

Chapter 941: Dog-eat-dog

Each day would pass as she waited and waited for someone to save her, without giving up hope. She wanted to survive, and she wanted to leave the place alive. She constantly reminded herself to fight for her survival. No matter what happens, I must not be afraid, and I must not fall asleep...

Suddenly, a knock echoed from the other side of the door.

Yan Huan sneakily peeked at the door, while remaining completely still and quiet.

After all, it would be a useless struggle. No matter how much she begged or pleaded, the chance of a positive outcome would still be nil.

They would never let her go.

A man entered the room and walked toward her, before stopping in front of her. Yan Huan simply glared at him expressionlessly, displaying no emotions in her ambiguous eyes. However, she managed to see the man's face, obviously battered and riddled by scars of old age and passing years.

When he was young, his face could surely rival the current popular idols. Even now, he was still an extremely attractive middle-aged man. In his past life, he was the Su Qingdong that dominated the Sea City. Now, he was simply a lackey of the Ye family, guarding this meager space and being constantly oppressed by them. He was the Su Qingdong who was a loser and a failure.

He lowered his head and scanned over her with an indifferent expression, without any intention of releasing her.

Yan Huan smiled bitterly to herself, as she knew very clearly that Su Qingdong would never free her from her restraints.

"Why are you here?" Suddenly, a shrill and unpleasant voice rang across the quiet room, as someone asked the question tersely.

Zhu Xianglan ambled over with a darkened expression on her face. Then, she pointed at Su Qingdong and asked menacingly, "Su Qingdong, what're you trying to do? Tell me, are you trying to free this sl*t?"

Su Qingdong swiped her hand away annoyingly and replied, "You're becoming more and more unreasonable."

"I'm unreasonable?" Zhu Xianglan's piercing voice reverberated shrilly through the suffocating air.

"Su Qingdong, how dare you say I'm unreasonable? You did so many evil things as well!"

"I did many evil things?" Su Qingdong sneered sarcastically and replied, "Zhu Xianglan, why don't you enlighten me who actually did those evil deeds? Who made me drunk and let me sleep with my niece. How dare you blame everything on me now?"

Zhu Xianglan was startled by his rebuttal and fumbled backward, unable to refute any of his accusations. After all, she was the mastermind behind all of these, and she did all of them simply to save her

daughter. However, what Su Qingdong did almost caused their daughter to die, all for his illegitimate child who was now dead.

As the thoughts flooded her mind, she swiftly stood up and walked past Su Qingdong to stand in front of Yan Huan. Her glaring eyes were poisoned with intense, unfathomable hatred and malice.

“Why, are you thinking of setting her free? She’s the cure to saving your daughter’s life; do you want to see her die? She’s the only child and successor of the Su bloodline. If my Ranran’s gone, the Su family’s bloodline would forever be extinguished!”

Su Qingdong’s brows furrowed so tightly it hurt his eyes, but suddenly, he let out a wicked sneer. He was laughing and mocking at Zhu Xianglan’s appalling naivety, as he retorted, “Do you actually think you can bring her here without any consequences or causing any disquiet? Do you think they wouldn’t find out by now? Who do you think the Lu family and the Lei family are, do you honestly think they are that dumb?”

If he had not cleaned up the mess, Zhu Xianglan’s evil plot would have been discovered long ago.

An inexplicable feeling of helplessness suddenly swept over Zhu Xianglan, as she realized that the man had seen through her entire evil machinations. Could it be that Su Qingdong knew about everything that she had done, right from the very beginning?

“Su Qingdong, you better not meddle in my business.” Zhu Xianglan gritted her teeth and said threateningly, “If you reveal even a fraction of my plan, I will cut all ties with you.”

“Don’t worry.” Su Qingdong narrowed his eyes spitefully. For the first time in his life, the wife that he had married for so many years suddenly felt so unfamiliar and distant, she could not even comprehend his intentions.

“Ranran is my daughter too. It’s not just you who wants to keep her alive. Do you think I want to watch her just die?”

“Stop jabbering these insincere sweet talk to me.” She sneered fiercely, “If you really treated her as a daughter, you wouldn’t cherish that wh*re like a treasure. Great, now it’s my Ranran who will be caring for you when you are weak and old, instead of that cursed child. The child is born all right, but too bad he’s now dead!”

Su Qingdong’s expression turned completely grim and dark. He raised his hand, wanting to hurt her. As he stood there, engulfed in fury, he stared daggers at her with widened eyes. When he recalled the little child that was once in his embrace, a pang of grief and bitter pain gripped his heart. Before his beautiful child had even reached one year old, his precious little life was stolen away, leaving him forever.

“You want to hit me?” Zhu Xianglan thrust her face forward, egging him on as she yelled, “Hit me! I dare you to hit me!”

“Unreasonable!” Su Qingdong contained the urge to slap her with all his might, and simply turned around and left. He feared that his fuse would run short if he remained any longer, and his compulsion to slap her would overpower his reason.

However, when he arrived at the exit, he heard a loud slap echo from behind him. It was undeniably the sound of a slap coming into contact with a person's flesh, loudly and painfully.

"You uncivilized wh*re! You're just a sl*t like your mother! You deserve to die young!" As she finished speaking, Zhu Xianglan landed another hit on the helpless woman's face, berating and mocking her as she did so.

Su Qingdong left the room hurriedly with massive strides. It was none of his concern who Zhu Xianglan was hitting; she was not his daughter after all.

After the two painful slaps, Yan Huan's face grew numb and her spirit was thoroughly shattered.

"If I leave here alive, I'll..."

She opened her misty eyes and said in a raspy voice, as though her throat was bleeding in pain. She etched Zhu Xianglan's demonic act into her skull, reminding herself to never forgive the wretched woman and to hunt her down if she made it out alive. She would make the Su family pay a terrible price, murdering all their descendants and wiping every one of them from the Sea City forever. She would torment and hurt her so badly, Zhu Xianglan would wish she was dead instead. She wanted to personally cut her flesh and make her pay back for the blood they pilfered from her, the pain they inflicted on her, and her emotional sufferings of being separated from her loving ones.

"Can you even survive?" Zhu Xianglan mockingly patted Yan Huan's swelling cheeks from the previous assault, as she jeered, "Do you think I'm dumb and will just let you walk out of here alive?"

"After you've saved my Ranran, don't worry." Zhu Xianglan evilly tapped her face again and said menacingly, "I'll send you to the afterworld to meet your dead mother."

When she finished speaking, she raised her hand to ruthlessly pinch and twist every inch of Yan Huan's body. She immensely reveled in watching Yan Huan's terror-stricken expression in pain. It felt as though she was torturing the woman from before, who had always been suppressing her and overshadowing her, forcing her to forever live in shame.

However, I heard that the woman has died. Great, it's so wonderful! No matter how much money she had or how beautiful she was, I'm the one who has the last laugh! Even my daughter would be stronger and live longer than that cursed child of hers!

They even have the same blood type.

She's clearly born to save my Ranran!

Chapter 942: Missing Mother

Yan Huan gripped both of her hands tightly and eventually, that was the only thing she could do while she lay weakly. She was powerlessly enduring the pain that others had brought to her, wrecked her, humiliated her because now she was neither human nor on the verge of death.

At that moment, she felt like her past life recurred, causing her to age swiftly, withered rapidly, and emaciated all of a sudden. She even felt the flesh and blood on her losing little by little. Her skin was dehydrated, all the moisture was lost and had caused her to age in the blink of an eye.

As the saying goes, blood is a part of the human body.

Blood is essential for the heart to stay alive while blood is the reason behind the warmth of a human body.

Blood was forcibly withdrawn from her body little by little and transferred into the body of a woman that she would never want or be willing to save.

She would save and give her blood to anyone in this life, but would never do the same for Su Muran.

The door outside cracked open gently. At this juncture, from the first time of being terrified but now, she was completely numb to the feeling. She did not even bother to open her eyes until an ice-cold hand was placed on her face. The hand was retrieved but soon after her face felt a surge of pain along with the sound of a slap.

She opened her eyes and stared coldly at the woman that appeared more like a ghost in front of her.

“There is no one in this world that can ever save you.”

Words that spat out of Yan Huan’s mouth were like a curse from her.

Exactly, there was no one that could save Su Muran. Regardless of whose bone marrow she would receive, eventually, she would die due to the same sickness like her past life. This was the punishment that God had given her which could equally be treated as a punishment to the Su family.

Su Muran’s pupils shrank as she extended her hands to pinch Yan Huan’s face. “I hated your face the most. Aren’t you capable of everything, the international best actress? Where are your excellent acting skills? Tsk, look at how you are now, looking like a piece of rotten meat, lying down ready to be torn into pieces as I please.”

“Don’t worry.” She leaned in, ferocity still hanging on her sunken face.

“I will drain out all your blood and live your life.”

Yan Huan turned away her face and did not want to say anything further. It was up to God’s will to decide whether she would live or die, but for Su Muran, it was destined that she could not live long.

She believed that the existence of natural order of things in this world, not that there was no retribution, instead, the time had not come yet.

“It’s time for the operation.” Zhu Xianglan was getting impatient. She might go crazy if she had to wait any longer because the Su Muran in her eyes was weaker day by day just like a flower losing its color all of a sudden.

Su Muran’s pale face had Zhu Xianglan wondering if she was still the beautiful, outstanding daughter of hers or the daughter that brought her pride.

She did not want her daughter to continue to be like this so this operation must be performed as soon as possible, one more day of delay meant one more day for Su Muran to suffer the pain and a step closer to meeting the grim reaper.

The doctor flipped through the recent medical report and stated, "It's about time for the operation. The operation can begin anytime because Ms. Su's body is already adjusted to the most suitable condition and the donor is at her best for the extraction of bone marrow."

However, the doctor still needed to have a word with Zhu Xianglan.

"Mrs. Su, there are two ways of extracting the bone marrow, the former is by detaching while the latter is by direct extraction. The person will experience less harm by detachment, but if it's to preserve the quality, direct extraction would be better, but the pain would be extremely unbearable..."

"Extraction, of course, I choose direct extraction."

Zhu Xianglan had never treated Yan Huan as a human. That woman's daughter will have to pay for the pain that I felt. Who cares if Yan Huan is alive or dead? It would be better for her to die or else I will have to make her dead instead.

Originally the doctor wanted to persuade Zhu Xianglan to change her mind, but she looked firm about her decision, so the doctor did no further persuasion.

Yan Huan grabbed tightly onto the edge of the bed as her skinny fingers were already filled with scars and her grasp was still hard. The corner of her lips was bitten by her until it was hard to be recognized.

Suddenly, excruciating pain hit her again, she forcefully banged her head onto the bed, but several people pressed her down and then a thick needle was inserted at the back of her spine to extract her bone marrow directly.

Beads of cold sweat on her forehead came dripping down. Her pair of eyes were red from restraining, her body trembled and spasmed severely. The several people that were still pressing on her were also filled with sweat until Yan Huan's bone marrow was completely extracted, and Yan Huan's body collapsed like a corpse.

Her face ran out of color as she leaned on the wooden bed weakly.

Her mouth was full of blood when she tried to touch her lips gently.

While at the same time in the Lu family, Xunxun, who was asleep, suddenly opened her eyes. Her small mouth twitched and her eyes were red, then beads of tears came rolling down her cheeks and she cried out loud.

When Xunxun started to cry, Lu Qi and Lu Guang cried along with her.

Lu Yi hurriedly extended his hands to pick up Xunxun, who was still young.

Xunxun tightened her fist and cried her lungs out no matter how Lu Yi coaxed her.

"Don't cry, don't cry." Lu Yi coaxed his daughter softly, while Ye Shuyun and the housekeeper each hugged the two boys. Both of the sons were crying as hard as their sister until their voice turned hoarse, their face was flushed. They looked like they were inches away from crying to death.

"I will bring her out for a moment," Lu Yi carefully carried the child in his arms that was crying breathlessly because he knew that the other two children would stop crying when they did not hear Xunxun's cry.

"Go ahead." Ye Shuyun wiped the tears on her face and felt sorry for the kids without the companion of their mother. The kids were so vulnerable without the love of their mother. She caressed little Guang's chubby face with sympathy.

"What are the three of you going to do with your life now?"

She could not help but hug her grandchildren and cried, even the housekeeper was secretly wiping off her own tears.

Lu Yi stood in front of the window outside and pulled open the curtains. There was nothing outside except the pitch-black surroundings. However, Xunxun's eyes were wide open, not knowing what she was looking at. She sniffed from time to time and huge droplets of tears were still streaming down her cheeks.

"Behave and don't cry, my dear," Lu Yi carefully caressed his daughter's face.

"Daddy knows that you miss mom but now that your mom is not here, Xunxun must behave and listen well, so one day when you grow up, your mom will return okay?"

Xunxun extended her small hands to hold onto her father's thumb.

Even though it was pitch-black outside, Lu Yi would hold her daughter and stand in front of the window. He knew Xunxun loved to stay here because she could look into the distance even though Lu Yi had no clue what Xunxun had in her eyes.

Chapter 943: Sending Her Away

The empty darkness of the night had finally veiled across the sky, but the break of dawn was still hours away.

When tomorrow arrives...

Will the sun still rise?

Will the dawn still come?

Will I still be alive?

When Yan Huan weakly opened her eyes again, she was still in the same posture as the one she was in initially. The intense pain in her waist remained, so even a normal gasp of air would send an excruciating pain to her ribs, as though a spike had pierced her heart.

It was so agonizing and unbearable, she wanted to bawl her eyes out.

She slowly placed the back of her hand on her mouth, and bit it forcefully. She did not cry, but she could not help but let out a bitter moan like a helpless little creature, as her tears cascaded down the side of her cheeks.

No one gave her any attention, and no one took care of her at all, treating her like a lifeless corpse. Maybe, they had never wanted to let her escape alive. However, Zhu Xianglan no longer came to hurt or reproach her. Perhaps, Su Muran had survived after receiving her bone marrow transplant.

She sunk her face into her hands, feeling every inch of her features as she pondered to herself. Thank goodness, it's me that they captured. Thank goodness it's me and not my Xunxun. If things had to be taken to this stage, she would at least be the one whose bone marrow was stolen, and not her beloved Xunxun.

Seconds...minutes...and hours crept by painfully slowly, as she used every ounce of her spirit to endure the pain, withstand the hunger, and forget the thirst. They did not give her any food or water, or in fact, anything at all.

After an unknown amount of time had passed, her lips began to dry and harden, even a slight twinge of her mouth would crack her thoroughly parched lips. When she licked her lips, the metallic taste of blood stained her tongue.

She licked them again, feeling the metallic taste from her bleeding lips. Her broken spirit was reflected in her lifeless gaze, as it began to gradually fade and lose its focus.

"Water... Please, someone, give me some water..."

She mustered all her remaining strength and yelled for water. She refused to die yet, as she still had three loving children. Naturally, she did not want them to grow up without a mother. She missed Lu Yi dearly, and yearned greatly to meet her children again...

Suddenly, she seemed to hear muffled footsteps approaching from afar.

Hence, she quickly raised her head, but she could not clearly see anything in front of her. It was as if her vision was clouded by a dense white mist, blurring her surroundings and stealing her sight.

Feebly, she tried to open her mouth, wanting to say something. However, her throat was completely dry and sore, and no voice could be emitted by her larynx. The pain was so excruciating, it would numb her every time she took a breath.

Suddenly, her entire body was flipped over. Her eyes widened roundly and her body trembled violently from pain, or perhaps even fear. The pain in her waist was so asphyxiating it seemingly numbed her heart. I'm... in so much pain. It's so painful, I want to cry...

She simply breathed weakly, allowing the piercing pain to cruelly rob her consciousness and her senses away.

Only the sense of pain flooded through her nervous system. It overwhelmed her senses and injected a feeling of hopelessness in her heart.

The silhouette suddenly moved. Yan Huan tried to speak up, but her words and pleas evaporated into silent moanings, as her throat was utterly gripped with pain and dryness. No, it was actually the faint breathing sounds that only she could hear.

Meanwhile, the man standing before her, was none other than Su Muran's father, Su Qingdong.

"I suppose I should at least thank you," he said. However, his words reeked with mockery and ridicule. She felt so repulsed that she thought to herself. I would save a pig or a dog, but I will never save Su Muran's life.

Also, is this considered saving lives, without asking the person's permission? This is definitely illegal and immoral. Right, how could I forget? People from the Su family have no morals. If they really do, why am I here, and why am I in such a sorry state, teetering between life and death?

She simply grinned widely with her parched lips, sneering spitefully at the man before her.

Su Qingdong's hands shivered in fear as he clenched them tightly beside him. Yan Huan's expression made him feel immensely embarrassed and apologetic.

However, humans were inevitably selfish beings. He only had one precious daughter, so he would do anything and everything for her. Even if he had to kidnap Yan Huan and her three children to save her, he would do it without batting an eyelid.

Suddenly, his eyes narrowed dangerously. The passing of time was evident in his ambiguous gaze and the wrinkles in the corner of his eyes, as a murderous intent abruptly broiled in his ruthless eyes.

He lifted Yan Huan up, and promptly carried her away from the room.

Even though she was hovering in the air, the cramping pain in her waist intensified, causing her to break into a cold sweat. The suffocating pain endlessly bit at her muscle fibers, while she tightly gritted her teeth, forcing herself to stay awake. Throughout the journey, she constantly reminded herself to not lose consciousness or fall asleep. I must live on, I have to live on.

Thus, she bit her reddish lips with all her strength. The aching pain caused her forehead to break into dripping beads of sweats.

Su Qingdong thrust her into his car ruthlessly, without a care for her. Whether she was knocked down by a car or hung to death, it did not matter to him. The pain from the impact was so overpowering, it felt as though every bone in her body had shattered into pieces. As the car headed to its unknown destination, she was thrown around and constantly knocked against the inside of the car from the bumpy journey, inflicting great inexplicable pain to her body.

"Where...are you...bringing me...?"

When she gathered all her strength to voice out the question, she sounded as rough as a broken gong. The tone of her voice flabbergasted and upset her. Anyone who heard could tell that this broken voice, was in fact hers.

Su Qingdong merely kept quiet, as he sped down the road. She could not tell how fast he was driving, but she could faintly see the bright streetlights whizzing past the window. This was her first experience of the outside world in a very long time. Imprisoned by the barren walls, she had no idea how long she had been locked away. It could be half a month, a full month, two months, half a year, or even an entire year.

At that moment, she knew that she was in an equally devastating state as her previous life. She was no more than a shell of a living ghost, neither dead nor alive, neither human nor ghost.

The car accelerated forward further, but Yan Huan did not know their final destination. In fact, she knew nothing at all. However, her body trembled and shivered in fear and cold.

It seemed that it was not a journey back home, but somewhere far, far away.

Is Su Qingdong trying to kill me?

She had always known that Su Qingding would never return her to the Lu family and tell them everything. His evil character was clear as day, when she found out what he did in his past life. He had annihilated the Ye family from the Sea City, crushing the family and murdering them.

He was ruthless and wickedly merciless.

“Mister Su...?” Yan Huan tried to speak again.

“I can pretend none of these ever happened. I won’t tell anyone, I promise you, I swear. Please let me return home, please?”

Su Qingdong’s hands remained tightly gripped on the steering wheel, while he showed no signs of any responses.

Chapter 944: Dead Men Tell No Tales

“Mr. Su, who doesn’t have a father or children, please do it for the virtue of your Su family.”

As Yan Huan finished speaking, she coughed ferociously. It was obvious her throat sounded sore, it sounded awful and miserable.

Su Qingdong did not add on to her words. He just drove his car faster with an indifferent and merciless facial expression on his face at all times until the car came to a sudden halt with a screech.

Su Qingdong opened the car door and walked out of the car. He then pulled Yan Huan out of the car forcefully.

A thud resounded in the air and Yan Huan fell heavily on the ground. The back of her head to her waist hit directly on the ground. She shriveled as she felt the pain, the cloth on her body had already been drenched by sweat as if she was brought out from the water.

She lifted her face and saw that she was brought to a place, none other than the side of the river. The breeze of the river carried a hint of the fishy smell, especially in the fish market. The river water was a branch from the long river. Their current location was exactly at the downstream of the water and this part of the water flowed quickly all year long. Hence, no one would come here as it was extremely dangerous. If one fell off the river, this person would be swallowed by the water in the river. This was not an enchanting sight of the river even though its outlook appeared to be majestic as it was filled with risk. This was certainly the entrance to hell as once stepping into it, one would be crushed to dust.

Yan Huan coughed as she held her stomach, she was choking as the result of the dust from the ground and the dust stuck on her eyelashes, shook off, and drenched.

She laughed miserably. If she was not aware of what Su Qingdong was about to do, she would be a fool.

She knew the Su family would not forgive her, but she never thought that Su Qingdong was more merciless than she expected; he wanted to shut her up forever.

Yan Huan struggled to sit up, then she breathed out lightly, for every time she breathed, what came along with them, was excruciating pain, from her waist, her heart, and her bones.

Suddenly, she bent her knees with her legs folded. She knelt on the ground and knocked her head hard onto the ground.

“Mr. Su, I beg of you, I have children. I still have three kids; they are still very young,” She continued to knock her head while she begged. She did not want her pride, she did not want anything else, she just wanted to stay alive, and she wanted to see her children grow up. Besides, she also missed Lu Yi, she did not want to leave him alone, she did not want him to carry all the pain on his own.

She already burdened herself with his death once, how could she bear it, how could she bear it again.

“Mr. Su, I beg you, I beg of you...” She knocked her head with all her might, her forehead slammed strongly against the ground. One loud thud after another, making others feel a little bit unbearable.

The corner of Su Qingdong’s eyes twitched once. In that instant, he felt merciful.

Yan Huan was only a kid for him, a kid of the same age as his daughter. He then stretched his arm but the phrase, ‘okay’ was eventually stuck in his throat, he could not bring himself to utter it.

“Uncle Su, I beg of you, forgive me.” Yan Huan lifted her face. Her forehead was already bloody, the blood dripped down along with her tears, passing by the corner of one of her eyes as if they were tears of blood.

Her voice made others sob, her words made others feel sorrowful, and her phrases made others shed tears of blood.

“Uncle Su, I beg of you to forgive me. I swear, I truly swear, I would not say a word, I would not say anything. If I tell anyone, then my dead body will not be buried. I will never ever reincarnate.”

She would not; she seriously would not tell anyone.

However, her request and humility did not exchange for Su Qingdong’s mercy. Su Qingdong squatted down and stared at Yan Huan expressionlessly.

I want to let you go too, yes, that’s the truth, that’s my real intention, but I can’t.

Yan Huan’s red lip shivered, her throat felt painful again.

“We all know that dead men tell no tales.”

He stretched out his hand and placed it on Yan Huan’s head, “Don’t blame me, blame your blood type, blame your identity as one of the Lu family members if you want.” He could not bear the anger and vengeance of Lu Yi. The current Lu Yi was not the same as before. Su family had also changed from the past and the Su family was threatened by the Ye family too many times. They were going downhill a few years ago already, and now he was the only heir to the Lu family, Su Muran was sick too. Su family

would not be the same anymore, the current Su family was torn apart, they could not withstand any changes or impact.

He could totally imagine the repercussions. If the fact that they had caught Yan Huan, and forcefully took her bone marrow went out to the public, based on the Lu family's attitude, he feared the Su family would be in danger by then.

He could not let Su family be destroyed in his hand, he must protect the Su family which meant his only choice was to ask for forgiveness from this girl.

"Unce Su, I beg of you." Yan Huan reached out her hand and tugged Su Qingdong's cloth. "I beg of you, let me live please," she cried. Her tears blurred up the dust in her eyes. In the white mist, she blinked heavily, but she could still see a bit of Su Qingdong's cold expression.

Su Qingdong stood up and picked Yan Huan up. He then pushed her to the edge of the downstream of the river. In that instant, all Yan Huan smelled was the stench of the river, and the smell of death, right in front of her.

She held firmly onto the fence in front of her for she did not want to die. She wanted to live, she did not want to die for no reason at all.

She shook her head, the wind from faraway swept past her thin clothes and drifted through her sleeves. The wind entered her clothes, hurting her skin, and also freezing her heart.

Su Qingdong forcefully released Yan Huan's grip and pushed her down. He did not hesitate at all and had no mercy. He had nothing because all he had now was a sense of relief and freedom.

Thump! Everything was over along with the splash.

Su Qingdong turned his body around, finally, he felt a great sense of relief.

Everything was resolved, yes, everything was resolved.

On the small bed, the child who was sleeping at the moment, suddenly clenched her small fist tightly, squeezing her eyes and started crying loudly.

Lu Yi hurriedly left behind all his work and he strode over quickly to carry his daughter on the small bed.

"What's wrong? Did you have a dream?" Lu Yi comforted his daughter, but he did not know if such a young child would have a dream.

"Good girl, don't cry."

Lu Yi skillfully swung the daughter in his chest, but it was weird for little Xunxun to cry this time as she had not cried like this for a long time.

Lu Yi caressed her daughter's tiny face with care. Xunxun had not gained back her weight recently – she was still small and thin. Her chin was sharp and her eyes turned bigger. This made her appear as though her entire tiny face was only occupied by the eyes. Such an appearance made her look exactly like her mother.

Chapter 945: Mummy Abandoned Her

When the child was still small, it was hard to recognize whom she looked like. However, one could clearly see that she resembled her mother now.

Xunxun had some occasional sniffles, but she meekly obeyed her father and had stopped crying.

Lu Yi hugged his daughter away, and then brought his two other sons into the room. Out of these three little ones, only Xunxun needed to be carried by him personally. She was a demanding child, unlike the other two obedient little ones.

He greatly cherished Xunxun, but he also felt slightly sorry for his two sons.

Since they were well and healthy, everyone in the family gave all their attention to her. They hugged her more, and did not pay too much attention to the other two sons.

Hence, Xunxun was extremely attached to her mother, while her other two sons were more independent.

“Xunxun, play with your brothers for a while, okay?”

Lu Yi tenderly caressed his daughter’s little cheeks and whispered, “Even though mommy’s not here anymore, your daddy and brothers will still love and adore you.”

Little Xunxun let out a sniffle, before nodding slightly. Actually, she had learned to understand words and knew what others were talking about. However, she could only understand and not reply. She even refused to utter the word ‘Guagua’ that she often used to call him, much to his annoyance previously.

Then, Lu Yi placed his daughter down between his two sons.

Little Lu Qi and Little Lu Guang knew it was their sister, and obediently made space for her to lie between them. The eldest Lu Qi even extended his chubby little hand and held his sister’s scrawny little finger.

Lu Guang babbled incoherently, as though he was consoling his little sister to stop crying.

Little Xunxun sniffled with her little nose again, and finally stopped her tears. However, her eyes and nose remained reddened from crying, seeming adorable and pitiful at the same time. Lu Yi tucked them into the blanket and sat down beside them, accompanying them as they fell asleep.

Finally, Little Xunxun fell asleep soundly. However, her eyelashes quivered slightly occasionally, as minuscule beads of tears rolled down her cheeks.

Little Xunxun was the only daughter in the Lu family in over 100 years. She was very adorable, but very difficult to handle as well. She cried easily, and was prone to illnesses. Everyone in the family aged significantly while fretting over her health- Ye Shuyun’s hair greyed drastically, Lu Jin’s face became tattered and wrinkly, while Old Master Liu was constantly anxious and angry.

The children were still so young, what could they do in the future? Naturally, they would not lack food or nutrition in the Lu family, as they would provide the children with the best education and the finest living conditions. However, no matter how perfect the condition they raised them in, how much money they spent, and how fine the food they provided the children with, none of that would forever be sufficient.

They could never replace their mother.

Outside the nearby window, it was a magical yet gloomy wintery atmosphere, with the air biting frosty. Flurries of snow seemed to begin to fall, the gracefully descending snowflakes seemed so pristine, yet piercingly cold.

Winter had arrived exceptionally early this year, and today's temperature was almost subzero. Curiously, it was still in the early days of winter.

Lu Yi stood up and ambled toward the window, pulling the curtains open and gazing mindlessly at the calming snowfall. Soon, the ground was completely covered in snow, blanketing the surrounding landscape in snowy white. The sky and earth seemed to have fused into one gigantic canvas, painting one's vision with absolute whiteness, with the horizon nowhere to be found.

The corner of his eyes suddenly twitched in pain that was so unbearable, as though it was being stabbed and pierced by uncountable sharp knives.

Suddenly, he covered his face with his hands, as though his eyes were hurt by the glaring whiteness. Then, the corner of his eyes ached again, turning from warm to burning hot.

The advertisement was playing on the television channel, the lady in it was stunningly beautiful. She stood while facing sideways, her red luscious lips forming into a bedazzling smile. Her waist was curvaceous, her collarbone was exquisitely sculptured, while her legs were long and slender. Besides, her facial features were unspeakably beautiful, while her body figure would make men drool and women eaten up with jealousy.

Then, a little girl walked toward Lu Yi unsteadily. She had large bright eyes, the white of her eyes as clear as a cloudless sky, while her dark irises glimmered like onyx gemstones, pristine and glistening like the water from mountain springs.

She was quite thin, and her chin was sharp, but her complexion was extremely fair and she looked very pretty. She seemed uncannily similar to the lady in the advertisement, with beautiful eyes, plump lips, and little chubby cheeks.

She seemed to be slightly below two years old, her hair was black and long like the woman on the television.

Then, two more children approached him as well. They seemed to be slightly older than the girl, tall and adorable with chubby cheeks. However, compared to the little girl, they were evidently burlier and tougher-looking.

"Mama..." The little girl opened her eyes wide, as she extended her dainty fingers toward the television screen.

"It's Mama."

The two boys rushed over, each of them holding one of her hands.

Their eyes darted toward the television as well.

Mommy... Their mommy was on the television. They thought that she had disappeared, but she had actually entered the screen. Ah, why is mommy in here? I'm not sure why...

Ye Shuyun was shocked when she could not find the three children, and had almost scoured the entire house to search for them. However, she still could not locate them. These three children were her most treasured things in life, how could she continue living if something happened to them?

"Madam, they're here." The Housekeeper rushed over and yelled loudly at Ye Shuyun to inform her that they were merely watching the television in the living room.

They're watching television in the living room... Ye Shuyun was flabbergasted momentarily. How did they run over there so quickly? These three little rascals, they can zoom everywhere with their little limbs now. If they grew any bigger, she felt that she would no longer be able to catch up with them.

Ye Shuyun hastily ran over and saw the three of them sitting on the floor obediently with their eyes glued to the screen. Even Little Xunxun, who was usually quite worrying, was sitting quietly between her two brothers. However, she was still very small. Despite being born on the same day as her brothers, she seemed as though she was one year younger.

When Ye Shuyun noticed what was playing on the television, she instantly felt depressed and tears unconsciously streamed from her eyes.

It was an advertisement for a perfume from a renowned international brand that Yan Huan filmed before she vanished. Once it aired, it played everywhere, greatly elevating her popularity to a frightening level with merely just an advertisement. It seemed that her fame had not faded at all, despite her extended hiatus. She was still the Best Actress Yan, dominating the box office and bringing in about 5 billion moviegoers. Several years had passed since then, but her record still remained unrivaled.

The three children stood obediently in a row, without making a fuss.

"Granny," Eldest son Lu Qi suddenly turned his head around and asked Ye Shuyun.

"Why is Mama in there, and not playing with us?"

Chapter 946: Mommy Will Return

As his words sunk in, the two other children spun themselves around. Ye Shuyun was on the brink of tears as she watched the three pairs of large, naïve eyes blinking right back at her.

How was she going to explain to the young kids that their mother was missing, that she could not be found, and might not ever be found anymore? They were looking at the television – they might be able to see their mother, but they would never be able to touch her or feel her warmth.

"Mama?" Little Xunxun stood up abruptly and dashed forward. She stood before the television and reached out her little hand, touching the image of the woman displayed on the television.

"Mama, mama..." She pressed her little face against the television and let out a heart-wrenching wail. Large beads of tears rolled down her face. Xunxun was still tearful as before, but it was only when she longed for her dear mother that she would cry the hardest.

Witnessing their sister crying, the two boys followed suit as tears began streaming down their faces.

Ye Shuyun immediately scurried over, took hold of the remote control and switched off the television. However, as little Xunxun noticed that her mother on the television was gone, she began shrieking at the top of her lungs; her tears pouring.

“Mama, mama...”

She wanted mama. She wanted her mama, she wanted to see mama.

Ye Shuyun hoisted her into her arms and comforted her. She called for the two housekeepers to bring the crying boys out of the room. They were easier to calm down and would regain composure very soon, unlike Xunxun. Once she was in her usual screaming fit, she would not give up until she had cried herself to death.

This child had inherited her mother’s charm, yet her temper was exactly the same as Lu Yi’s when he was younger. Once he had his mind set on something, he would never forget it his entire life.

Xunxun might not be able to remember much but she definitely remembered her mother. She knew by heart of her mother’s appearance. At the same time, clouding the majority of her memory was the assumption that her mother had gone missing and had abandoned her.

Moreover, Xunxun still could not speak well. No, to put it this way, she was just unwilling to speak, rather than being unable to speak. Lu Qi and Lu Guang were already capable of having a basic conversation with the adults, but Xunxun could not.

Tears continued to spill from Xunxun’s eyes, pushing Ye Shuyun to her limits as she began to weep along.

At the moment, Lu Yi was at work. Ever since Yan Huan’s disappearance, he had hardly displayed any emotion. It was as if his face was just frozen like this, the corners of his lips had never curved upward and his eyes held no warmth. While handling cases, he looked even more rigid and emotionless. He had put many people in prison this year, and Prosecutor Lu’s outstanding working capability had grown to be almost proportional to his intimidating face. His means were brutal, but his face was more aloof and his heart was even more ruthless.

At this moment, he emitted a repulsing aura. His coldness and apathy could be sensed even before approaching him.

He was notably impersonal now, and he was quite irritable as well.

One could tick the heaven and earth off, but never in their right mind should they vex Lu Yi. This was something every businessman in Sea City should take note of.

If he had caught someone red-handed, they would get skinned alive even if they managed to escape death. Furthermore, he would neither show any sentiment nor give face. He was cold, indifferent and did not show kindness to anyone. As he continued to step up the ladder at work, he had the final say, and no one in the entire procuratorate would ever dare object. He could even conceal the truth from everyone as he wished, but he would never do so.

He once said that this world was a reasonable realm. If the others were not amenable to the idea, he would do so on their behalf.

Yu Bo stood aside in silence. He dared not make a single sound, to the extent where he paid much attention to his breathing to keep it as quiet as possible. At this moment, he was cautious and solemn, and he dreaded getting under Lu Yi's skin. Although Lu Yi would never wring his neck, nothing would change the fact that it was beyond torturing to be forced to stand under the air-conditioner in the winter.

However, why is it getting colder and colder here? Well, can I go out for a little sun? Chief Prosecutor Lu did not seem to be in a good mood today, with that sullen face of his.

No, that was not right. It was not merely a sullen face. In fact, this was just how Chief Prosecutor Lu looked like on a day-to-day basis.

Just as he felt he could no longer endure the cold, with his face and neck went red, Lu Yi's phone rang on one side.

Lu Yi picked up his cell phone. Instantly, Yu Bo let out a sigh of relief, and it felt like something had been lifted off his shoulders. Large drops of cold sweat had formed on his forehead, and he stealthily wiped it off.

Lu Yi placed the phone near his ear.

"Yes, mom. It's me."

It was a call from Old Madam Lu. Yu Bo really wanted to cheer when he heard the appellation from Lu Yi. Is Chief Prosecutor Lu not coming tomorrow? Can I have a day off tomorrow?

Lu Yi frowned. His deeply furrowed brow almost formed the Chinese character '川', which he had never shown before in his entire life. Throughout the year, many creases had begun to inhabit his face indefinitely.

"Mom, pass the phone to Xunxun."

With his phone in hand, he rose to his feet and walked over to the window. He stared into the distance, gazing blankly.

Ye Shuyun dried her tears and placed the cell phone by Xunxun's small, reddened ear.

"Baby, papa wants to talk to Xunxun."

Xunxun sniffled as the large teardrops continued streaming down her face.

"Baby, this is papa," Lu Yi spoke over the phone. He knew his daughter was listening. Although she could not speak yet, she was bright enough to understand what he was saying.

Xunxun bit her rosy little lips and sobbed loudly, giving away the fact that she had cried for a long time.

"Baby, papa knows that you're a good and obedient baby. A good baby should listen to grandma, okay? The mommy you saw is at a place very far from us. But since Baby could see mommy, mommy can see us too. Mommy would be sad if Baby is crying. Haven't papa said that mommy will return soon if Baby behaves?"

Dejected, Xunxun pursed her pouty little lips, her tears still falling unceasingly.

“Baby, did you hear papa?”

Lu Yi spoke to his daughter again. He could hear the little girl’s sobbing. He had taken care of Xunxun since young, and ever since Yan Huan went missing, he served as both a mother and father for her, so nobody understood Xunxun better than he did, and nobody was dearer to Xunxun than he was. At home, Xunxun would only listen to him; when Xunxun was in tears, only he could console her. Otherwise, she would cry herself to death like how she just attempted to.

Lu Yi waited for his daughter’s reply. Xunxun was one and a half years old. Although she was little and finicky, he knew that his daughter was, in fact, just an obedient little lamb.

Again, Xunxun sniffled as another tear fell to the ground with a splat.

She nodded her little head lightly, despite that, her tears still threatened to spill.

“Baby, papa is coming home soon. You must behave – don’t cry.”

Chapter 947: An Ugly Woman

“Okay.” Xunxun promised her father with great reluctance, but she fixed her eyes on the television which was a black screen. Her mother was gone, and she really missed her mother very much.

When Lu Yi went back, Xunxun had already fallen asleep. Looking diminutive, she slept on her own small bed and her tiny small face was terribly thin. But her eyelashes slightly curled up and were still very long. She looked very beautiful.

The little girl was looking more and more like her mother. Lu Yi thought, when Yan Huan was a child, she must also be so beautiful, and also a gem inside the palm of her parents. However, her parents had long passed away and left her all alone, solitary and impoverished. Later, it must have been a mistake of her past life to have even caused her to lose her life.

It was just that having lived through her life once again, her life became better after great difficulty. But why did something happen to her again? Not to mention Xunxun, even though he was unable to bear the fact that Yan Huan had passed away until now.

There was still an expectation in his heart as well as hope that his Huanhuan must now be in a certain place and she could not come back. As long as he persevered, as long as he waited, as long as he continued to look, she would finally come back. She would come home for there were him, the three children including Xunxun at home.

He walked over and crouched down beside his daughter’s small bed. Then he gently stroked his daughter’s little face.

“Our Xunxun is the best, right? Papa knows you’re thinking of Mama.”

“And Papa also misses your Mama.”

At this time, the winter season had arrived again. In the world of ice and snow, the last pieces of leaves on the branches were also blown away and scattered. And then not knowing when, the bare branches were also tainted by the winter cold, and winter snow.

In the distance, that swathe of frigid cold was daunting and made people not want to get close.

The fire in the stove burnt from time to time, and the flames outside the stove also occasionally speckled out. The surrounding walls had peeling paint on them with large patches already fallen off. There were a few broken chairs which should have been thrown away or used as firewood as well as a table with a missing leg. It was now propped up with half a block of brick and it could continue to be used.

No one would be willing to throw away every blade of grass, a single branch, a table and a chair, even if they were broken, and then rotten.

It was a small village in the mountain, which was far away from the city, but also far away from the civilization of a tiny village. The village was located in a remote mountainous area. The dozens of families here had lived in this place for generations, almost cut off from the world. There was not even electricity available here. People used original oil lamps to illuminate things. The things every family used were also passed down from generation to generation.

There was no electricity, no television, no washing machine, no natural gas. The fuel that the village used to light fires for cooking was the firewood picked up from the mountains.

They would break up tree roots on the spot or chop up a few large trees with an axe, which would be enough to burn for a good few days.

And in this room made out of clay, a woman came out. She wore old and shabby clothes on her body, and her body was also patched up in several places before she dragged a leg to walk out.

She took a bundle of firewood from one side and then added a few firewood inside the old stove. Then she sat up by the side of the stove and leaned against the stove to give her warmth.

She lifted her face and there was almost no flesh on her face. There was also a big scar on the other side of her face, which made her face look a little scary. She buried her head between her legs, and then tightly gripped her knees with force.

The wind outside almost blew down the rotten window, which also brought the distinctive chill from the mountains.

This place stood by the side of the mountains, and the wind was very cold.

She then hugged her legs tightly and almost shrank herself into a ball. Only then, it seemed that she could give herself some warmth and let herself some semblance of warmth.

Her face had been destroyed and was very ugly. But those eyes of hers were still very beautiful. They were regular almond-shaped eyes and the corners of her eyes were very long. Her eyelashes were also curled. It was a pity that these eyes were born in this ugly-looking face.

She touched her face. There was no mirror here, so she did not know what she looked like now. But from the reflection on the water, she could vaguely see her current appearance.

It was indeed very ugly.

Moreover, there was her leg. She put her hands on her leg and gently pressed. It seemed that there was the initial pain. The pain of a broken bone was the kind of pain that would be impossible for her to forget.

It was just that because of the limited medical conditions here, her leg was broken and now she was crippled.

She had become an ugly person as well as a cripple. She took another firewood and tossed it in the old stove. With the temperature coming from the stove, at least she would not freeze to death.

Come tomorrow, she was going to find something which she could use, to see if she could borrow some plastic sheets to seal up the window. Otherwise, she might not survive this winter.

She held her legs tightly again and clung onto the little warmth. Otherwise, she might have been frozen to death this winter.

And not far away, there was a bed with a torn blanket filled with cotton wool, which was unable to block out any cold at all. It also could not hold any warmth. However, even these things were the only items she had now. Otherwise, she would really be without a shelter and not even a roof that could provide a shield from the wind and rain.

The wind outside was still blowing, and the stove was extinguished in the middle of the night. She did not know whether the fire naturally extinguished on its own or it was snuffed out by the wind. When she wanted to pick up the firewood to light the stove again, she felt somewhat defeated. There was not much firewood left. Even if she went to pick up firewood tomorrow, the firewood that she brought back would also be damp with moisture and could only be used after putting them out to dry for a long time. If not, they would not be of much use even if she had picked them up and brought them back. It would be impossible to start a fire by using them to light up.

She just forgot about it and stood up. She could also feel the outside wind again on her back, sending chills to her back again and again. She felt as if she was not wearing any clothes in the winter and completely naked, standing in the world of ice and snow, and then she would literally freeze to death.

She pulled aside that torn cotton wool filled blanket. She got into bed under the covers. She used the torn quilt to wrap herself tightly within but was afraid to lie down for real. She also did not dare to sleep, especially at night when it was time to sleep.

Because it was too cold. She was afraid of freezing to death, and she was also afraid of succumbing to illness from the cold. So, she was the same every night, leaning on the old stove so that she could feel a trace of warmth. And it was also due to the fire inside the stove that she was barely able to hang onto her life.

She stretched out her hands and the fingers on those hands had been frozen till they were red and swollen like radishes. It was almost impossible for fingers to hold tightly.

Chapter 948: Who Set Her Up

She hastily stuffed both her hands beneath the blanket, making use of whatever little heat present to warm herself and dissipate the pain.

She sniffled softly. All of a sudden, the lump in her throat grew and tears threatened to spill uncontrollably. She dipped her face into the torn blanket, crying alone and choking on her sobs in the dark night. She wondered if she would freeze or starve to death.

However, at the very least, she was still alive. So, she must survive, she definitely had to survive, she must leave this place alive. She had to go back, she desired to return home, she longed to return home alive.

All at once, the water surrounding her swiftly gushed toward her. The water pressure almost squeezed out the little bit of air she had left in her lungs. She could not breathe, and it felt as if someone was strangling her until they had driven out the very last breath of air in her lungs.

She opened her mouth wide, yearning for air, pleading to breathe. However, it was the water full of sand that flooded into her mouth, almost filling her stomach to the brim.

That ice-cold water, laced with sand, along with her tireless struggling, and the air she had ridden of, as well the terrifying sensation of suffocation.

The thought of death flashed through her mind. She thought she was about to die and leave this world. No, she shook her head. She neither wanted to die nor could she die; she wanted to live.

“Argh!!”

Suddenly, she let out a scream. She sprang up into a sitting position, her pale face full of terror and fright as if time had halted at that moment, that nightmare-inducing moment of living hell.

She quivered from the gust of chilly wind blowing in from the window. Her clothes were drenched with sweat, as large beads of sweat rolled down her forehead, streaming along her jawline and dripping onto the torn blanket.

From time to time, she inhaled greatly through her mouth. Air – yes, it’s air.

She raised her head and breathed the air greedily. However, blood did not seem to rush back to her face. Her face was still ashen.

The wind was still roaring, surging in until she trembled as if the heat in her body had been swept away. She quickly wrapped herself up with the blanket but her clothes and the blanket were still damp.

I hope today will be a sunny day, she mumbled to herself as she glanced at the distant unlit sky. She had no idea what time it was, perhaps it would be dawn soon. During the winter, the night was prolonged and the day was brief. It could easily be eight o’clock in the morning by the time the sky was fully illuminated.

She laid down once again and curled herself into a ball, trying to keep the warmth from escaping.

It felt ice-cold under the blanket. Her body felt ice-cold too.

So, it was just a dream.

Yes, it was a dream, a horrifying nightmare.

No, that's not right, she laughed to herself miserably. She dared not weep anymore. She was scared that the blanket would be drenched in tears if she continued crying. She had neither the money nor the power to get herself a clean blanket, so she had to deal with this trashy, ragged blanket. She could barely afford to dream about a new blanket.

She huddled herself up and wriggled underneath the small torn blanket. She could still feel the agony of suffocation and the discomfort of the sandy water filling her stomach.

She could still taste the sand at the back of her throat, the water of the Sea River...

Yes, it was not a dream. It happened in reality. She was that person. She did not lose her memory, she still remembered everything. She remembered her name, remembered everything, and remembered what had happened.

She was Yan Huan, the international best actress 'Yan Huan'.

However, who would believe that the dignified international best actress, worth more than billions would lead such a torturous life now? She had insufficient clothing, no proper wool blanket. Even the clothes on her now were unwanted clothes donated by kind hearts. Everything in the house she had was unwanted, disposed of by others, and collected by her.

She pressed her face against the cold, hard bed frame, as memories of the day when she was dumped into the river began playing in her mind.

Su Qingdong, you would never have expected this even in your dreams, that Yan Huan's will to live is so tenacious. Even though you dumped me into the Sea River, what could that have done? I still managed to survive. No matter how challenging it gets, I will survive. I will return to Sea City. I will make sure the Su family pays for your evil deeds – an eye for an eye.

She bit down on her rosy lips, so hard until spots of blood surfaced. She hated the Su family, everything about the Su family. So, she must survive and return. She wanted the Su family to disappear from Sea City; she wanted Su Qingdong to have no daughter accompanying him by his deathbed. In other words, she wanted him to suffer an unpleasant end.

Karma maintains the balance of the world; good will be rewarded with good. If the reward is not forthcoming, it is simply because the time has not arrived yet.

If people could still roam free after committing heinous crimes, then, she would have to take things into her own hands.

She would seek revenge for the ill-treatment she had received. She would never forget who set her up, and whose fault it was.

Outside her window, the sky had brightened up. However, the wind that flurried past was still awfully cold. The weather here was significantly colder compared to that of Sea City. She cupped her hands around her mouth and exhaled a puff of hot air. Despite her effort, they quickly regained their coldness in an instant.

She wondered whether it was snowing outside. She drew the torn blanket off herself, and the familiar piercing cold presented itself to her. It was still freezing even with a blanket. She exceptionally missed

the heater and air-conditioner in Sea City, as well as her warm bed and the lightweight duvet alongside Lu Yi's warmth that had never left her bearing the cold. As her train of thought trailed off, a lump formed in her throat.

She sniffled, fighting back the tears that almost overflowed from her eyes. Perhaps her tears would freeze upon contact with the cold air and hit her hard. At that time, not only would her eyes hurt, but her heart would sting as well.

Relative to bodily pain, that kind of pain was infinite times more unbearable and intolerable.

She huffed a breath of hot air into her palms. Then, she opened the door. Once the door swung ajar, the howling gale poured into her throat, bringing with it a fair amount of snowflakes. Her lips turned purple while her face lost its color due to the harsh weather.

Sure enough, it was snowing.

She hesitated for a while, her frosty fingers trembling. Then, biting hard on her cold lips, she wrapped her clothes around her tightly. With a limp, she trudged forward with her wounded leg dragging behind her.

The heavy windstorm outside swept past her from time to time, and the snow fell gracefully around her. As if she did not sense anything, she squinted slightly and staggered ahead, step by step, with difficulty.

Chapter 949: Hard Times

She followed the Sea River water and floated here. Perhaps she was really delivered from a great danger and escaped death. She unconsciously got caught by a log of wood and the desire to survive let her hang onto this big piece of wood. Then she floated along the Sea River for an unknown period of time and was finally picked up by the people here. When they stumbled upon her, the bones in her leg were broken and her face was also lacerated. Her entire person was soaked till she was almost beyond recognition. Later, these kind-hearted people let her stay in the village and the rural doctor in the village gave treatment on her leg. However, the conditions here were too backward after all. A few months later, when she could walk again, her leg had become this way. The rural doctor said, if she could seek help in those big hospitals outside, then it might still recover. It was just that now with the weather, the heavy snowfall would definitely seal off the mountains. She would certainly be courting death if she wanted to go out.

She still had injuries and had no money as well so she basically could not get out of the mountains at all. As a result, she had to wait for the chance.

She had to wait until someone turned up here from the outside. Then maybe the person could bring her out.

But she asked when someone would actually come into the mountains.

And the people in the village did not know. It might be a few batches of people that will come in a few months. These people would come here to give assistance to the poor. It was also possible that no one would come here for a year and a half.

Nevertheless, even though they did not know when those people would come, with the current season, the winter season in the mountains was very cold and the roads in the winter within the mountains were not too good to travel on, so it was not possible for anyone to come in at this time. It certainly meant that it was even more unlikely that anyone could get out at this time.

Wintertime in the mountains was extremely dangerous.

If it was not handled properly, it would be a matter of losing one's life.

Although it was said that Yan Huan had once acted in a film shot in the mountains and gotten frostbite on her frozen hands, it was not like how it was now, being frozen to such a degree.

They were short of food and clothing in the mountains. Everyone was basically self-sufficient. The thing that the people in the village looked forward to the most was when the electricity would be connected. However, their area was just too remote, and the power poles could not be installed here.

Yan Hua once again walked laboriously forward, with one foot deep and the other foot shallow as she stepped on the thick heavy snow-covered ground.

As soon as her foot reached in, the snow almost got into her shoes. She gritted her teeth. Even if that was the case, she still walked forward planting one foot after another.

She picked up a branch from the ground and held it in her arms. Then she continued to walk. She hoped to pick up more branches, so that there would be firewood to burn at night and she would also suffer less.

Wintertime in the mountains was long, and it was only December now. It was possible that she was going to have to endure three months here.

In fact, three months were not that long. It was true that it was not long. It was only 90 days. From when she first got here and was in a coma, until she could not move nor speak and eventually she was lame in one leg with a disfigured face. And up until now she had already spent nearly half a year here. Although she suffered a lot and it was cold here, she was still alive when all was said and done. Compared to death and dying through dubious causes, she wanted to live, even if she had to suffer a lot of hardships to survive.

She came back with a bundle of firewood, leaving behind her a series of echoes from her footsteps. She only felt a little better after she closed the door. The broken door and windows managed to isolate that layer of cold air from the outside. She patted the snow from her body. Then she walked toward the stove and began to light a fire with her trembling fingers. When the people here made a fire, they all used matches which were sent up by the people below the mountains. The village chief kindly gave her a few boxes, which she used sparingly.

She was afraid that there would not be more once they ran out. After all, she was not one of the people from the village. So, no matter what, she could not be like the other villagers and able to receive the village subsidies. Besides, the lives of the other people in the village were not much better.

Everyone was poor and suffered hardships. Their lives were difficult as well.

With her fingers trembling, she used her almost frozen fingers to light a match and carefully build the fire. It was fortunate that she had learnt some things during her time acting in films in the past. Even though she was acting, it was still necessary to prepare herself. Just like making a fire, she could not create a fake fire, so her skill at starting a fire was quite good. She did not waste too many matches.

She had counted all these matches one by one. One match was to be used for each day. If she was lucky, maybe this fire could last for several days, which could let her boil some hot water, and then to make something for her to eat.

She just had to work harder to pick up more firewood.

On top of the stove was a small broken pot. The water in the pot was boiling and she took a small jar from one side. After she opened it, she put her hand into it and grabbed a small handful of rice from the inside which she put in the pot. She did not wash the rice grains as the water for washing the rice might wash away a lot of the grains till there was nothing.

Anyway, she was rough and hardened. She would not die from eating the food.

The only thing was when she held up that small jar and gave the jar a shake, there was not much rice left inside. The rice given to her was collected from the people in the village each contributing a little. But she really did not know with the little rice she had, whether she could see the winter through. She grabbed a little each day and did not know if she would have enough to last her for 90 days. She could only save all she could.

As long as the weather improved and the snow melted, then she could go down the mountains. Once she got down from the mountains, she could go home.

The water in the pot was gurgling as it boiled. Soon after, she could smell the aroma of the rice. She could not help but swallow her saliva, because she was really too hungry. She could only eat one meal a day and it consisted mainly of drinking the watery broth. She was really starving. In the past, she was still picky about food. She did not eat this nor eat that. Lu Yi was always cajoling and tricking her to get her to eat more. Now that she recalled it, she just wanted to give herself a slap.

Why did she not eat those good food? Why did she waste them? Why was she so picky about food? Why did she turn a blind eye? Whenever she thought of it now, she would feel the pain in her heart.

She only had this small pot, waiting for the rice to be cooked and anticipating the meal.

The small pot was not big and the rice in the pot was not much. A small handful of rice and a small pot of water was enough for her to eat two meals. Once she finished it, she would have to go out again to pick up some firewood for herself. Otherwise, she might really be frozen to death at night.

And this stove was practically her life saver.

The bowl of rice porridge was so thin that it could almost be watery broth. The rice grains were from the farmer's own rice fields and the fire was made from real firewood. It might be the most indigenous food she had eaten in her two lifetimes. Although it was only white rice porridge with no other dishes, she felt it was just as delicious and fragrant when she ate it. Maybe it was because she was too hungry.

There were some left in the pot, which she was keeping for herself to have tonight. She would just have to make do tonight and another day would be over.

Chapter 950: Porcelain And Yan Huan

Now, she was counting down the seconds, the days, the months and this winter season. After this, she could go home. So, no matter how challenging, how cold, how disheartened she felt, she must endure it.

She tossed a few more pieces of firewood into the stove, then opened the door and walked out. When she returned, she carried with her a bundle of firewood. As her feet sank into the snow with every step she took, her body suddenly felt lighter. She turned around and blinked. Snowflakes fell onto her lashes as they instantly melted into water droplets, soaking her long eyelashes.

“Thank you.” She batted her long lashes. Now, she could finally face the people in the village undisturbed. When she first saw her face, she dared not meet anyone for days. After all, she had been beautiful since her past life. She had inherited the best genes, and ever since she was a child, all she ever heard was how gorgeous and dainty she was, and how she was a national treasure. All of a sudden, however, she realized that her face that she had always held pride in was gone. She was hurt, but she knew it was not the end of the world. It only took a few days for her to figure it out.

Now that she was leading a life like this, compared to a pretty face, she would rather live with an unsightly appearance.

“I’ll help you carry it,” said a man, skinny as a bag of bones, his tan face littered with red. This person was the one who hauled her out of the water. He was her savior.

His name was Changsheng, and he was one of the villagers, born and raised in the village. The youngsters in the village had all gone to other places to seek work, but he was the only one who stayed, farming on the few acres of land his family possessed, and living with his mother. It was only him and his mother, whom he had spent all those years taking care of. If he had also left, what was his widowed mother going to do?

However, Changsheng was strong as an ox. When it came to farming, he was incredibly an expert. He was hardworking, and his hands were also skillful. It was just that the resources in the village were limited after all, and if they had solely depended on those few acres of land, they would be lucky enough to harvest a year’s worth of food, not to mention earn money with it. No outsider was willing to marry into the village since once they did, they would never be able to get out. Hence, there were still a handful of young folks in the village who remained unmarried to this day, and Changsheng was one of them. The oldest bachelor in the village was already in his forties. There were hardly any girls in the village, not to mention a person, a living woman.

Changsheng moved all of the firewood into the run-down hut. This used to be a living space for the villagers, but ever since the last family relocated, the house remained vacant. Nothing of good worth was found inside, but it was still inhabitable. It could still provide shelter from the wind and the rain.

“Thank you,” Yan Huan uttered another word of gratitude. She carried the firewood inside. The frostbites on her hands were particularly noticeable, every finger was swollen like a carrot, but she did not seem to care.

“No worries.” Changsheng touched the back of his head, perhaps out of embarrassment. After all, young maidens like her were not abundant in the village. On top of that, most of them had high standards and preferred going out to find work, to experience life in bustling cities. The ones who left never came back and even if they did, it was just to bring their families away with them. They would claim that no matter how bad the outside world was, it was still far better than living in this poor ravine as if even farts in the city smelled nice.

Right, look at him. He had even forgotten about the important matters. He pulled out a small bag.

“Xiao Yan, this is for you, keep it for now. Everything will turn out just fine by springtime.”

Yan Huan took the bag in her hand. It was a small bag made of cloth, and she had no idea what was inside. She opened it to look and gawked at its contents in surprise. It was a bag of rice, sown and harvested by the villagers themselves. It was neither too much nor too little, possibly about five kilograms. These five kilograms of rice plus the initial amount she had left could definitely last her through the winter.

Yet, she only clenched her fist tightly around the bag of rice.

“Changsheng, what about your family?”

“My family...” Changsheng chuckled, “It’s not like you don’t know about the situation at home. We have enough for my mother and me, we will have much more than you. Just eat the rice. No matter how cold it gets, you shouldn’t starve yourself.”

“Thank you.” Yan Huan clutched the bag of rice to her chest. She could feel a tingling sensation on her fingers, brought about by the warmth radiating from within the bag, as if it contained Changsheng’s sincerity as if it carried hope.

That’s right. No matter how cold it was, it was easy to endure. However, what if hunger struck? What could she do?

She made sure to remember Changsheng’s generous deed. Once she returned home, she would repay them ten times, no, a thousand times, ten thousand times more.

Changsheng stared at the window for a good period of time before he walked off, deep in thought. Yan Huan cautiously poured the bag of rice into a jar and hid it. Although the people in the mountains led a simple life, she did not want to risk anything. This was her only source of food and she would not be able to afford it if she were to buy it herself. Once she got out of here, she would be able to get her hands on some money, be it by picking up trash or by begging for food. As long as she had the money, she could call home; as long as she had the money, she could go home.

After her meal, she stepped outside once again to gather more firewood as the more the better. Best case scenario, she could block the window, so it would not be as cold in the middle of the night.

Unbeknownst to her, however, at this moment, not too far away, a sneaky man was spying on her. At one glance, it seemed as if a dim glow was flickering within that pair of glaring, turbid eyes.

Yan Huan hoisted the firewood onto her back and felt as if she had actually become porcelain. A young lady coming from the ravines, not knowing the path home, just like porcelain encompassing all sorts of

dramatic happenings. Though she knew that reality was merely reality; stories were no more than stories; and movies would simply be movies, that was neither reality nor life. Life was filled with various kinds of uncertainty and accidents. It might contain some surprises, but whatever laid within those surprises would only be revealed when you managed to encounter one.

Porcelains were porcelains, just like how Yan Huan would only be Yan Huan.

It was undeniable that her life had been extraordinarily resilient. Perhaps it could be put this way, the year she turned 28 was a critical point in her life. In her previous life, she did not manage to live past 28, but in this life, she survived.

On top of that, she planned to continue living, constantly living her life.

By the time she had collected enough firewood, the sky was growing dark. Despite that, she did not feel cold. Maybe it was because she had been here for a long time, and had adapted to the weather. Hence, it did not feel as cold or piercing as it did when she first arrived.