.

Huo Yao glanced at the podium and shrugged her shoulders. "Maybe."

"Did you look at the forum last night?" asked Meng Ying.

"Nope." Huo Yao lazily lowered her head and tapped her toes drearily against the ground.

“Didn’t you go and see Lu Xia yesterday? Someone posted your conversation with Lu Xia onto the forum. Many people have started wondering how you are related to Lu Xia.”

Meng Ying was behaving like a complete busybody and continued to chatter in a whispered tone. “Lu Xia’s surname used to be ‘Huo’. Then she found out she was swapped at birth and changed her surname after finding out who her biological parents were. Sister Big Shot, don’t tell me you... you were the other baby?”

Although it was quite the plot twist, it was not entirely impossible.

Chapter 219: What The Principal Had To Say

Huo Yao raised her brow and then smiled at Meng Ying. In a lukewarm voice, she said, “Congrats, you got it right.”

“You mean... PFFFT, I got it right?” Although the thought had crossed Meng Ying’s mind, it was completely different to hear it straight from the horse’s mouth.

She had taken Huo Yao and Lu Xia to be merely relatives when they bumped into each other at the school entrance previously. Never did she think that Huo Yao was the baby who got swapped at birth with Lu Xia.

Meng Ying touched her nose. “So Lu Xia can’t stand seeing how good your grades are and keeps framing you to make it impossible for you to stay at No.1 Middle School. Oh wow! I always thought Lu Xia was a poser. But now I’m certain that she’s a pretentious bitch.”

Despite reuniting with her rich parents and severing ties with her foster parents, she was still so jealous that she kept messing with her foster parents’ daughter.

“What can I say? I’m simply too outstanding,” said Huo Yao proudly as she tucked some hair behind her ear.

Meng Ying was caught completely off guard and received another blow. “...”

Was that right?

Huo Yao raised her hand and placed it on Meng Ying’s shoulder when she saw how dumbstruck Meng Ying looked. With a smirk, she turned to face the front. “Pay attention to what the Principal has to say.”

The Principal made no small talk and got straight to the point. Sure enough, he wanted to talk about the post which accused Huo Yao of cheating during the National Quiz Contest.

Even if the school wanted to suppress it, it was already too late since the post had caused a furor online. In any case, the Principal had no intention of suppressing the news after seeing the various comments yesterday.

He had personally invited Huo Yao to join No.1 Middle School. However, her name kept getting smeared repeatedly ever since the school term started. It was no longer merely slander but had become a matter of challenging the school rules and culture.

Since the school had a long glorious history, anyone capable of sitting at its helm as principal undoubtedly would have excellent decision-making skills. The current principal was nothing less than a force to be reckoned with.

After the Principal spoke for 20 minutes, almost all the students involved in adding fuel to the post started to break out in cold sweat and felt ashamed of themselves.

Chang Yingying felt as though a heavy rock had fallen on her heart. She was in a daze, and her mind kept ringing non-stop since she was the one who had posted it. The Principal announced that he wanted to catch the culprit behind the slander and make an example of that student.

Although she had posted it anonymously, she could not help feeling scared.

If the school wanted to investigate it, she was bound to end up getting exposed.

Chang Yingying's eyes landed on Lu Xia, standing in front of her. She could no longer restrain herself from tugging Lu Xia's sleeve.

Lu Xia was equally frustrated. She moved away a little when she detected Chang Yingying coming near. The usual warm expression had dissipated from her face.

Chang Yingying was so frightened after hearing what the Principal said that she failed to detect Lu Xia's sullen expression. "Xiaxia, what should I do now? The Principal wants to punish the person who posted it."

Lu Xia squeezed her hand and said coldly, "Why didn't that cross your mind before you did it yesterday?"

"I... I just wanted to teach her a lesson on your behalf," replied Chang Yingying softly.

"Enough. Stop using me as an excuse. Was I the one who told you to do it?" said Lu Xia infuriatingly.

Lu Xia did not sleep a wink last night because of that damn post. She was terrified that the situation might escalate. The moment she heard about the unscheduled assembly, she knew that things were going to go downhill.

Chang Yingying bit her lip in disbelief. She had never seen Lu Xia being so curt and impatient.

Chapter 220: Courting Disaster!

Lu Xia immediately realized that she had lost control of her emotions. She inhaled deeply and did her utmost to sound gentle before she said, "Didn't you post it anonymously? I don't think the school will end up finding out the real culprit."

She felt that the school was not about to hire hackers to check Chang Yingying's IP address just because of a post.

"But the Principal said he was going to investigate thoroughly. Moreover..." Chang Yingying did not dare finish her sentence.

Lu Xia frowned. She had a feeling this dumbass must have done something else behind her back. "Moreover what?"

Chang Yingying hesitated for two seconds before gritting her teeth to continue. "If it was just an anonymous post, I wouldn't be so worried... I... I told the homeroom teacher about it."

Lu Xia's blood started to boil when she heard this. She was at a loss for words to describe her emotions now. "Are you stupid? You had already posted it online. Did you have to tell the homeroom teacher too?"

Lu Xia pressed her forehead and raised her head. "You're really courting disaster."

Chang Yingying was on the verge of tears now. "I felt indignant and upset after hearing how your foster sister made your father pull connections to obtain those notes and cheat during the contest, so I reported it to the homeroom teacher."

Lu Xia recalled how she purposely mentioned the National Quiz Contest notes to Chang Yingying in the hope that she would spread it among the other students and help make Huo Yao's life in school a little harder.

But she did not think Chang Yingying would end up becoming a burden and work against her instead.

"Xiaxia, what should I do now? I have a feeling that I will get called to the office after the assembly." Chang Yingying's face had gone ghastly pale.

"There's nothing that I can do. You were the one who did it, so you better pray hard that nothing happens," sneered Lu Xia.

Chang Yingying staggered back and instinctively wanted to grab Lu Xia's arm for support, but Lu Xia had already turned away. She found the distant look on Lu Xia's face as though she wanted nothing to do with her.

If Lu Xia did not complain to Chang Yingying, why would she impulsively want to seek justice for her?

Yet Lu Xia wanted to push all the blame on Chang Yingying at this moment.

Chang Yingying felt stifled in her heart.

Lu Xia's eyes went cold after she turned away. She quickly took out her phone from her pocket and sent a text.

[Dad, Huo Yao ended up telling the Principal about the notes after Ziming sent them to her. I might get punished by the school. I can't afford to get my school records tainted. Is there anything you can do?]

**

After the assembly ended, Chang Yingying got called into the office by Wei Mingzhe, just as she had dreaded. The Principal was waiting for her inside.

The Principal's imposing aura and Wei Mingzhe's stern questioning made Chang Yingying buckle under pressure. Even though she wanted to deny the accusation, she crumbled and confessed real soon.

Wei Mingzhe had believed Chang Yingying when she reported the incident to him yesterday because of how confident she had sounded. After Chang Yingying told them the real story behind it, it was as good as getting his face slapped in front of the Principal again.

He had taught many students, but none of them were as prejudiced as her.

“Leave! Tell Lu Xia to come here.” Wei Mingzhe did not feel like seeing Chang Yingying any longer and even his voice sounded cold.

Chang Yingying looked at Wei Mingzhe before looking at the Principal. Her eyes were already red from crying and were filled with regret. “I’m sorry, Sir. I didn’t think things would go overboard. Please don’t expel me from school.”