

## Sweet Love 2551

### Chapter 2551: Return Fire (2)

The curvature of Yun Shishi's lips stiffened somewhat.

She originally thought that, once she made her stand clear, this woman would feel greatly humiliated and stomp off, but that did not happen.

On the contrary, her husband's old flame had nothing but apologetic smiles and kind words, which made it difficult to pick faults with her.

Her aggrieved face and forced smiles were flawless as if she had suffered a lot of grievances. She looked so pitiful that all who saw her would feel sympathetic.

*She's making me appear caustic, isn't she?*

Mu Yazhe frowned and opened his mouth finally, "Rong Xuan, stop fooling around!"

The other woman noticed the term he used on her at once.

Compared to how he used to address her affectionately as 'Xuanxuan', using her full name sounded strange to her ears. He changed the way he addressed her now, which only pulled them further apart.

Her shoulders shuddered, and as her thick eyelashes blinked momentarily, a teardrop suddenly rolled down one of her eyes uncontrollably!

"Brother Zhe..." She surged forward in agitation and could barely maintain her usual elegant and decent manners as she exclaimed with a bitter smile, "Regarding what you told me last night, I heard you loud and clear! I thought and cried through the night and finally sorted out my thoughts. I used to hold hopes and anticipation about us, but now that you have your happiness and fulfilling marriage, all I can do is give you my heartfelt blessings. I really wish you two the very best! I have no hidden motives, but your wife seems to be very hostile toward me. That's not what I want to see!" Choking back her tears, she continued after a pause, "I'll be settling in Italy henceforth, and you, too, will have a life of yours. This is the only chance for us to catch up; who knows when's the next time we will see each other? I just want to make this reunion as a tribute to the memories of the past; do you really want to deprive me of this opportunity?"

When Yun Shishi heard that, she clenched her fists in hot fury.

*This woman is shameless to the core!*

However, she could not figure out what this woman was conceiving in her mind!

Why did she still obsessively pester her husband when her words had made their stand clear?

*Is there an ulterior motive?*

She could not think of a reason no matter how much she racked her brain, though!

Nonetheless, after taking a look at the man's already somewhat impatient expression, she suddenly curled her lips into a smile and said, "Do you want to tag along with our wedding photoshoot today?"

"Definitely!" A smile broke through the other woman's wet face. "You'll need help with your photoshoot. I can help lift your skirt from time to time, fix your makeup, or something else!"

"Alright, then. Since you insist on coming along, we'll go together. I don't have a problem with that!"

She might appear to give in, but in reality, she had a plan of her own!

Regardless of what games a woman might want to play, be it sowing discord or fanning the flame, by appearing to take a step back, she would, in fact, be letting the woman come face to face with stark reality!

*No big deal; let's go together.*

*We'll put up a lovey-dovey show!*

She had never liked demonstrating any affection for her man publicly, for she deemed it as pretentious, but since someone else wanted to watch, she would do so, then!

The hotel arranged for two cars specifically for them: One was for the luggage and could fit in three persons, while the other was for carrying people. Thus, the two cars combined could hold up to six people.

It was just the right arrangement for them.

### **Chapter 2552: Mother and Son Facing the Same Enemy (1)**

The protagonist offered to be in the same car as her rival. Obviously, she was still guarded against the other and was not comfortable with her being alone with Mu Yazhe or any of her kids.

Rong Xuan gladly accepted it.

Both women sat in the back seat, while Youyou sat in the passenger seat. His mother made sure he was buckled up before setting off.

After a long deafening silence inside the vehicle, Rong Xuan took the lead to break the ice.

"Shishi, don't you and Brother Zhe need some private space?"

"What do you mean?"

"I see you guys always sticking together, won't you get tired of this?"

"Not really," replied the actress. "Both of us are usually very busy at work except at night. Each of us is busy with our own business, but as long as he has some free time, he will push aside all his schedules to keep me company."

"There's less personal space, isn't there?"

"He doesn't need personal space."

Rong Xuan's face stiffened for a moment, and then she quickly switched topics. "Speaking of career, what kind of work do you do?"

"I'm an actress."

"Actress?!" Her rival was really startled to hear that. "So you are a superstar!"

"I'm no superstar. I act because it's my interest."

She said softly, "The domestic entertainment industry is a pandemonium. You must take care not to get involved with a bad company. The showbiz is a place of moral filth and debauchery. Brother Zhe takes this value seriously, so you must watch out for yourself!"

The actress sniggered inwardly.

Her rival, under the pretext of giving her some goodwill advice, was actually attacking her with curt remarks!

Looking at the face of the other woman, who could not be more hypocritical at that moment, she merely gave a half-smile and replied, "Thanks for the reminder."

"Shishi, how did you and Brother Zhe meet?" The other pressed on curiously, seemingly with a hidden agenda. "Do you still remember how you two first met?"

As soon as the words left her mouth, the protagonist's face changed.

*The first time we met?*

To be precise, the first time she met him was under a very fortuitous circumstance. She was fired from the company and was carrying her stuff back home when she was accidentally bumped by his approaching car.

That was the first time she had met him.

Although, strictly speaking, their true first meeting was really at a beach house.

That was on a bed which felt foreign to her.

At that time, he was her employer, and she was the contracted surrogate mother hired by his family.

The price was clearly stated—she sold her body for five million yuan just so she could give birth to a child for the Mu family.

As she was not suitable for artificial insemination, they opted for natural conception, instead.

At first, she was extremely resistant; however, all pieces had been set in place and there was no turning back.

She vaguely remembered their first encounter. She was lying in bed, with a piece of red silk covering her face, and then she heard the approaching footsteps from outside the room; the door was pushed open, and along with the cold evening breeze, he swaggered in and sat at the head of the bed.

At that time, he was probably examining her carefully!

He felt nothing for her then; it seemed that he was only performing an ‘examination’ befitting of an employer.

The next thing she knew, without any pleasantries, he asked her to spread herself for him.

She wrinkled her brows at this juncture: *What a terrible first encounter!*

If it were possible, she would not want to recall it.

### **Chapter 2553: Mother and Son Facing the Same Enemy (2)**

If it were possible, she would not want to recall it.

Her silence prompted the other to ask out of curiosity, “Don’t you remember your first encounter?”

“My memories are vague since it happened so long ago,” she simply said.

“Speaking of which, I can’t really remember how we first met, either. All I know is that he’s been by my side since I was young.” Rong Xuan began speaking enthusiastically.

The Rongs and the Mus had some connections, so when they later lived near each other, the two kids ended up growing up together and becoming childhood friends.

“I really didn’t expect him to get married at such a young age, though!” She hesitated a little before suddenly asking, “Was it a marriage of convenience?”

“Marriage of convenience?”

“Yeah!” She nodded while smiling guilelessly at the actress. “He’s the successor of the Mu Group and heir of Disheng Financial Group, after all, so his wife must be a rich missy of a prestigious family. May I know which family you’re from?”

“The Yuns.”

“The Yuns?” She fell into deep thoughts. “I don’t think I’ve ever heard of any prestigious families with the surname ‘Yun’ in the capital.”

“That’s because I wasn’t born with a silver spoon in my mouth.” Yun Shishi added calmly thereafter, “I have an ordinary background—nothing too prestigious.”

“You’re a commoner?!” exclaimed the lady out of the blue, which earned her a displeased, frowning look from the other.

“Oh, no; I didn’t mean that...” The lady hurriedly offered her apologies. It was unknown, though, whether she had truly accidentally made a faux pas or was just deliberately making a fuss about the actress’s social status. “I’ve adopted the candid way foreigners speak after living abroad for such a long time, so I accidentally misspoke. Please don’t take it to heart.”

“I’m indeed a commoner,” replied the actress bluntly, “but is that something to be so surprised about?”

"I'm not trying to belittle you," Rong Xuan hurriedly explained. "I just found it unbelievable because, according to their family customs, any Mus are forbidden from marrying commoners."

"Forbidden?"

Yun Shishi noticed her emphasis on the word.

"Yeah! The bigger and more influential the family is, the more they care about well-matched marriages. The Mus are the most prestigious family in the capital with their wealth and long history, so they are very particular about Brother Zhe's fiancée since he's the heir and all. They have high expectations of his wife's family background and status and will even dig into her ancestry. Even though I migrated to Italy later on, I still know some stuff about their family in those few years I was with them. I heard that Brother Zhe's grandpa insisted on picking a girl of unknown origins to be his fiancée despite the protests from others within the family. I think her name is... Mu Wanrou or something."

Yun Shishi's eyelids twitched at that.

"Their marriage never happened in the end, though." She proceeded to pose her question in a bland tone. "Are the rich that particular about having well-matched marriages?"

"Yes. They pay great attention to that."

All of a sudden, Rong Xuan began telling her about her ex. "While I was still studying in college, I used to have a boyfriend who came from an ordinary background. He's here in Italy to further his education and would use his spare time back then to work in a fast-food restaurant, earning a miserable ten bucks per hour, but you know what? A lipstick of mine can easily cost a full day of his wage. With our family background being worlds apart, it's only natural for our values to differ, too. I love going shopping; any piece of clothing I buy can worth an entire month of his salary."

### **Chapter 2554: Mother and Son Facing the Same Enemy (3)**

"The clothes mean nothing to me, but that money is enough for his one-month expenditure."

She paused for a moment before continuing to speak with a smile. "There's not much surprise in the relationship with a commoner. The money he scrimped and saved to last through one semester is only enough for me to buy a powder foundation. One can kiss goodbye to surprises in such a bland and unexciting relationship; I even had to accommodate to his values, views on money, and outlook on life! Even though we loved each other, our relationship ultimately could not stand up against the cruel reality."

The actress could not help but be stunned by what she said.

"That's why I'm so envious of you, Shishi. I can tell that Brother Zhe truly dotes on you, for he's willing to accommodate your lifestyle and values despite having always been living in the lap of luxury! He truly does love you so."

Youyou, meanwhile, kept mum throughout their conversation. Inwardly, though, he found what the woman had said to be ludicrous.

*Is that how relationships should be?*

*Based on materialistic desires and values?*

*Be it dating or marriage, do women only want beautiful designer clothes, expensive bags, dazzling jewelry, and money? Could all those truly satisfy their desires?*

*If only love is so simple...*

*The truth is, as long as the couple willingly works hard to integrate into each other's life, they can develop enough chemistry in their relationship.*

*Love can break all rules and stereotypes and can overcome anything and everything.*

*Even though daddy was indeed born with a silver spoon in his mouth, there's no such thing as him needing to yield to mommy just to accommodate her. In fact, he appears more than delighted to do so! It isn't because he's so noble but because he loves mommy enough to do that.*

His mother sniggered at this time. "So what are you driving at?"

With wide eyes, Rong Xuan hastily explained, "Nothing at all! You're overthinking it again. Please don't mind me; I'm just too straightforward."

"Oh? I thought that you were hinting to me that I, with my lack of background and status, am not worthy of him."

"No way!" She let out a few dry laughs. "That's never crossed my mind. On the contrary, I think you're marvelous."

"Marvelous?"

"I think you should be commended for your courage. After all, you're really impressive for daring to break the age-old traditions and stay true to your belief in love. I admire you for that."

Yun Shishi did not comment on it right away. Instead, it was her son who suddenly turned his head and, with a meaningful smile, declared, "Aunt Xuanxuan, I admire you, too."

The young lady's heart burst in joy when she heard that. Thinking that the boy was about to sing her praises, she lifted her head elegantly and asked, "Oh? What is it that you admire me for?"

"Your thick skin," replied the lad while smiling elegantly at her.

"Cough—"

Yun Shishi choked upon hearing her son's words.

Rong Xuan's smiling countenance stiffened right away as she gritted her teeth in anger.

"Pardon?"

He continued rattling on nonchalantly. "Isn't it so? You don't seem to know your limits and keep clinging onto my parents like a leech. Don't you find yourself an eyesore?"

The lines on her face hardened as her facial muscles twitched nonstop.

*What is this brat saying?!*

*How dare he call me a leech?!*

#### **Chapter 2555: Mother and Son Facing the Same Enemy (4)**

"Oops! Then again, it's only natural that you lack such awareness! Your shamelessness is what I admire you for." The little guy paused, then added in disgust, "My parents finally have the chance to spend some quality time with each other, but you just have to come clinging onto them like a third wheel; how annoying!"

Rong Xuan was thoroughly antagonized by now!

No one had ever insulted her to this extent, let alone by a mere child!

Tugging her lips back, she scoffed. "Thick skin? Shameless? What poor upbringing you have! That's understandable, though. Your mother is only a commoner, so what superior upbringing could she possibly provide you? Even though you have inherited Brother Zhe's good looks, you're the same as your mother on the inside!"

A pin drop silence ensued, followed by a loud, resounding slap that came sans a warning!

The actress had delivered a tight slap across her face.

"Rong Xuan, I'm warning you: Mind the way you talk to my son!"

As she held her stinging cheek, she stared at the other wide-eyed in disbelief and fury!

"You slapped me?!"

The other merely retorted, "You deserved it for speaking so vulgarly."

Furious, the young lady raised her hand and swung her arm to slap her back, only to be stopped in the nick of time. The mother of two kids had deftly caught her arm and gripped it so tightly that she was unable to break free despite her fierce yet vehement struggle.

She gnashed her teeth in exasperation. "You'd better unhand me right now!"

"And you'd better behave yourself!" Yun Shishi leaned toward her and gave her a bland, expressionless smirk. "What? Aren't you all smug over being his childhood friend? If I'm a commoner who deserves commendation for my courage, what are you? You know very well that he now has a happy family, yet you're still clinging to him; just what motives do you have?!"

"Yun Shishi!" yelled the lady out of indignation. "You don't deserve Brother Zhe!"

"I don't?!"

"You're just a commoner. Don't you know the rules of the rich? They're forbidden from marrying commoners! Who do you think you are? On what basis are you worthy of him?! I wouldn't have said

anything had he married some other rich missy, but a commoner like you? Why did he have to marry you?!" screamed Rong Xuan, who was all flushed in the face, as she poured out her resentment hotly.

At the mention of her sore spot, she began speaking in a brash and unfiltered manner. "Didn't you say that you're an actress? How clean and decent women from the showbiz could be? I bet you resorted to trickery and enchantment to bewitch him into falling for you!"

*Smack!*

Once again, Yun Shishi slapped her sans hesitation.

Hot, grievous tears poured down the woman's face as she raised her voice, yelling in anger, "Why the hell did you slap me?!"

"Because of your uncouth mouth!" She then grabbed the lady's collar and pulled her close before enunciating frigidly, "Let me tell you this: In this world, no other woman but me is worthy of that man, nor are they more worthy of him than I do! Hear that?"

Those words were spoken in a forceful and firm manner, and the actress, at this moment, was looking all charming, haughty, and mesmerizing.

### **Chapter 2556: Mother and Son Facing the Same Enemy (5)**

"Waaaah!" The boy's eyes glinted in excitement as he clapped his hands, cheering, "Bravo, mommy! That's marvelous! Go teach this wicked woman a lesson!"

He then glanced at the tear-streaked woman and snorted. "Weren't you feeling very smug and proud earlier? Your father is merely an Italian-Chinese entrepreneur, whose business is barely hanging in there ever since that financial crisis five years ago. Based on how he's making a loss every year, your family's glory won't last long and you, the so-called missus of a prestigious family, will soon turn into a pauper in a few years' time!"

Rong Xuan stiffened at that. She cast an oblique look on the boy, her eyes widening in disbelief, as she asked with trepidation, "...H-How did you know that?!"

He cocked a brow and answered carelessly, "Why wouldn't I? Oh, I also know that, even though your father remains a well-known entrepreneur on the surface, his business, because of a faulty capital chain, has undergone a few failed rounds of financing. He didn't even manage to get much financing in Round A. Hmm... I wonder how long more can his debt-ridden company survive for?"

Shock robbed the woman of her speech.

As Youyou slowly scanned her face, he suddenly smirked, then added, "As for your mother... Are you really so naïve to think that no one would know how much price she had paid just to climb to her current position? Hah! The political world has always been fraught with dirty and shady dealings. Your mother has had such relations with countless political dignitaries in order to come this far."

Meanwhile, the young lady was in a state of consternation, for what the boy said were all facts.

The Rong Group used to be an influential enterprise in Italy and even made impressive results in the New York Stock Exchange ten years ago. The Chinese-owned enterprise held a certain level of prestige in this country itself!

Alas, the physical industries had been hit hard by the financial crisis five years ago, and this naturally included the Rong Group.

Back then, the company was on the brink of bankruptcy, with many investors pulling out their investments. They only managed to salvage the situation by selling off their family assets to invest the money into the company and make up for the shortage of funds.

Their revenue, however, could not cover their expenditure, and their profit and loss statement was tragic. They were losing hundreds of millions by the year and they had almost sold off all of their family assets, but there was no turn for the better.

What was even more frightening was that the Rong Group today was heavily in debt.

The banking industry held a rather pessimistic outlook for the Rong Group's future. Their newest round of financing, which was worth just several million, was as good as nothing.

By the looks of things, it would only be a matter of time before their company wound up folding.

This was also part of why she was so enthusiastic and delighted to meet Mu Yazhe again.

She was hoping that, even if things did not work out well between them, she could at least borrow some of the Mu Group's resources to help her family's business tide over this critical period.

As for what Youyou had mentioned about her mother...

She was too ashamed to even talk about it.

The only reason she managed to work in the embassy was entirely through her mother's connections—connections that the latter amassed through dirty dealings.

The political world was dark and dirty, and one had to resort to all means in order to climb up to a higher position.

Nevertheless, these were inside secrets!

Outsiders had no idea about them, so what more of a young, little boy?

*Did Brother Zhe look into this matter?*

*Even so, there's no reason for him to share his investigation with his seven-year-old son!*

**Chapter 2557: You are just asking for trouble.**

Yun Shishi, meanwhile, was rather astonished to hear such startling news, but the appalled expression on the lady's face told her that what her son had said must be pretty much true. The puzzled her did not know where the lad got that insider information from, though.

The boy coldly commented, "Aren't you so clingy toward my father because you're hoping that he, for the sake of your past friendship, will help the Rong Group tide over this crisis using the Mu Group's resources?"

"Nonsense!" The guilt-ridden missy tried to refute his words. "I don't have such thoughts in mind! What nonsense are you spewing?!"

An elegant smile graced his face as he spoke mockingly, "You know it yourself whether I'm spewing nonsense or not. It doesn't matter to me whether you're exposed or not. All I'm concerned about is: What right do you, a soon-to-be pauper, have to laugh at my mother's so-called 'commoner' status?"

"You're being ridiculous!" Looking all livid, Rong Xuan spat, "The Rong Group isn't a house of cards as you described!"

"Oh? Then, let's wait and see."

*The Rong Group isn't a house of cards as I described?*

*All I need is to resort to a little trick and pressure, and that company will face bankruptcy in no less than two months!*

*She and her family will end up as paupers and laughingstocks when that time comes.*

*They will, of course, also no longer be able to survive in Italy, though there's also no chance for the debt-ridden family to flee the country.*

*They will end up as nothing but a joke!*

Last night, while in the study, he had tasked his trusty subordinate, Agent Lin, to investigate the Rong Group. The results he received, however, made him frown.

*Trust her to keep up with appearances by behaving as if she's a lofty and haughty rich missy when her family is already on the edge of downfall.*

*Either way, I won't let her off so easily!*

He, thus, pulled a little, dirty trick on her by instructing Li Hanlin to make a call to Italy's Embassy of the Republic of China. The removal of Liang Qingyi, Rong Xuan's mother, from her post would be processed urgently within two days, and the official notice of her dismissal would be released three days later.

Once her mother was removed from her position, the young missy's political career would also soon come to an end.

*The nerve she's got to bully my mother.*

*Just she waits! I'll make sure she and her family end up bankrupt!*

*Let's see if she can still act so smugly when that time comes.*

Like the evil, little gentleman he was, he flashed her a gracious smile and said magnanimously, "Still, if you apologize to my mother now, I may consider sparing the Rong Group."

"How absurd!" Rong Xuan laughed it off, not at all believing that a child would have such capability to do that.

Besides, there was no way that she would eat the humble pie and apologize to the actress. Her self-esteem would not permit her to do so, much less her pride!

"Hmph, then you're just asking for trouble." He then turned around and, in fluent English, ordered the driver, "Throw this woman out of the car."

The woman, who understood what he said right away, screeched, "I dare you to!"

"You don't think I dare to do it? Pity, for I'm a man of my words!"

The driver immediately hit the brake, then he alighted to go pull Rong Xuan out of the car. Her struggles were useless against the male driver, and she was dragged off the car in no time.

Caught off guard, she fell to the ground like a heap of mess, while the driver headed back to his seat and closed the door. By the time she lifted her head, the car was already driving off with Youyou elegantly waving his hand at her from an opened window.

### **Chapter 2558: I am the first to disallow it!**

Amid his mother's dumbfoundedness, the boy started to grumble, "Mommy, I don't understand how you could be so courteous to her still. A b\*tch like her—"

He stopped suddenly, covered his mouth with his hand upon his realization of his poor manners, and hastily apologized, "Oh, this won't do! I mustn't swear; I have to be prim and proper."

"Pfft!"

The woman burst out laughing.

"What's so funny?" The boy gave his mother a scornful look.

Yun Shishi could not suppress her curiosity. "What did you want to say?"

"What I wanted to say is, you should be rough with a bad woman like her! There's no need to be merciful at all," replied the lad.

"Eh, I'll remember that!" She could not help caressing her son's small head as she smiled at him indulgently. "Youyou, you're really my knight in shining armor."

"That goes without saying! Of course, I'm your knight in shining armor." Cocking a brow, the lad felt smug. "I'm the first to disallow anyone who tries to bully you."

"Still, how did you learn about the Rong family's demise?"

The boy snorted. "It's easy to find that kinda information with a simple check."

"I was still wondering why she's adamant on pestering us, so it turned out that she's doing it for her family."

Her son replied, "No powers are big enough to save that family, nor do I want to be implicated in their mess. The Rongs are struggling to hold on, hoping for a silver lining, but it's all in vain. It isn't going to get better for them! Sooner or later, the family will declare bankruptcy."

She listened in confusion; all she knew was that the Rongs were sinking and without hope!

"Mommy, don't let a bad woman spoil your mood. You're out to have fun and be happy. C'mon and give me a smile!"

The mother-son pair looked at each other and smiled. The woman, especially, broke into a charming and moving smile when she heard her son's words, her eyes arching merrily.

When they arrived at the location, Yun Shishi got out of the car with Youyou in her arms. The man walked over to them for apparent reason. The other woman had already called him to complain, but he did not blame his younger son and, instead, smiled dotingly at him.

"What exactly happened earlier?"

The younger boy was the first to stand up and righteously accused, "That bad woman bullied mommy; I couldn't stand it, so I asked someone to throw her out of the car!"

His father narrowed his eyes and stared penetringly at him. Just when he thought that his father would scold him, he saw the man smile warmly at him, instead, and heard him say with relief, "Well done!"

Standing at the side, his older brother laughed. Trying to hold back his guffaw, he asked, "Earlier, in the car, that bad woman called daddy and complained that mommy had bullied her. Mommy, do you know what daddy said?"

"Hmm? What did he say?" The woman glanced at her husband and was rather curious on how the man expressed his stand at that time.

Her older son supplied, "Daddy told her that she deserved it! Hahaha!"

Youyou nodded approvingly and praised his father in a serious voice, "Daddy did well!"

His sibling gleefully described the scene he observed while dancing around, "Did you know how much that woman had cried over the phone? It's enough to shake the heavens and earth! In my heart, I was thinking that she deserved it! She deserved to be thrown out of the car because she bullied mommy!"

He could not help teasing his brother, "Mu Yichen, you've grown up finally. The idioms are rolling off your tongue!"

His brother blinked at him mischievously and replied, "Yes! I've been well trained by you!"

*Well-trained...*

Their mother had to cover her face in shame.

*Isn't that term rather misleading?*

### **Chapter 2559: Good and Bad News**

After two days' of picture-taking, the family returned home.

Upon reaching home, the protagonist immediately rushed to report to the production crew. The moment she stepped on set, her assistant could not wait to gush about what had happened during the time that she was away.

"Shishi, there's bad news and good news; which do you want to hear?"

"Don't keep me in suspense and tell me both!"

"Alright, then. I won't speak in riddles!" The young woman lowered her voice after a pause. "Have you heard? A few days ago, Lu Jingtian committed suicide by jumping off a building."

The actress was stunned for a moment, her eyes widening in astonishment as she stared at the other woman in disbelief.

"What?!"

"You heard correctly, and this isn't fake news. Lu Jingtian's memorial service was held just a day before yesterday, and many celebrities attended it."

"Why did she kill herself for no reason?"

"Why did she kill herself for no reason?" Yun Shishi could not help feeling suspicious about this latest happening. "Something's fishy. Didn't her surgery go very well? Plus, before I left the country, I heard that she had safely passed the critical period, so why would she want to end her life?"

Her assistant shook her head blankly. "This news came very suddenly, and at that time, you were abroad. Naturally, we didn't want to tell you about it for fear of disturbing your holiday mood. Also, it's not much of a thing for us. Qin Zhou has already expressed tribute through your Weibo account."

She still found this news unbelievable and said hushedly, "I still find this fishy. Lu Jingtian was strong in nature, and since the surgery went well, why did she do that to herself?"

"She's too headstrong, I supposed?" Mu Xi took a breather before adding, "Did you know? I went to the hospital with our manager and head producer to deal with the aftermath of her attack and coincidentally, I saw her disfigurement..." At this juncture, the young lady took a deep breath and then shook her head regretfully. "It's too tragic... That fire ruined her face for good! It's not too much to say that her body was gone, too. She suffered different degrees of burns throughout her body. The most serious was her pair of legs, where the muscles got badly damaged. There's a great deal of pain during the rehabilitation. Probably because it's too painful to continue living like that, she chose to end her life!"

Yun Shishi's chest tightened at the thought.

She could never understand what kind of pain that was. After all, she was not standing in the victim's shoes.

Her foster father came to her mind suddenly.

*He must've been in great pain, too, right?*

She could not help feeling heartbroken.

After her twin brother brought her foster father back to the Gong family, he contacted her and told her that the old man had been sent to his family's medical center; after which, what would come next would be a long recovery period. Due to the secrecy of the whole affair, he could not video-call her but assured her, nonetheless, that he would keep her posted on her father's recovery.

Only then did she put her mind slightly at ease.

"At the memorial service, I saw Director Lu's hair turning white overnight because of grief. Actually, I didn't feel good about it, either. Although, in the past, I quite hated the young actress, now I only feel sorry for her. After all, the dead should still be honored; plus, one couldn't help lamenting the loss of a young life..."

The actress sighed and replied, "I didn't think she'd end her life so hastily."

#### **Chapter 2560: Li Xiang'er is banned.**

"I couldn't figure it out as well. Since she's not even scared of death, then why was she afraid of living?"

Yun Shishi frowned all of a sudden and replied, "The truth is, there are times when living is more frightening than dying."

Her assistant was taken aback.

"This is the bad news. What about the good news?"

Yun Shishi deliberately avoided this mood-dampening topic.

The deceased had departed, and she did not want to probe too much into it.

Her young assistant responded with a mischievous smile, a mysterious look hanging on her face. "Guess what happened during the few days you were not in the country?"

"I'm asking you because I don't know!" The actress gave a playful shove. "Alright, quit keeping me in suspense. Out with it, alright?"

"I'll tell you a great piece of news now... Li Xiang'er has been banned!"

She was not too surprised to hear that, though she was curious to know how it happened.

"How did that happen?"

"A few days after you left the country, a website exposed the dirty laundry of that copycat. Besides that, a video clip has also started to circulate on the Internet. Li Xiang'er became infamous because of it!"

The more she listened, the more queer the matter seemed to her, and she immediately urged her assistant to continue. "Why are you still keeping me in suspense? Don't tease me anymore. What is the video clip about?"

"It's a clip of Li Xiang'er being raped... Tsk tsk. It's revealing!"

It turned out that, not long ago, a set of Li Xiang'er photos and video of her being raped were continuously circulated on the Internet.

The formidable netizens captured screenshots of these images, and after comparing the photos of Li Xiang'er, they confirmed that the woman in those photos and video clip was the actress-wannabe herself!

Li Xiang'er's nose tip had a beauty mole, which coincided with the image of the woman in the video. Soon after, the woman in the series of sleazy photos was also quickly verified to be Li Xiang'er herself!

In addition to Li Xiang'er, there was also a man in these photos.

This man was quickly identified by the netizens. He was one of the top executives in EASE, Huang Jinxiu.

Some people in the industry suspected that Li Xiang'er had offended the mafia, so she was kidnapped, drugged, and raped. The affair was recorded and used against the woman. Perhaps she did not follow their instructions in antagonizing the mob, so the video was released on the Internet to be circulated viciously.

Li Xiang'er's name had completely become the bane of the entertainment industry.

Such a scandal aroused the attention of the central media group pretty quickly, and with an announcement, Li Xiang'er and her company, EASE, were completely banned. The company was also being investigated and many in the top management were apprehended. This matter was quite a big thing until it was hushed by the officials.

The first time Mu Xi found out about this matter, she ran to Qin Zhou to drill for more information but was scolded by him, instead. "Do your work and stop meddling in other people's affairs!"

The manager's attitude, however, confirmed her suspicions.

"I guess that this scandal must be Gu Xingze's doing."

"How's that possible?"

The assistant saw Yun Shishi's face of disbelief and was surprised at her ignorance. "Don't you know? The Gus are the number-one mafia family in the capital, and many agencies in showbiz are under their control. Of course, Huanyu is the exception, but other companies like Chengguang, UME Entertainment, and Xingyu Entertainment are all controlled by that family. It just takes one command from the superstar to dispose of that model!"