

## **As Agreed 431**

### Chapter 431 - 431: Gu Huanhuan

Shu Pan seemed to see Gu Shaoting walk away so hastily for the first time. What could have happened?

Suddenly, her heart was in turmoil again.

She remembered she hadn't reminded him to stay safe, so she tried calling his phone, but it kept ringing busy.

She tried several times, but it was the same.

Oh well, he's usually so decisive and calm. She believed he would handle whatever it was just fine.

Shu Pan kept reassuring herself because he hadn't explicitly mentioned what the urgent matter was, so she didn't want to pry.

After pondering for a while, Shu Pan decided to put her phone away.

Since Gu Shaoting had left, Shu Pan didn't feel like continuing to shop. It was almost time to meet Joy.

She decided to take a stroll and go meet Joy.

If she didn't find something to do, she was afraid she would keep worrying about Gu Shaoting.

At the same time, Gu Shaoting was driving to his second uncle's house.

His private phone had just rung, and he felt a pang of worry. It was usually a family emergency when that phone rang.

“Shooting, you’re finally here. I’ve been so worried,” Gu Shooting’s second uncle greeted him as if he were a savior.

“Uncle, what happened?” Gu Shooting’s face also showed some anxiety, as it was rare to see his second uncle so distraught.

“Ah, it’s your troublesome cousin, Huanhuan. She’s back in the country, no longer abroad. She secretly went to interview with a talent agency and is now pursuing her dream of becoming a star.” The second uncle’s words were rushed and jumbled because he was so agitated.

Though Gu Shooting managed to grasp the gist of it, it was clear that his cousin, Gu Huanhuan, had returned to pursue a career in the entertainment industry after completing her studies.

Huanhuan was his second uncle’s favorite, born when he was much older, so she was cherished like a pearl.

Growing up, she and Gu Shooting had a close relationship because they were the only ones in their family. Gu Shooting treated her like a little sister and always catered to her requests.

He was always there to clean up her messes whenever she got into trouble.

This time, she had entered the entertainment industry, probably because she was afraid her family wouldn’t approve and kept everyone in the dark.

Her worry was justified; her family would definitely disapprove.

What kind of place was the entertainment industry? It’s a melting pot of all sorts, with all kinds of people. Gu Huanhuan, as an innocent girl, was like a blank sheet of paper. How could she handle it? She only saw the glamorous side of being a star and didn’t realize the sacrifices and dark aspects behind the scenes.

This girl was really reckless. Usually, everyone spoiled her too much.

“Uncle, don’t worry. I’ll talk to her and find out where she is.” Gu Shaoting comforted him.

“She’s probably out with her friends. I didn’t know anything until a friend told me she had filmed some advertisements and gained some fame, becoming one of those internet celebrities. It’s all a mess. I thought she was working at a company.” Gu Shaoting’s second uncle got a headache whenever he thought of his daughter.

His daughter, who used to be so well-behaved, why was she so stubborn about this?

“Don’t get worked up. I’ll talk to her. Grandpa shouldn’t know about this, right?” Grandpa always stayed at the second uncle’s house.

“How dare I tell the old man? Wouldn’t that make him anxious too?” Gu Shaoting’s second uncle sighed.

“Okay, if she comes back, call me. I’ll have someone look for her whereabouts now.” Gu Shaoting reassured his second uncle.

“Alright, thank you. Please try to persuade that girl.” With Gu Shaoting’s words, the second uncle’s suspended heart finally settled.

He trusted Gu Shaoting’s abilities..

Chapter 432 - 432: Furious

After Gu Shaoting left, he immediately called a friend to help him find out where Gu Huanhuan was.

At that moment, Gu Shaoting was sitting in a Mercedes-Benz driven by a chauffeur, speeding towards the largest entertainment venue in Bin City, the Kempinski.

The chauffeur had driven Gu Shaoting for so long and had never seen his face look so dark and troubled.

Usually, for personal matters, Gu Shaoting would drive himself. Today, seeing his gloomy mood, the chauffeur suggested he drive instead, and Gu Shaoting, after a moment's thought, agreed.

Gu Shaoting was so angry because of Gu Huanhuan. She really didn't know her place, and he was determined to teach her a lesson.

After about half an hour, the car finally arrived at the Kempinski.

When Gu Shaoting got out of the car, his expression had improved significantly, but his face still wore a forbidding look, a warning not to approach him.

"Mr. Gu, you've finally arrived," a young man in his twenties approached Gu Shaoting with a sense of relief. Serving the Gu family's young master was not an easy task.

"Where is she?" Gu Shaoting asked with a stern face.

"Miss Gu is in VIP Room 206 on the second floor," the man replied, feeling intimidated every time Mr. Gu wore that expression.

He led the way, quickly guiding Gu Shaoting upstairs.

Another VIP room? What was this girl up to? She really needed to be taught a lesson.

As they approached the private room, Gu Shaoting's brows furrowed tighter and tighter.

All along the way were scantily clad women, some of whom deliberately bumped into Gu Shaoting and even directly invited him to have a drink, but Gu Shaoting avoided them all.

The place was suffocating, filled with the stench of alcohol, and seeing couples embracing and kissing shamelessly in the corridor made Gu Shaoting's temples throb with anger. He felt the urge to flatten the whole place.

Gu Huanhuan, this girl, had really gone too far this time. He hadn't realized she had this kind of capability before.

"Mr. Gu, we're almost there," the man said when he saw Gu Shaoting's twisted forehead, eager to break the silence.

Finally, they arrived at the door of Room 206. "Mr. Gu, Miss Gu is inside," the man said, relieved to finally fulfill his duty.

Gu Shaoting opened the door and was greeted by a sight that made him deeply inhale. If he didn't have good manners and restraint, he might have smashed everything inside and thrown everyone out.

The private room was large, dimly lit, and filled with an ambiguous atmosphere. Men and women sat on the couch, embracing each other. Their gaze was focused on the two people dancing passionately in the middle of the room.

The woman was wearing provocative makeup, a camisole, and denim shorts, gyrating wildly, while the man, dressed in a black shirt and tight black pants, moved his body rhythmically. They would draw close and then pull away.

Around them, men and women whistled and applauded. Especially the men present, their eyes were like hungry wolves fixed on the dancing woman.

The scene was wild, everyone was excited.

But in Gu Shaoting's eyes, it was infuriating. He took a step forward, took off his jacket, and wrapped it around the dancing woman.

In a cold voice, Gu Shaoting said, "Gu Huanhuan, do you know what you're doing?"

The dancing woman finally regained her senses and saw Gu Shaoting in front of her.

Her heart sank. Why did it have to be her cousin? This was just her luck..

#### Chapter 433: Teaching That Naughty Girl a Lesson

Gu Huanhuan saw Gu Shaoting's grim face and felt a sense of impending doom.

What wind blew her brother here? Since childhood, the person she feared most was her brother, although he doted on her.

She had risen to fame with a single advertisement and was now starting to receive scripts. Her popularity was gradually increasing, and she relied solely on her own abilities. Her family knew nothing about it, so she had come out to celebrate with her colleagues and friends.

Who would have thought she would be caught by her brother?

Her current plan was to pretend to be drunk and innocent.

She blinked her beautiful eyes and reached out to tilt Gu Shaoting's chin. "Who are you? Are you here to watch me dance? I'll dance for you now," she said with a giggle.

"Gu Huanhuan, I'll give you a second. If you keep pretending to be crazy and acting stupid, you'll see how I deal with you later," Gu Shaoting threatened, his face cold.

Gu Huanhuan wanted to continue pretending to be drunk to fool Gu Shaoting, but hearing his words made her a bit nervous. She knew Gu Shaoting was a man of his word and could be very stern.

She stole a glance at him, wanting to say something to him, but seeing his stern expression, she held back. Gu Shaoting didn't give her a chance to resist, grabbing her and leading her outside without a word.

"Friends, I apologize for the oversight. Enjoy yourselves. I have to leave now, but we'll play again next time," Gu Huanhuan hastily said before leaving.

Gu Shaoting covered her mouth, preventing her from saying anything more. There wouldn't be a next time.

"What are you doing, bro?" Gu Huanhuan finally found a chance to catch her

breath and asked Gu Shaoting discontentedly.

"I don't want to talk right now. We'll talk when we get back," Gu Shaoting said coldly, giving her a sidelong glance.

Gu Huanhuan suddenly felt a chill.

"Bro, stop wearing that poker face. Don't you want to see me? It's been ages since we last met, hasn't it? And now, besides me, who else would want to face that icy expression of yours? You're going to stay single forever with that attitude."

At the same time, she clicked her tongue sympathetically at Gu Shaoting's predicament.

Gu Huanhuan pouted, seemingly sympathizing with Gu Shaoting, but in reality, she was somewhat reveling in his misfortune.

Gu Huanhuan only knew that Gu Shaoting had divorced a few years ago, and she knew little about his ex-sister-in-law, as she was abroad at the time.

But could you blame anyone? Look at her cousin's stern expression. It's enough to scare any woman away, although he's handsome and well-off.

Gu Shaoting walked with a steady pace, pulling Gu Huanhuan along, still silent.

Gu Huanhuan continued, "You're in your thirties now. It's time to worry about your own lifelong affairs. Find a girlfriend and stop worrying Grandpa and the others. Of course, you need to change your attitude too, or else women will leave you like your previous wife did."

Was she plucking hairs at a tiger's mouth?

"Shut up." He had to speak up when it came to Shu Pan. Gu Shaoting squeezed out the words through gritted teeth, wishing he could throw this drunken chatterbox to the side of the road.

Although Gu Shaoting was irritated to no end by her, she was still his beloved sister.

"Bro, let go. I can walk on my own. It's not a good look to be dragging me around like this. After all, I'm a public figure now," Gu Huanhuan protested, trying to free herself from his grip.

As long as she didn't mention being a star, he could control his temper. But once she did, he got even angrier.

"Are you going to keep acting up?" Gu Shaoting warned.

Ignoring his warning, Gu Huanhuan continued to mutter discontentedly.

Gu Shaoting shot her a glare, ready to settle the score later.

What a wonderful night it could have been. He should have been cuddling with Panpan, dreaming sweet dreams, instead of dealing with a drunkard like her..

Chapter 434: Creating News



Gu Huanhuan continued to provoke as if she had no fear, “Bro, I’m all grown up now. I know what I’m doing. Being a star has always been my dream. It’s not about the money; it’s about my passion. And now that I’ve successfully taken this step, bro, I hope you’ll support me.”

Gu Huanhuan knew that her family might already know about her entry into the entertainment industry because her dad had called in the afternoon, questioning her, and now her cousin had shown up at night.

But this dream of hers, she was determined to pursue it.

She also knew that the entertainment industry could be shady, but she would keep herself clean.

Usually, it was all just for fun, a bit of acting. She didn’t have the guts for the real deal.

Gu Huanhuan glanced left and right with her beautiful eyes and spotted a figure holding a camera not far away. She flashed a cunning smile.

She knew that Bin City, the largest entertainment hub, was a place many celebrities liked to visit. Many newcomers in the industry would come here to try their luck and get some exposure.

With her current level of fame, stirring up a bit of gossip would be perfect.

Anyway, her cousin didn’t have a girlfriend. What harm was there in using him a bit?

“Bro...” Gu Huanhuan suddenly stepped forward and hooked her arm around Gu Shaoting’s, presenting a perfect profile.

“What?” Gu Shaoting was surprised by her actions. What mischievous idea did this girl have now?

“Nothing. Just wanted to call you over,” Gu Huanhuan said sweetly.

"I'll take you home. It's late, and we need to have a serious talk," Gu Huanhuan approached, and Gu Shaoting wrinkled his brow at the smell of alcohol emanating from her.

"Okay, but I'm going to your place. If I go back like this, I'm afraid my dad will have a heart attack from worry," Gu Huanhuan stuck out her tongue. Usually, she would dress more modestly when visiting.

"You? Worried about your dad?" After finding Gu Huanhuan, Gu Shaoting had already spoken to his second uncle, telling him not to worry.

Gu Huanhuan shrugged.

Her goal was achieved. She believed that after those gossipmongers added fuel to the fire, tomorrow's news would feature intimate photos of the newly famous Huanzi and a man embracing.

Oh, by the way, Huanzi was her stage name.

She created some scandals, boosted her popularity, and then the next script...

Thinking about it made her happy. Acting was her ultimate goal. Since she was young, she had a strong desire to perform. But her family probably didn't want her to pursue this career, so they ignored her training in this area. Luckily, she secretly studied it in college.

The car arrived, and Gu Shaoting stuffed her inside. She was truly a headache.

Panpan, on the other hand, was gentle and considerate.

After a night of turmoil, Gu Huanhuan was probably tired. She fell asleep shortly after getting into the car.

Gu Shaoting looked at her innocent face, now covered in makeup like a palette, and couldn't help but sigh. He realized he hadn't been paying enough attention to her. He needed to be more attentive in the future.

The driver glanced discreetly in the rearview mirror, thinking that this miss could really throw off their usually composed Mr. Gu.

“Mr. Gu, where are we heading now?” the driver asked.

Gu Shaoting thought for a moment. It was too late to go back to Shuimu Qinghua, and it would probably disturb Panpan and Joy.

“Let’s go to Tongyuan Villa,” Gu Shaoting rubbed his temples and replied.

The driver turned the car around and headed towards Tongyuan.

Gu Huanhuan slept soundly, but little did she know what consequences her actions would bring to Gu Shaoting..

#### Chapter 435: Don ‘t Bother

Tongyuan Villa had been renovated for some time now and was ready for occupancy. Gu Shaoting had also hired a housekeeper, Mrs. Li, to take care of the place and start organizing the rooms.

Originally, Gu Shaoting planned to move in with Shu Pan and Joy in a while because the environment here was beautiful and spacious. But unexpectedly, the first one to move in was the troublemaker, Gu

Huanhuan.

Upon arriving at Tongyuan, Mrs. Li immediately greeted them. “Sir, what can I do for you?”

“Mrs. Li, please prepare a clean set of clothes and tidy up the guest room,” Gu Shaoting said before striding into the house with the sleeping Gu Huanhuan in his arms.

Once inside, Gu Shaoting placed her in the bathtub and turned on the warm water, spraying it over Gu Huanhuan.

“Wow!”

“Help!” The girl, who had been sleeping soundly, used her hands to brush the water off her face while calling for help, taking a while to fully wake up.

She raised her head, glaring at Gu Shaoting. “Bro, are you trying to drown me for my inheritance?”

Gu Shaoting crossed his arms, his face dark. “Look at yourself now, you look like a ghost. All you do is cause trouble.”

Gu Huanhuan hung her head silently. She knew that if her cousin found out, it wouldn’t end well. And look, she was right.

She wondered if she had any reliable friends who could be introduced to her brother so he’d have someone else to manage, giving him less time to bother her.

Seeing her silent, Gu Shaoting’s tone raised slightly. “Gu Huanhuan, are you even listening to me?”

Gu Huanhuan looked at him, her lips trembling as if she was about to cry. “Bro,

I’m already in my twenties, I’m an adult. Why are you still controlling me?”

“Now you claim to be an adult, but your actions are worse than a child’s,” Gu Shaoting mocked.

“Bro, I’m feeling cold. I want to get out,” Gu Huanhuan said, hugging herself.

“Stand still and reflect on your actions,” Gu Shaoting stared at her. “You’re wearing that and complaining about being cold?”

“Bro...” Gu Huanhuan felt discontented, but she dared not stir. She couldn’t afford to defy Gu Shaoting; he was someone who responded better to gentleness than resistance.

“Do you even recognize me as your brother? Why do you make decisions without consulting the family?” Gu Shaoting looked at this girl, who seemed oblivious to her own limitations, and felt exasperated.

“Bro, I want to get up and sleep. I’m tired.” Gu Huanhuan, feeling like a defendant in court, had long lost her patience and started to throw a tantrum. Gu Shaoting remained firm. “Do you realize your mistake?”

Gu Huanhuan remained silent. She couldn’t admit her mistake; otherwise, everything she had worked for would vanish into thin air.

Gu Shaoting raised an eyebrow, feeling helpless with this girl.

The girl finally lifted her head, puffing up her cheeks. “I’m an adult, and I have the right to decide my own life. You don’t even have a girlfriend yourself. Focus on your own affairs; you don’t need to meddle in mine.”

Gu Shaoting scolded sternly, “Just because you call me ‘bro’ doesn’t mean I shouldn’t discipline you. ”

“Is it because I called you ‘bro’ that you can be so harsh to me?” Gu Huanhuan burst into tears, disregarding her image.

“Crying won’t help. Since we haven’t resolved this today, no one will be sleeping,” Gu Shaoting said, massaging his temples where a dull ache was forming.

“Dictatorial... oppressive...” Gu Huanhuan grumbled indignantly..

## Chapter 436: Stern Reprimand

Gu Shaoting knew that this girl was feigning vulnerability, hoping to soften his heart. He was well aware of her intentions, so he remained resolute and refused to compromise.

“Gu Huanhuan, let me repeat it once more: you’re not suited for the entertainment industry. It’s a cesspool, and look at you now, daring to go out dressed like that,” Gu Shaoting said solemnly.

This kind of girl thought being a celebrity meant glitz and glamour every day, without realizing the various unwritten rules behind the scenes. Gu Huanhuan pouted. “You all don’t care about me anymore, or how I feel.” Tears were starting to well up in the young girl’s eyes.

“Sir, the clean clothes are ready, and the guest room is tidied up,” Mrs. Li chimed in at the opportune moment, just as Gu Shaoting was about to reprimand Gu Huanhuan.

“Get yourself cleaned up first. I’ll be waiting for you in the living room,” Gu Shaoting said before walking away.

Gu Huanhuan made faces behind his back. Such a cold-hearted person, always with a stern face. No wonder he still didn’t have a girlfriend.

“Miss, you should wash up quickly to avoid catching a cold. I’ll make you some ginger tea later,” Mrs. Li said. She didn’t know who had been brought here, but seeing how much Mr. Gu valued her, she must be important.

“Mrs. Li, right? Thank you. Do you know if my cousin usually brings anyone else here?” Gu Huanhuan asked, observing the newly renovated villa. Despite knowing her brother’s extensive properties, the fact that someone had been assigned to look after this place indicated that someone was coming to stay. But with such a large house, was it really just for him?

Gu Huanhuan was brimming with curiosity.

Mrs. Li, upon hearing her address Mr. Gu as “cousin,” realized that who the girl was.

“Miss, I’ve only been here for a short time, so I haven’t seen anyone else come. Mr. Gu has only visited twice and arranged for someone to buy some daily necessities,” Mrs. Li said, feeling awkward. Even if she knew more, she couldn’t just gossip; working in such a wealthy household required discretion. “Okay,” Gu Huanhuan said dejectedly. She had hoped to glean some gossip about her brother.

“In that case, I’ll go prepare some ginger tea for you,” Mrs. Li said, noticing the cooling weather. The young girl seemed resistant to the cold and was dressed so lightly—it would be strange if she didn’t catch a cold.

“Thank you, Mrs. Li,” Gu Huanhuan said as she began to clean up. She was thinking of ways to coax her brother. Once he agreed, it would be as good as the entire family’s approval.

Her brother had a lot of say in the household affairs.

After Gu Huanhuan emerged and found the living room empty, she inwardly rejoiced, thinking she had dodged another lecture. Little did she know, things wouldn’t go as she hoped.

Gu Shaoting returned after just stepping outside for a smoke.

“Tomorrow, you’re going back home. Find a decent job and behave yourself. Otherwise, if you want a position at Gu Group, you can pick it yourself,” Gu Shaoting cut to the chase, making a decision for her.

“I don’t want to,” Gu Huanhuan protested.

“Are you itching for trouble. Gu Huanhuan?” Gu Shaoting showed signs of growing anger.

Although infuriated, Gu Huanhuan dared not push too far.

Because she knew her cousin was always firm in his decisions. Though he spoiled her, he never compromised on matters of principle.

Throughout her childhood, she never did anything he forbade.

Back then, it was normal for him to be strict. But now, in her early twenties, he still intervened.

Was there something wrong with him mentally or physically for not pursuing romantic relationships and instead focusing on controlling her?

Well, maybe nobody was interested in him anyway. Even as an incredibly beautiful girl, she thought bitterly, he still treated her with such a heart of stone. He deserved to be single..

Chapter 437: Woman?

If Gu Shaoting knew what Gu Huanhuan was thinking deep down, he might have felt like strangling her.

At this time, he should have been at home cuddling with Shu Pan, showering her with affection. But now? This troublemaker showed no remorse, still cursing him for being single?

"Miss, Mr. Gu is doing this for your own good. You don't understand how dangerous society can be nowadays. You, as such an innocent young girl, are very likely to be taken advantage of," Mrs. Li chimed in to help.

"Mrs. Li, even you're siding with him? That's too much. You're all bullying me!" Gu Huanhuan stomped her foot in frustration. If she went home, her budding entertainment career would be over.

"Alright, don't be angry. Have a bowl of hot ginger soup, don't catch a cold, and let's talk things out," Mrs. Li coaxed.



Gu Huanhuan wouldn't budge.

She put on a childish look and ran to Gu Shaoting, massaging his back as she spoke, "Cousin, let's compromise. I'll report all my plans to you in the future, and I'll consult with you before taking any acting jobs, okay?"

Her young, tender face was so endearing.

Gu Shaoting couldn't bear to see her disappointed.

"I've just signed on for a youth drama, very innocent. Just got the contract. I'm waiting to join the crew. Brother, please be merciful. Breaking the contract would cost a lot of money," Gu Huanhuan continued.

The young lady could be flexible. Gu Huanhuan lowered her posture, looking pitiful, making it hard for anyone to refuse her.

Gu Shaoting pondered for a moment. She was his only cousin, and he couldn't bear to see her unhappy. Besides, it was rare for her to show enthusiasm for something.

Who cared about the money? He knew if he didn't agree to her terms, who knows what kind of trouble this little troublemaker would cause later?

"Fine, if you want to stay in the entertainment industry, I'll arrange for you a manager and two assistants. You must run any acting jobs by me first. If you don't agree or can't follow through, you come back to work at the company immediately," Gu Shaoting finally relented, at least ensuring that she wouldn't cause too much trouble under his watch.

Gu Huanhuan had ten thousand reasons to disagree. With everything under his control, what freedom did she have left? But wise people knew when to yield, and she could only agree for now.

"Great, I knew you'd always look out for me, cousin," Gu Huanhuan's flattery rang loud.

"Alright, it's settled then," Gu Shaoting glanced at his watch; it was already late.

"You'll sleep in the guest room here tonight. Someone will come to pick you up tomorrow and help arrange your schedule," Gu Shaoting instructed, then stood up and walked towards the foyer.

"Cousin, it's so late. Aren't you staying over tonight?" Gu Huanhuan inquired.

"No, I'm going back to Shuimu Qinghua," Gu Shaoting replied without looking back.

"Strange. It's not like someone's waiting for him at home, and this is his house too. Is it necessary to go back so late?" She thought. "Does he have a woman? Is that why he's in such a hurry to leave?"

Tonight, he checked his watch several times.

"Hmm, something's up. I'll have to find out the truth when I get the chance." She made the decision. If there really was such a great woman, she would make sure to thank her properly on behalf of the whole family.

Gu Shaoting's head was still throbbing from that bratty girl's antics. When he got back home, the living room had a dim, warm light left on, a habit

of Shu Pan's. Whenever he didn't return, she would leave a light on to guide him.

He tiptoed into the room and saw Joy sleeping soundly, with a smile on her face, probably dreaming sweet dreams..

Chapter 438: A Familiar Back View

After checking on Joy, Gu Shaoting finally entered Shu Pan's room. Shu Pan seemed to be sleeping restlessly, so Gu Shaoting bent down and gently placed a kiss on her lips.

As if sensing his presence, Shu Pan slowly opened her eyes and saw Gu Shaoting standing by the bed. His eyes had a hint of bloodshot, indicating his fatigue.

"You're back?" Shu Pan's voice was soft and gentle. Gu Shaoting, however, seemed distracted.

"Yeah, you go back to sleep. I'll go take a shower," Gu Shaoting replied, feeling a certain part of his body responding to the situation.

How could a man who had just started night life resist such temptation?

Gu Shaoting hurriedly took a shower as soon as he returned to the bedroom, wasting no time.

When he returned to the room, Shu Pan was already awake, sitting at the bedside, looking at him with concern.

"What happened? Is it serious?" Shu Pan had been restless all night, fearing something serious had occurred, hence Gu Shaoting's solemn expression.

"It's nothing. Don't worry. I'll tell you tomorrow. It's late. Go to sleep," Gu Shaoting embraced Shu Pan, then lay down beside her.

"But..." Shu Pan wanted to say more, but Gu Shaoting's hand on her waist began to wander restlessly.

"Not tired, huh?" Gu Shaoting murmured lowly in her ear, his breath tickling her face, sending shivers down her spine.

Shu Pan quickly closed her eyes, but it was too late. Gu Shaoting was now very awake.

In the early morning, Shu Pan was still half asleep when Gu Shaoting had already taken Joy to kindergarten and returned.

Half awake, Shu Pan noticed Gu Shaoting's return and panicked upon seeing the time—it was already past 8 O'clock. She quickly got up to get ready, realizing she was almost late.

'Why didn't you wake me up? I'm going to be late, and my perfect attendance award will be ruined,' Shu Pan scolded Gu Shaoting.

Ugh, why did men always have so much energy? She felt her legs weakening just thinking about it. It wasn't fair; did men never get tired?

"Take your time, no need to rush. What's a perfect attendance bonus anyway? I'll compensate you," Gu Shaoting casually remarked.

Shu Pan shot him a glare. She couldn't let him have his way all the time.

Due to her rush, Shu Pan forgot to ask Gu Shaoting about what had happened the night before as they hurried to the office. When they arrived, she was five minutes late clocking in, making her even more resentful toward Gu Shaoting.

As Shu Pan settled into her seat, she overheard someone exclaim, "Oh my goodness, how could this happen?"

The voice sounded sharp with excitement, drawing the attention of others nearby.

Shu Pan looked up to see several colleagues gathered around, covering their mouths, seemingly in a mix of shock and excitement.

Tang Wei, who enjoyed gossip, quickly joined them. "What's going on?"

A colleague pointed at the computer screen. "It's a celebrity news report. My new favorite idol, Huanzi, is in a relationship! How could she be dating already? She's so adorable! You know how popular her recent makeup advertisement is, and her career is just taking off. Why would she start dating

"Huanzi? I remember her. I've seen that ad. She's really innocent-looking and beautiful. I heard she's planning to star in a drama," colleagues chimed in.

Shu Pan wasn't interested in celebrity gossip, so she paid no attention.

"Hey, doesn't this figure look familiar?" The colleague scrolled down the screen, revealing a photo of a man from behind, surprising everyone..

Chapter 439 - 439: Gossip

"I'll take a look." Tang Wei leaned in closer.

"It does look familiar, doesn't it? And what a sight! The man's silhouette is so tall and sturdy; I bet his face is just as handsome. And the woman, petite and slender, dressed so provocatively. Any woman would be captivated by them," Tang Wei analyzed confidently, as if she were a love expert.

"Mr. Gu?" Someone in the crowd exclaimed, as if making a remarkable discovery. "Don't you think this silhouette looks a lot like our Mr. Gu?"

Initially uninterested in gossip, Shu Pan's curiosity was piqued by her colleague's comment, especially considering Gu Shaoxing's late return the previous night. It seemed too coincidental. Her hand involuntarily opened the entertainment section of her computer's web browser.

As Huanzi was a rising star, her news was prominently featured. In the entertainment section, she quickly found the article.

In the photo, a man was holding a woman's hand, looking intimate.

Though only a silhouette, Shu Pan found it oddly familiar, as she saw it every day now. Even in the dim light, the man's clothing and hair resembled Gu Shaoting's.

Shu Pan reassured herself that she couldn't definitively conclude it was Gu

Shaoting based solely on a few photos, especially ones showing only his back. Yet, deep down, she had a nagging feeling it was him, reinforced by the consensus among her colleagues.

No wonder he had evaded the topic when she asked him last night. Did he not want her to know? Did he think she was naive and easily fooled?

It was just too much.

The more Shu Pan thought about it, the more aggrieved she felt. Last night, they had...

She couldn't bring herself to finish the thought.

As everyone seemed convinced it was Mr. Gu, suddenly the chatter ceased, and her colleagues looked at Shu Pan with sympathy.

Because they knew they were now a couple, yet Mr. Gu couldn't resist temptation, secretly meeting with a female celebrity behind Shu Pan's back.

Still, they all understood. After all, for wealthy individuals, a wandering eye was considered normal. A young and attractive female celebrity was good for one's image. Who wouldn't like that?

Shu Pan could feel everyone's eyes on her, and though she felt deeply disappointed, she pretended to be strong, busying herself with tasks as if nothing was wrong.

In truth, only she knew the bitterness in her heart.

Tang Wei also noticed Shu Pan's distress. She glanced over and said, "Upon closer inspection, it doesn't really look like Mr. Gu after all. There are so many people in the world, and plenty could have similar silhouettes."

Everyone knew Tang Wei was trying to comfort Shu Pan, so they chimed in,

"Yeah, it couldn't possibly be Mr. Gu!"

With that, they dispersed. Tang Wei walked over and gave Shu Pan's shoulder a reassuring pat. "Are you okay? Don't overthink it. Things might not be as you imagine. And it might not even be Mr. Gu."

"Thank you, Tang Wei. I'm fine," Shu Pan replied with a faint smile, though it held a hint of resignation.

"Get back to work, you've got this," Tang Wei encouraged before returning to her seat. Shu Pan remained lost in thought, wondering if Gu Shaoting would come clean to her when they went home today.

Considering his warmth towards her, he didn't seem like the type to betray her. Or was he simply trying to have the best of both worlds?

The more Shu Pan thought about it, the more tangled her thoughts became.

She wanted to call Gu Shaoting and ask him directly if he was the man in the news report. But she hesitated. What if he admitted it? What would she say then? Would she not be bringing humiliation upon herself?

Throughout the day, Shu Pan's mind remained in turmoil, and even as she clocked out for the day, she still felt out of sorts..

Chapter 440 - 440: Unable to Calm Down

However, whenever Shu Pan thought of Gu Shaoting's behavior, it felt like there were tens of thousands of ants gnawing at her insides, causing her immense discomfort.

Today, in the office, she endured many strange glances—some sympathetic, some gloating, some mocking...

Perhaps many were seeing her as a joke, laughing at her audacity to think she could hold onto the CEO with any charm.

As she left the office at the end of the day, Shu Pan sent a message to Gu Shaoting, asking him to pick up Joy for her as she had something to attend to and wouldn't be able to make it.

After that, she silenced her phone, dropped it into her bag, and walked out of the company doors alone.

They hadn't even been back together for two months, and he had already been involved with another woman. How could she bear this?

Throughout the day in the office, she had endured, even though she was in agony inside. She maintained a facade of composure, unwilling to show her weakness to others.

But now, with no one else around, she dared to let down her mask.

This was the perfect opportunity for her to clear her mind and contemplate whether it was worth maintaining this relationship with Gu Shaoting.

Her mind was in turmoil.

As people bustled past her on the street, each with a clear destination in mind, she alone wandered aimlessly, unsure of where to go.

After walking around for a while, she grew tired and found a place to sit down.



Her hand instinctively reached for her phone, and she saw a dozen missed calls, all from Gu Shaoting.

Her heart stirred again—what did he mean by this? It seemed like he was very concerned about her.

Thinking of today's entertainment news, Shu Pan felt a surge of anger and frustration, casually tossing her phone back into her bag.

Gu Shaoting was indeed frantic.

Just before leaving work, he received a message from Shu Pan, but he didn't pay much attention, assuming she had something to do. He went ahead and picked up Joy.

Afterward, he tried calling her, wanting to ask where she was and offered to pick her up himself. But there was no answer. He called again and again, realizing her phone must have been blowing up with notifications, yet still, there was no response.

Gu Shaoting was extremely anxious, worrying if Shu Pan had encountered some trouble. Why else wouldn't she answer the phone?

Joy seemed to sense her daddy's anxiety and obediently played on the side.

Shu Pan walked around aimlessly, knowing that Gu Shaoting would take good care of Joy, so she wasn't worried.

As she strolled, her stomach growled, and she spotted the famous snack street ahead. She walked over, ordered some of her favorite snacks, and enjoyed them thoroughly.

Her emptiness gradually filled with the delicious food, and she felt some energy returning.

Suddenly, she had an epiphany. There was nothing to worry about. If she could be with Gu Shaoting, then great. If not, they would part ways.

Hadn't she been through this before? At worst, things would go back to how they were. Why make herself miserable? With that realization, her heart lightened.

As the night grew darker, she hoisted her bag and headed home.

Downstairs, she noticed the lights on their floor, and her heart twinged. Normally, she would eagerly return home, but now, she was somewhat afraid to face Gu Shaoting.

As she reached for her keys, Gu Shaoting had already opened the door.

"Panpan, where did you go? I called you so many times, but you didn't answer," Gu Shaoting said, relief evident in his voice as he saw Shu Pan return.

"I had plans with a colleague and went out for a walk," Shu Pan lied, her tone neutral, masking her true emotions.

"Have you eaten?" Gu Shaoting asked with concern, noticing her subdued mood..