

As Agreed 141

Chapter 141: Surprise

Shu Pan picked up Joy from kindergarten and on their way home, Joy excitedly shared her day at school, but Shu Pan seemed somewhat distracted. She wanted to ask Joy if she wanted to see her dad. If she could only choose one person, would it be her dad or her mom? But she couldn't bring herself to ask.

When they got back home, Wen Chi called Shu Pan. "Pan, you didn't answer my call earlier. Is everything okay?"

Shu Pan's voice was subdued as she replied, "Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't hear it. What's up?" Wen Chi could tell something was wrong.

"Don't say it's nothing. I can hear it in your voice," Wen Chi said, sensing Shu

Pan's unease.

After a moment of hesitation, Shu Pan finally revealed the truth to Wen Chi, "Joy's dad knows about her now, and he wants custody of Joy."

"What gives him the right? Just because he contributed a sperm? How can he have the audacity to say such things?" Wen Chi couldn't believe the audacity of Joy's father.

"He might take legal action to fight for custody, Chi, what should I do?" Shu Pan felt helpless.

"Pan, why don't we get married? That way, we can give Joy a complete family, and even if it goes to court, the judge might be on your side. I'll treat Joy as my own," Wen Chi suggested, and his deepest wish was to marry Shu Pan.

“Don’t talk nonsense. Auntie hasn’t fully accepted our relationship yet, and if something like this happens, it will be even harder for her to understand,” Shu

Pan rejected the idea.

“I’ll try to persuade my mom and give her some time.”

“Okay, Chi. Thank you.”

One evening, Gu Shaoting picked up Tong Fei for dinner. Tong Fei was thrilled because Gu Shaoting hadn’t asked her out for a long time.

She had just finished a magazine shoot, and Gu Shaoting was already waiting for her in the car. As soon as she settled in, the car was already in motion.

During the meal, Gu Shaoting ordered a variety of dishes. “Take a look and see what you like.”

“Enough, you know my stomach is tiny,” Tong Fei stopped him.

“Tong Fei, Shu Pan and I have a three-year-old daughter named Joy. I want custody of her,” Gu Shaoting dropped the bombshell on Tong Fei without warning.

“What? A child?” Tong Fei asked in astonishment.

“You have a daughter?” Tong Fei repeated, finding it hard to accept.

“Shaoting, if you like kids, we can have our own after we get married. Let Shu Pan raise this child, can’t we?” Tong Fei didn’t think Gu Shaoting cared much for children.

“That’s my daughter, and I want to give her the best. If we get married, I hope you’ll treat her as your own,” Gu Shaoting told Tong Fei.

Tong Fei still couldn't believe what she was hearing and struggled to come to terms with the news.

She had to wonder about Shu Pan's motives. Why did she secretly have a child, and why did Gu Shaoting only discover it now? Did she want to reunite her family?

Their relationship with Gu Shaoting was already on shaky ground, and this new revelation only added to the instability.

However, she couldn't show her true feelings. She forced a smile and nodded politely, but deep down, she was seething with anger.

Why did this unexpected turn of events happen when she thought she had found happiness?

She thought, "Shu Pan, you won't make me suffer without consequences. Just you wait."

Gu Shaoting observed Tong Fei's expression and knew that she was trying to hide her true feelings. His expression turned serious..

Chapter 142: Showdown

Gu Shaoting and Tong Fei each had their thoughts, and they both fell silent, focusing on their meal. Gu Shaoting's mind often wandered to the adorable little Joy and Shu Pan.

Tong Fei's face seemed somewhat blurry.

After dinner, Gu Shaoting dropped Tong Fei off at her home. He felt troubled and decided to call He Ming to go for a drink.

“Where are you? Come out for a drink,” Gu Shaoting assumed He Ming would agree.

To his surprise, He Ming declined, his voice fluctuating over the phone. “Ting, it’s not a good time right now. We’ll talk later.”

He Ming hung up after speaking.

Gu Shaoting looked at the disconnected call, feeling puzzled. He pondered for a moment and unconsciously drove to Shu Pan’s building. As he looked at the location, his heart softened.

Wen Chi returned home to find his mother busy. He went over to help, and Mrs. Wen gave him a strange look.

She thought, “What’s going on today? Being so attentive for no apparent reason.”

In her puzzlement, Wen Chi cautiously began, “Mom, Shu Pan is really a good girl. I want to date her with the intention of marriage.”

Upon hearing this, Mrs. Wen dropped the cloth she was holding onto the table heavily.

She thought that by not mentioning it recently, Wen Chi had understood her stance and wouldn’t bring it up again. But his feelings had remained unchanged all along.

If Wen Chi were to marry Shu Pan, how would others see him, how would they view their family?

Mrs. Wen didn’t speak, and Wen Chi, noticing her solemn expression, continued, “Mom, I hope you understand. I truly like Shu Pan, and her daughter Joy is really adorable.”

“What did she feed you, a love potion that’s made you infatuated with her day in and day out?” Mrs. Wen’s anger grew at the thought.

“In any case, I don’t agree.”

Wen Chi, worried about her high blood pressure, didn’t want to upset her further. He hugged her and said, “Okay, okay, I won’t say anything more.” Mrs. Wen looked at Wen Chi and felt that he had become obsessed.

The next day at noon, Mrs. Wen brought a handbag to Shu Pan’s company building just as work was ending. She called Shu Pan, hoping to have a conversation with her.

The moment Shu Pan received the call, her heart skipped a beat. She didn’t expect Mrs. Wen to reach out to her.

She quickly packed her things and came out. They sat down at a restaurant to the left of the company’s entrance.

“It doesn’t matter. I came to see you this time, and I think you know why. I hope you can break up with Wen Chi. You two aren’t a good match,” Mrs. Wen got straight to the point. She didn’t want to beat around the bush.

“Auntie, is this about Joy, my daughter?” Shu Pan responded calmly.

“That’s one reason. Besides, we hope that Wen Chi can marry someone from an appropriate family. Shu Pan, this society is very practical, and we live under the scrutiny of others.”

“Wen Chi has been outstanding since childhood, and he doesn’t need my worry. His father and I have high hopes for him. Auntie, I hope you can understand and consider separating from him.”

Mrs. Wen’s words pierced Shu Pan’s heart like needles. She knew this outcome was expected, and she truly appreciated his efforts, but she couldn’t ignore his mother’s feelings.

A love that wasn’t blessed was not happiness.

“Auntie, I understand,” Shu Pan replied softly..

Chapter 143: Jealousy

“Pan, Auntie knows you’re a good girl, but you and Wen Chi really aren’t a good match. Auntie hopes you can understand my motherly love,” Mrs. Wen spoke in a gentler tone.

Shu Pan nodded but felt a deep sense of discomfort.

Back at home, Wen Chi happened to arrive.

“Pan, get Joy ready. I’m taking you both out for dinner at a friend’s restaurant,” Wen Chi announced with a cheerful smile.

Pretending like everything was normal, Shu Pan looked at Wen Chi, feeling torn inside. She knew she was about to disappoint him.

Wen Chi and Shu Pan came out with Joy, appearing to be a lovely and harmonious family in the eyes of outsiders.

This was particularly true for Gu Shaoting, who had been spending time near

Shu Pan’s building, observing them from a distance whenever he had a chance.

Today was no exception, and he intended to take a quick look and then leave. However, to his surprise, he saw Shu Pan coming out with another man, holding hands with Joy. The man was the same person he had encountered at the café.

Gu Shaoting frowned deeply, his expression stormy as if a tempest was approaching.

He watched them get into a car and followed their direction, his heart feeling like it was crawling with thousands of ants. He was uncomfortable.

Seeing the three of them entering a restaurant, the man holding Joy, and Joy hugging him, whispering something in his ear, both of them laughing, Gu Shaoting was consumed with jealousy. That was his privilege, and he couldn't understand why someone else was taking his place. Seeing them so happy, he felt a burning discomfort.

He knew this discomfort was jealousy. He wanted to replace that man.

Late that night, unable to resist, Gu Shaoting called Shu Pan.

When the call was picked up, he remained silent, his ears perking up to listen for any other sounds or movements on the other end of the line.

Seeing that it was his call, Shu Pan's initial reaction was to hang up. However, she knew he was the type who wouldn't give up easily, so reluctantly, she pressed the answer button.

"What is it, Mr. Gu?" Shu Pan's tone was as calm as water, as if the person on the other end was a stranger.

Mr. Gu—the address stung Gu Shaoting's nerves.

"Shu Pan, you're just the same as before, skilled at pursuing men, aren't you?

Found a new man so quickly, thinking of finding a father for my daughter?" Gu Shaoting's words dripped with sarcasm.

"Gu Shaoting, are you insane? We've already divorced. What I do is none of your business." Shu Pan had heard much worse words, faced much greater hardships, so these words meant nothing to her.

“Shu Pan, you better think carefully. I won’t give up Joy’s custody. Don’t do something foolish; the consequences are something you can’t bear,” Gu Shaoting’s voice turned frosty.

Shu Pan “hehe” chuckled twice on her end, as if she had heard a joke.

What consequences could she not bear? She had already endured the worst. “Then you go ahead and see if I can bear it or not. If you push too far, we can all go down together,” Shu Pan suddenly said ruthlessly. She had nothing left to lose, and she would go all the way, even if it meant risking her life.

Gu Shaoting was taken aback by her harsh words. In his memory, Shu Pan had always been gentle and wouldn’t be this cold now.

He didn’t realize that a cornered dog would jump over the wall. The current Shu Pan felt like she had nothing left to lose. If he insisted, she would go down with him, even if it cost her life..

Chapter 144: Dare Not Admit It

Gu Shaoting’s face instantly darkened.

He thought Shu Pan now had a strong backing and was speaking with confidence.

He pictured her laughing and chatting with that man, her eyes filled with a light-hearted smile while treating him coldly.

“I’d like to meet Joy. Please arrange a time whenever it’s convenient,” Gu Shaoting’s tone shifted as he expressed his desire to see Joy.

“I don’t know how to explain it to her yet. Gu Shaoting, our life is quite peaceful now. Why do you want to disrupt it?” Shu Pan took a deep breath.

“She’s my daughter, and you should’ve known she’d bear my name when you gave birth to her,” Gu Shaoting’s words were devoid of warmth.

“Are you sure you genuinely want a child? Don’t forget you had me take birth control pills. Do you know those pills have side effects? Where were you when I was pregnant, or when our child was sick? Now you suddenly want a child?” Shu Pan grew more and more furious. She found his behavior utterly unreasonable.

Gu Shaoting’s grip on his phone tightened. “You didn’t tell me you were pregnant...”

“If I tell you, and there’ll be no Joy. You can pretend not to know. If you still have a conscience, please spare us,” Shu Pan said with no energy left to argue.

“Never.” Gu Shaoting’s words had just fallen when he hung up the phone.

Gu Shaoting was left panting angrily. He was furious, as he had never realized that Shu Pan could be so outspoken.

Shu Pan lay on her bed, pondering their past, sighing repeatedly. She wondered how she could have fallen for such a despicable person.

In fact, she knew that when Joy followed him, their life was more comfortable, unlike their current situation. However, would Tong Fei treat Joy well? Certainly not, she knew how deep Tong Fei’s hatred for her ran.

Shu Pan eventually drifted off to sleep in a daze.

Lately, Ye Xiaomeng had been pestered by He Ming. No matter how much she scowled at him, he acted as if he couldn’t see it. She had never encountered someone with such thick skin.

“Where’s Little Princess Joy? Haven’t seen her around lately,” He Ming had been secretly envious of Gu Shaoting. Joy had appeared out of nowhere, while he wondered why he wasn’t that fortunate.

“She’s at school. Lately, Shu Pan’s been looking after her. She was suddenly bitten by her deadbeat father,” the disgust in Ye Xiaomeng’s tone was palpable.

He Ming’s heart sank. He didn’t dare reveal that he knew Joy’s “deadbeat father.”

“Oh, what happened between Shu Pan and Joy’s dad?” He Ming pretended not to know Gu Shaoting.

“He’s a jerk, that’s the verdict. Seeing someone like him makes me want to punch them. Always.” Ye Xiaomeng spoke through gritted teeth.

He Ming silently cursed Gu Shaoting for dragging him into this situation. If Ye Xiaomeng ever found out he was friends with Gu Shaoting...

He Ming massaged his temples with his hand, feeling a headache coming on.

“Hey, don’t you have work? Why do you keep coming over here?” Ye Xiaomeng gave He Ming a puzzled look.

“Work isn’t as important as you. I’m not busy.” He Ming quickly assured her.

“Smooth talker. Just get to work,” Ye Xiaomeng was exasperated. He Ming’s shamelessness surpassed all bounds.

“I’d rather keep you company,” He Ming insisted.

Ye Xiaomeng couldn’t help but roll her eyes. However, because of He Ming’s relentless pursuit, her pain over cutting ties with Cheng Yang had been reduced somewhat, though it was unintentional.

Cheng Yang still called occasionally, but Ye Xiaomeng had already blocked him. If they couldn’t be together, it was better to let go and start new lives, finally leaving the past behind..

Chapter 145: A Long-term Plan

Gu Shaoting had been feeling overwhelmed recently. He was at a loss, both anxious and frustrated with Shu Pan. However, he couldn't resort to legal action, as it might escalate the situation and leave no room for compromise.

He had to consider He Ming's advice. After all, outsiders often had a clearer perspective.

"What should I do? No matter what I say, Shu Pan remains unresponsive. I haven't even formally met Joy yet. It's as if Shu Pan is guarding against me like a thief. Should I really send a demand letter?" Gu Shaoting was troubled.

"No, Brother Ting, if you genuinely want to establish a connection with Joy, don't offend Shu Pan. The little girl has been with her mother all her life. If you mistreat her mother, she won't give you a warm welcome either," He Ming explained the intricacies of the situation.

He Ming had his own reasons for this advice; he was worried that if Gu Shaoting offended Shu Pan, Ye Xiaomeng would be upset once she found out about their relationship.

"Just keep engaging with them. Over time, she will be moved, but the key is to maintain a good and sincere attitude," He Ming earnestly advised.

"Alright, it's getting late. I'll head back to the Gu Family's mansion today," Gu

When Gu Shaoting returned to the Gu Family's mansion, the living room was brightly lit. Song Can was watching TV in the living room, and Tong Fei had just come out of the kitchen when she heard the commotion.

"Welcome back, have you had dinner?" Tong Fei inquired, but Gu Shaoting didn't respond and went straight to his bedroom to take a shower.

Tong Fei felt uneasy, not knowing what had happened. She looked at Song Can, hoping to get some information from her. However, Song Can shrugged her shoulders, indicating that she didn't know what was going on either.

The two women exchanged glances, and Tong Fei silently sat down next to Song Can. Since the day Gu Shaoting had told her about his daughter with Shu Pan, she had been restless.

"Feifei, what's wrong? You seem lost in thought," Song Can noticed that Tong Fei seemed off and asked with concern.

"It's nothing, I'm just thinking about work. Auntie, there are many new arrivals lately. We should find some time to check them out," Tong Fei managed a weak smile.

"Is Shaoting very busy these days? Have you two been meeting frequently recently?" Song Can raised an eyebrow as Tong Fei changed the topic.

"Not much lately. We're both busy," Tong Fei replied. In reality, they hadn't met since the day they had talked, and Gu Shaoting had revealed that he had a daughter. The more she thought about it, the more anxious she became. So, she had come to the Gu Family's mansion today to see Song Can's reaction. Based on her expression, Gu Shaoting likely hadn't told her yet.

She decided not to say anything. According to Song Can's thinking, she wouldn't allow the Gu family's flesh and blood to be left outside.

As she was lost in thought, Gu Shaoting came out in casual clothing, his hair still wet. Grandpa Gu had been sulking for a while due to Gu Shaoting's divorce. Recently, he had gone to stay at his uncle's house to avoid seeing them. Gu Shaoting had no choice but to let him be, occasionally visiting when he had the time.

Gu Shaoting sat down on the sofa, glanced at Song Can and Tong Fei, and then spoke with determination, "I want custody of Joy. I hope you both understand that she is my daughter."

"Joy? Your daughter? What daughter?" Song Can was bewildered and couldn't grasp the situation.

“Shu Pan was pregnant at the time, and later, after our divorce, she gave birth to a daughter,” Gu Shaoting explained to Song Can..

Chapter 146: So It's Your Daughter

Song Can was genuinely stunned by Gu Shaoting's words and took a long time to regain her composure.

“You have a daughter with Shu Pan? It's unbelievable. Where is the child?” Song Can eagerly asked, wanting to see the child as soon as possible.

“Along with her mother,” Gu Shaoting said matter-of-factly.

Song Can's frown deepened, and she exclaimed, “How can we leave the care of a child from the Gu family to an outsider?”

At the same time, while saying this, she noticed Tong Fei sitting next to her. Tong Fei had a heavy expression and didn't utter a word. Song Can thought, “This is not good. In front of Tong Fei, who would want to be a stepmother?”

“Mom, she's the child's mother after all. Let's take it slowly, you mustn't act recklessly,” Gu Shaoting worried that Song Can might mess everything up.

Given Song Can's personality, she was capable of anything.

“Don't worry, I understand. Do you have any pictures of the child? I'd like to see,” Song Can said, not letting go of the topic about the child.

Gu Shaoting opened his phone's gallery, selected a photo, and handed it to Song Can.

Taking the photo, Song Can examined it closely. "Oh, isn't this the little girl I bumped into at the mall that day? At the time, I thought she looked a lot like you. It turns out she's your daughter. What a remarkable coincidence," Song Can couldn't help but marvel at destiny's arrangement.

She was extremely happy inside, but she maintained a calm demeanor.

Tong Fei, seeing their reactions, felt a wave of fear in her heart. She was worried that all her previous efforts would be in vain.

After a long pause, she spoke in despair, "Shaoting, let's recognize Joy a bit later, alright?" She suddenly grabbed Gu Shaoting's hand tightly and continued, "Let's get married."

She didn't even dare to ask if he had fallen in love with Shu Pan or why he was so concerned about the child. She had never seen him care so much about a child.

Gu Shaoting looked at her, furrowing his brow, and his eyes turned icy.

"Let's discuss marriage later," Gu Shaoting's tone was cold. He had no mental capacity for discussing marriage at the moment. More importantly, he seemed to genuinely reject the idea of marrying Tong Fei.

Tong Fei was taken aback, but she had anticipated this response. She sat there like a statue, unmoving.

Song Can was a woman of action. The next day, she quietly went to the kindergarten where Joy was enrolled. She ignored Gu Shaoting's advice. She wanted to see Joy as soon as possible.

At the kindergarten's entrance, she stood on her tiptoes and strained to see inside.

Because it was morning, the children were doing exercises on the playground. She glanced multiple times and finally spotted Joy bouncing around in the middle. Her heart melted.

She truly wanted to tell Joy, "I'm your grandmother," but she held back to avoid scaring the child.

Standing at the entrance, she couldn't get enough of watching Joy.

Once back home, she immediately called Gu Shaoting. "You should quickly contact Shu Pan and have Joy recognize her roots. Our Gu family's descendants shouldn't be left suffering outside."

She had a determined tone, and Gu Shaoting felt a headache coming on. "Mom, didn't I tell you not to act recklessly?"

"What's wrong with that? Joy is already a Gu by name. You need to handle this matter as soon as possible," Song Can felt she couldn't wait any longer.

She thanked her lucky stars that she finally had a granddaughter. She had been waiting for this day for too long. Originally, she had reservations about Shu Pan, but now, seeing Joy, she felt a sense of gratitude. She was thankful that Shu Pan had given birth to Joy..

Chapter 147: Sick

Shu Pan had been extra cautious lately because Gu Shaoting had learned about

Joy's existence. She was afraid that Gu Shaoting might suddenly take Joy away. So, from going to school to coming back home, she took matters into her own hands and couldn't relax.

In Bin City, October already brought a cool autumn breeze, with fallen leaves lightly dancing in the wind, making a soft "crunch" under pedestrians' footsteps.

Shu Pan was under pressure due to her busy work schedule and the stress had taken a toll on her. Eventually, she fell ill.

One morning, she felt light-headed and her body felt weightless. Luckily, it was the weekend, so she didn't need to take Joy to kindergarten. She prepared some milk and boiled eggs for Joy in a daze.

Then she told Joy to eat her breakfast and play with her toys, not to touch anything in the house, and not to open the door. If anything happened, she should call her.

Seeing her mother's discomfort, Joy obediently nodded, and then let her mother rest in bed.

Shu Pan was very unwell. She searched her medicine box for a packet of cold medicine, mixed it, and drank it. Afterward, she lay in bed, feeling dizzy. Joy stood by the bed, holding her mother's hand, constantly calling her.

Wen Chi was away for a two-month study program in another city, and Ye Xiaomeng had returned to her hometown to visit her parents. With no one to help take care of the child, Shu Pan had to rely on herself, struggling to manage everything.

Lying in bed, Shu Pan felt alternately cold and hot, with no strength left in her body. She squinted her eyes, looked at Joy, and a wave of heartache washed over her. Then she drifted back to sleep.

Suddenly, her mobile phone inside her bag rang. Shu Pan was still half-asleep, and Joy heard it. She opened her mother's bag, took out the phone, glanced at her mother, who was still asleep, and tried not to wake her.

Then she pressed the answer button on the phone, and her childish voice sounded, "Hello, who are you looking for?"

On the other end of the phone, Gu Shaoting paused. Why was there a child's voice, and looking at the phone, he confirmed that it was Shu Pan's number.

Gu Shaoting raised an eyebrow, "Is this Joy?"

Gu Shaoting's voice was tender, unlike any time before.

“Uh-uh-uh... my mom... is sick, sleeping...” Joy spoke incoherently, but Gu Shaoting could roughly understand. Shu Pan was ill and asleep.

“Joy, don’t be scared. Uncle is on his way now. Uncle will take your mom to see a doctor. Don’t be afraid; stay at home and wait for Uncle.” After hanging up the phone, Gu Shaoting hurriedly drove to Shu Pan. All the way there, he was anxious at every red light.

In her drowsy state, Shu Pan woke up briefly, feeling disoriented. She thought she heard the doorbell ring and felt puzzled about who could be ringing the doorbell.

She struggled to sit up and unsteadily made her way to the door, opened it, and immediately felt her body go limp as the visitor swiftly caught her.

“Shu Pan, how are you?” Gu Shaoting held her, checking her forehead with his hand. It was burning hot. Shu Pan squinted and recognized him as Gu Shaoting before collapsing.

“Mom, how are you?” Joy came out from her room, tugging at Shu Pan’s clothes, crying.

“Joy, don’t be afraid. Uncle is here. You stay with Uncle, and I’ll take your mom to see the doctor.” Gu Shaoting comforted Joy, watching her in tears. He felt a pang of sadness.

He held Shu Pan, and with Joy by his side, he reached the car. He called He Ming to ask him to come and look after Joy. Shu Pan was sick..

Chapter 148: Hospital

After giving his instructions, Gu Shaoting drove to the nearest hospital. Upon arrival, he carried Shu Pan into the emergency room where a doctor examined her.

When Shu Pan woke up, her mind was still in a foggy state. She opened her eyes and found herself surrounded by white walls. She was lying on a bed, and she could faintly smell the scent of medicines and disinfectants. Was this a hospital?

She sat up abruptly, confirming that it was a hospital room. Her heart skipped a beat as she wondered about Joy's whereabouts. She scanned the room and saw a tall figure standing near the window with his back to her.

As she hesitated about what to say, the figure turned around, and she was surprised to see that it was Gu Shaoting.

Before she could express her concerns, Gu Shaoting had already approached her bedside and inquired, "How are you feeling? Is there anything still bothering you?"

"I'm much better now. But where's Joy? Where is she?" Shu Pan asked anxiously.

"He Ming has taken her out. Hospitals are full of germs, you know. Today was quite dangerous. If I hadn't called, no one would have known you fell ill at home," Gu Shaoting shivered at the thought.

"I've been very busy lately and exhausted. This has never happened before," Shu Pan admitted, her voice subdued.

"Living as a single mother with a child is not easy. You can't provide her with a good living environment," Gu Shaoting now had a lingering sense of concern.

"Don't worry, this won't happen again in the future," Shu Pan retorted, shutting down any further argument.

"Are you hungry? I'll go buy you something to eat. Is there anything specific you'd like?" Gu Shaoting changed the topic, deciding that she needed to rest now.

Shu Pan shook her head, "I'm not in big trouble anymore. I can go home later and pick up Joy."

Gu Shaoting furrowed his brow but remained silent. He left the room and returned shortly after, holding a bag. From the bag, he took out a bowl of plain congee and placed it on a tray by the bedside.

“Hurry up and finish this bowl of congee, and then I’ll take care of your discharge. If you don’t listen to me, I won’t bring Joy back,” Gu Shaoting warned.

Shu Pan couldn’t help but glare at him for a moment but then obediently started eating the congee. Maybe it was because she hadn’t eaten for a while, but she found it particularly delicious. As she ate, her stomach felt warm.

One spoonful after another, she finished the bowl quickly. Watching Shu Pan’s head bowing low over the empty bowl, Gu Shaoting couldn’t help but smile with satisfaction.

After finishing the congee, Shu Pan looked up at Gu Shaoting to signal that she had finished, expecting him to keep his promise.

Gu Shaoting glanced at her and then left the room. Shu Pan felt something unusual about Gu Shaoting’s behavior today.

Gu Shaoting completed the discharge procedures and intended to pick her up. “I can walk by myself,” Shu Pan told him, feeling embarrassed.

“Are you sure you can walk by yourself?” Gu Shaoting looked skeptical.

“I’ll be fine,” Shu Pan replied. Although she was still somewhat unsteady on her feet, she was determined to walk.

Gu Shaoting followed her, supporting Shu Pan as they made their way to the car. “What about Joy? Did you have He Ming take her back home?” Shu Pan couldn’t stop worrying about this.

“He Ming has already taken her back home. Don’t worry.” Gu Shaoting

reassured her. He could tell that her mind was solely focused on Joy..

Chapter 149: You Are An Uncle

When Gu Shaoting brought Shu Pan back home, they coincidentally met Joy downstairs.

“Mom, are you feeling better now? Please don’t get sick. I got so scared,” Joy, upon seeing Shu Pan, rushed to embrace her. She had been greatly frightened today.

“Sweetie, don’t be scared. Mommy is all better now,” Shu Pan held her daughter and silently vowed to be more careful and look after herself in the future.

“Mom, today, the uncle brought you to the hospital...” Joy began to say. “Mom knows, my love. Let’s go back home,” Shu Pan said and led Joy inside.

Gu Shaoting followed them into the apartment.

“Uncle, are you one of Mommy’s good friends?” Once they were inside, Joy’s innocent voice filled the room.

“Yes, I am, darling,” Gu Shaoting crouched down and replied.

“Oh, then you’re my good friend too,” Joy declared earnestly.

Shu Pan was in the kitchen, and although she hadn’t wanted to let him in earlier, she felt a sense of gratitude since he had helped her. So, she allowed him to stay.

“Shu Pan, when will you tell Joy that I am her dad? It’s really about time. I’m introducing myself as an uncle when I should be her dad,” Gu Shaoting felt that this was becoming urgent. After all, he was Joy’s father.

“We need to give her some time to adapt. We told her a while back that her dad went to work far away,” Shu Pan explained. She believed that one day they would recognize each other, but perhaps it wasn’t the right time just yet. Joy had seen on TV that other kids’ parents lived together, and she wondered why her parents weren’t.

“Okay, we can take it slow for now.” Gu Shaoting agreed.

Suddenly, both of them fell silent, creating an awkward atmosphere in the kitchen.

Gu Shaoting walked out of the kitchen.

“Joy, is there anything you’d like? Uncle can buy it for you.” Joy was his precious little girl, and he wanted to pamper her.

“I don’t want anything. I already have everything, and I’m a big girl now. My mommy says I shouldn’t let other uncles buy things for me anymore,” Joy said seriously, lowering her voice to say something in Gu Shaoting’s ear.

“In fact, Uncle Wen has already bought me many toys,” she whispered.

Hearing Joy mention Uncle Wen, Gu Shaoting guessed that this was the refined man who had been frequently seen around Shu Pan. His face instantly turned sour.

In Joy’s heart, Uncle Wen was apparently held in high regard.

Gu Shaoting was taken aback. “Oh, Uncle Wen is pretty awesome. How about we go out to play next time?”

“I’ll go if my mom goes,” Joy said with determination.

“Joy, do you miss your dad?” Gu Shaoting suddenly asked.

“Yes, I do. My dad works far away, ” Joy replied, her mood turning a bit somber. Gu Shaoting quickly embraced her.

When it was time for dinner, Gu Shaoting, feeling a bit shameless, sat at the dining table. Shu Pan reluctantly gave him an extra bowl and chopsticks.

Like someone who hadn’t had a homemade meal in a long time, Gu Shaoting wolfed down his food.

At that moment, Gu Shaoting thoroughly enjoyed the atmosphere. He wished he could freeze time in this moment.

He gazed at the mother and daughter eating dinner and smiled contentedly..

Chapter 150: Encounter with Cheng Yang

Gu Shaoting spent a long time at Shu Pan’s house. In the end, he had no more excuses to stay, so he left.

When he stepped outside, it was already dark, and he didn’t want to return to his empty house. He called He Ming.

“Where are you? Come out for a drink,” Gu Shaoting invited him.

“Um... Brother Ting, I can’t tonight, I have something to do,” He Ming quickly declined. Most importantly, Ye Xiaomeng didn’t like people who drank, not even beer. He had tried a few times, and every time, Ye Xiaomeng would show a disgusted expression.

“Has the sun risen from the west?” Gu Shaoting pondered for a moment. Had He Ming undergone a transformation?

“Hehe, Brother Ting, you’d better not drink either. It’s not good for your health,” He Ming said. At this moment, Gu Shaoting believed that He Ming had been brainwashed. Who had influenced him so much? Gu Shaoting really wanted to find out.

“Why do you have so much free time? You’re always around,” Ye Xiaomeng couldn’t figure out why He Ming was clinging to her.

“I’m keeping you company for a little shopping. You’ve been away in your hometown for two days, and it felt like an eternity. I missed you,” He Ming pitifully replied.

“Fine, but no impulsive shopping. If you buy anything unnecessary, I won’t go,” Ye Xiaomeng clarified, well aware of He Ming’s nature.

“Alright, I get it. Let’s go,” He Ming urged her.

Ye Xiaomeng wasn’t quite sure about her relationship with He Ming now. They were constantly bickering and had no formal status. Since her breakup with Cheng Yang, she had been afraid of loneliness and wanted someone to keep her company. She hadn’t taken the initiative to define her relationship with He Ming, so they were just taking things day by day.

Arriving at the shopping mall, it was still early, and there were many people around. Ye Xiaomeng didn’t have anything specific to buy, so she strolled around while He Ming followed her, pointing out stores and offering opinions on different items.

Ye Xiaomeng had never seen a man talk so much.

“I’ll just walk around. You don’t need to keep talking in my ear,” Ye Xiaomeng finally lost her patience.

"I'm just giving you some advice. Have you found anything you like? How about we check out the clothing section?" He Ming suggested.

"Let's just walk around," Ye Xiaomeng replied absentmindedly.

As they were discussing where to go next, they encountered another couple walking towards them. The man was handsome, and the woman was attractive.

When Ye Xiaomeng looked ahead, her gaze met with Cheng Yang's. The scene felt familiar but was now irrelevant to her.

Cheng Yang was a little embarrassed. He looked away awkwardly, but when he saw He Ming beside Ye Xiaomeng, he froze and his eyes dimmed.

In reality, the world kept turning every day. Breaking up with someone didn't mean the end of the world. The old went, the new came, and everyone knew this. So, one shouldn't say one couldn't live without someone. The world would keep on going.

Ye Xiaomeng glanced at them but pretended not to recognize them. She continued walking past Cheng Yang and his companion with He Ming.

It seemed that He Ming also picked up on something, but he acted like he didn't know and held Ye Xiaomeng's hand as they walked on.

Two people who had once separated passed each other.

Ye Xiaomeng seemed to forget this brief encounter and continued to stroll around happily.

Seeing that he had found a new destination, she was happy for him. Everyone should move forward, not dwell on the past. There was no obstacle that couldn't be overcome, especially in love. Time was the best medicine.

He Ming had probably guessed something, but he pretended not to know. Everyone had their own secrets. He didn't want to pour salt on the healing scars. If the day came when she opened up, she would tell him. He waited for that day to arrive..