

Beautiful 241

Chapter 241: Ling Qingyu: Is there something wrong with my IQ

The first item exhibited didn't even move Ling Qingyu's eyelids. It was nothing more than the famous abstract painting or it seemed.

After the host announced the identity of the painter, people gasped. Their eyes shone with greed to own the painting.

Ling Qingyu was confused. People enjoyed seeing weird pattern designs and felt the true art. How come? Whenever she looked at the painting, why did she feel like an idiot? She couldn't analyze anything.

Ling Qingyu scratched her head, doubtful of her IQ, after comparing with the restless crowd. Even Tang Ziyi and Xiao Yue, who had nothing to do with art, were commenting on this and that.

She nearly plucked away her hair from overthinking. Her expression amused Yang Qingyue on the side, who chuckled.

"What? You're even looking down on me." Ling Qingyu narrowed her eyes.

"Of course not, Sister Ling. I'm relieved there is someone who's in the same situation as me," said Yang Qingyue.

Ling Qingyu suspected this girl was lying but there was no evidence. Anyway, she felt better Yang Qingyue accompanying her misery, whether on pretense or not.

Seeing the first item as a mere painting, Ling Qingyu quickly lost interest. Her eyes scanned over other materials underneath the cloak.

She rubbed her knuckles in excitement. Having heard many stories of the protagonist finding a treasure by paying less than the amount it was worth, Ling Qingyu wondered if her luck would give her the opportunity.

'Miss System, can you tell me whether any items here for immortality inheritance or similar?' Ling Qingyu asked in her mind.

Miss System rolled her eyes at Ling Qingyu's request. Although this was the first time she served as a system, Ling Qingyu's presumptuous idea broadened the horizon. But she scanned every object meticulously, despite her opposite announcement.

[Nope, nothing related. But they are good collectibles. You can decorate your empty manor.]

Ling Qingyu's face expressed regret. She didn't anticipate much but wasn't feeling well either. She didn't doubt Miss System's answer because multiverse existence disdained to lie.

While murmurs gained momentum among the crowd, the host finished describing the painting's history. Losing her desire, Ling Qingyu slouched on the seat in boredom, raising strangeness in Yang Qingyue's eyes.

What happened again? One moment full of hope, The next moment, loser vibe. Yang Qingyue thought, puzzled.

The host announced. "Ladies and gentlemen, this item will start at 100,000 yuan. Each increment should be at least 10,000. Please start raising price."

A short while later. "110,000!"

"125000!"

"200000!"

"..."

"250000 once, twice...and sold." The host smiled and slapped the small wooden hammer.

Ling Qingyu was speechless. Well, her first experience of attending the auction was exactly what she had seen in movies and novels.

The excitement and the crowd synergy, the silent competition between individuals were shown vividly before her.

The auction resumed and people's excitement never went down. It seemed there was something like a magnetic aura, attracting people to own ancient collectible works.

Whenever Ling Qingyu eyed those items, she felt empty. What she desired to keep were mostly technologically advanced items.

The second item was unveiled. A strong steel epee telling tales of battles of vicissitudes. The golden handle where some pieces went missing. Ling Qingyu seemed to understand the collector's emotion.

The price began with 50,000 yuan and it was still increasing without any signs of slowing down. Ling Qingyu sometimes raised her sign, participating in the auction and discovered joy, smiling happily.

Tang Ziyi and Xiao Yue smacked their tongue at Ling Qingyu's childishness. They were initially worried Ling Qingyu's mind would be burdened by the threats from the gangs.

It seemed they were thinking too much. Either she forgot so soon or her trust in them was immeasurable.

Somehow whenever she raised her hand, others stopped competing, as if frightened of being remembered by Ling Qingyu. She understood, why strength was supreme.

"Sold. Congratulations to Miss Ling, who owned the most dazzling epee." The host flattered.

Finally, Ling Qingyu won the prize with half a million yuan. An ancient weapon from the 16th century—Ling Qingyu preferred these to be her manor's decoration rather than abstract art.

"Why do think of buying this one?" Yang Qingyue asked.

"I like weapons. If not for the restriction of firearms, I even want to decorate my house with several types of firearms from different countries." Ling Qingyu said.

"I'm sure, you've no sense of arts." Yang Qingyue mocked Ling Qingyu to speechlessness.

"At least, this epee can be used to cut someone and protect myself." Ling Qingyu retorted. "What's the use of paintings, other than taking up my spacious manor?"

Yang Qingyue's mouth twitched, helpless against Ling Qingyu's answer. Although she had no sense of artistic talent, at least, living in a house where those beautiful paintings were hanging on the walls elated anyone's soul.

It helped as a psychological comfort and raised the prestige when someone visited one's house.

As for what Ling Qingyu thought, Yang Qingyue really didn't want to know. In fact, Ling Qingyu had a simple reason why she rejected these paintings on her manor's wall, because they were all owned by Shen family.

Every rich family, preserving their wealth for generations, had heritage in terms of both real estate and collectible items. These were the tell-tale signs differentiating between the wealthy classes.

What the Shen family sold in today's auction wasn't what they wanted to sell. There were many they kept to themselves. If not for their dire financial condition, Ling Qingyu guessed, this auction wouldn't be held in the first place.

What dire situation? Ling Qingyu had no idea but based on the past conversation with Mr. Shen, Ling Qingyu predicted the big family was in urgent need of money input.

This was also another reason why Shen family paid huge attention to her, who squandered billions of yuan easily without any hesitation.

Of course, the items in the auction could also belong to other families. Despite not having a bad reputation, Shen family weren't innocent as they depicted themselves in public.

Chapter 242: Stop mentioning me, I'm not Doraemon

The auction wouldn't stop with Ling Qingyu's thought. It continued as usual, unveiling numerous kinds of collectible items.

Ling Qingyu quickly lost interest, none of the later items had a deep heritage. Nonetheless, a portion of bootlickers remained chanting prices given their energy. If not to give face to Shen family, she wouldn't come here at all.

After all, refusing Mr. Shen's personal invitation, though wouldn't bring any trouble, Ling Qingyu disliked doing such a stupid act.

She and Yang Qingyue spoke, their faces close together, unrelated topics. Ling Qingyu felt their intimacy was increasing dramatically.

Based on this factor, she didn't suffer a loss, coming here in boredom. When Yang Qingyu couldn't hear, Ling Qingyu simply moved her mouth to the young policewoman's ears and whispered to his favorite.

"How are you going to pay back?" Yang Qingyu asked out of nowhere.

"Payback what?" Ling Qingyu was puzzled.

"Did you really forget I drove away the lunatics?" Yang Qingyue said with a threatening tone.

Ling Qingyu giggled and cursed inwardly. You drove away one but another came and rode my head.

"I said whatever you need." Ling Qingyu answered.

"But that isn't specific." Yang Qingyue whined.

"How about the armored truck you saw in the past days? I'll give you 4." Ling Qingyu relented.

Yang Qingyue's eyes shone and exclaimed happily. "Great, great. I want those beasts a long time ago."

"You have a good eye." Ling Qingyu snorted. "Your mouth is drooling; take care of your image."

Yang Qingyue was shocked and immediately wiped with the back of her hands and discovered nothing. "You, dead girl, learn to lie to the official."

Ling Qingyu leaned back and avoided Yang Qingyue's cute slap. While their actions weren't seen by most people, some interested parties noted the warm interaction and sighed at their closeness.

Particularly, Mr. Shen had a premonition that his plan sank into a ditch. He and his father already estimated Ling Qingyu's ability and concluded in the future, Ling Qingyu could surpass their family.

He was reluctant to let this woman go out of his grasp. He must press her underneath by any means necessary. There were various routes to take to conquer Ling Qingyu but none would work conventionally, not to mention with the addition of Yang Qingyue's presence.

Once Ling Qingyu became his, the rejuvenation of the Shen family wasn't far. Someone who could raise the company's net worth from the pitiful money to more than 30-40 billion yuan, had the capability to do more with the Shen family's foundation.

Unknown to Ling Qingyu, people with bad intentions were laying traps and conspiracy, she just immersed herself at the moment, indulging in Yang Qingyue's sophistry and fragrance.

"Sister Yang, I'll be sponsoring you with more vehicles in the coming future." Ling Qingyu said seriously. "A new company that I build will manufacture several types of cars and the sedan class might be the best suitable for your force. Remember the HongQi—the luxurious type—that I gave you."

Yang Qingyue nodded. "If the quality won't threaten the safety and convenience, I would like to see the vehicles."

"I'm sure you won't be disappointed." Ling Qingyu said. "Except for lacking too many functions, the reliability and durability remain the same."

"In fact, I don't need this much." Yang Qingyue made a suffocating smile. "If you continue providing, I'm not sure if there will be enough officers for the amount that you sponsor, even if one person driving one vehicle."

Ling Qingyu slapped her forehead. She almost forgot she was in Province N. The police force was usually understaffed due to a lack of recruitment from fresh blood, especially under the dark turmoil.

Who in the right mind wanted to find the meaningless battle against injustice since the true culprits were the ones sitting behind the desk and ordering them?

Ling Qingyu pursed her lips as she replied. "Well, don't worry I'm also advertising my brand through yours so you don't need to care too much."

"Tsk..as expected from the businesswoman. You never ever stop taking advantage of others." Yang Qingyue smacked her lips in displeasure. "But I'm satisfied with your beasts. So, it doesn't matter."

"In the end, as long as I give benefits, you'll speak." Ling Qingyu poked the pretentious balloon mercilessly.

Yang Qingyue glared and took a sip of wine, not bothering to talk.

"I suggest you raise the police image in the public as soon as possible to increase the manpower." Ling Qingyu expressed her opinion. "Once you form a rigorous and virtuous cycle, your goal won't be far away."

Yang Qingyue knew and nodded. "I'm aware of these factors and I'm trying."

"Well, how about I help you in another way?" Ling Qingyu changed the topic when she saw Yang Qingyue distraught.

"What way?"

"Sister Tang can train your loyal subordinates to the level of special units and I'm sure she will agree."
Ling Qingyu said.

"That's not counted. I already negotiated a price with her long ago." Yang Qingyue rolled her eyes at someone who always looked to exploit others.

"I'm talking about the training venue in my area. Everything is provided by me. You don't need a dime."
Ling Qingyu's eyes glittered like a fox.

"Deal!" Yang Qingyue quickly agreed, afraid that Ling Qingyu would refuse to recognize later. "You must promise me not to go back after your words."

"How could I bear to hurt my lovely police chieftess?" Ling Qingyu teased with a wolfish smile. She regained her smile and said solemnly. "I advise your subordinates should be someone loyal to you and very trustworthy, not spreading my involvement."

Yang Qingyue agreed. Although she sat on this important seat only for a short time, she understood the water shouldn't flow to outsiders and away from her control. She must first fill her own.

"But how can you be sure, your venue is better than our officials'?" Yang Qingyue eyed Ling Qingyu suspiciously, although she had long trusted this woman because Ling Qingyu had never disappointed her expectations.

"You can come to my place and see it for yourselves. Tang Ziyi supervised the construction personally."
Ling Qingyu said, throwing away the responsibilities of Tang Ziyi, who also perked her ears whenever her

name was mentioned. If not for the corner of her lips twitching slightly, she seemed uninterested in their topic.

Tang Ziyi exchanged glances with Xiao Yue. Ling Qingyu really did poise her like a roadblock to dissuade Yang Qingyue from asking further. Whatever the case, Tang Ziyi was there to solve it.

She wanted to tell Ling Qingyu—she wasn't a Doraemon existence.

Chapter 243: Pretentious moment

"Sister Yang, you better focus more on the public relation." Ling Qingyu gave a suggestion. "As long as you have a positive influence on the public, the rest becomes easy. How about the pieces of advice, me and Sister Tang told you?"

Yang Qingyue tapped her chin. "I've only arranged the task force to set up an emergency traffic response unit for the critical patients. As for the live broadcast and media technique, the new innovation—I might have to disappoint my sister."

Ling Qingyu nodded, despite not being satisfied with the results. Yang Qingyue was stuck in the old ideas. As a fresh blood, she must choose a path different from the rest, creating a trend.

"If you are talking about having financial difficulties to hire celebrities, you can pull it from my donated amount, or here is my ready-made sister." Ling Qingyu pointed at her cheap sister.

Although Ling Yunxiang was in a controversial quagmire, the discussion around her name had become clearer and cleaner. A healthy atmosphere rose under Athena's suppression.

Not to mention her threat against the Qin family worked superbly, cutting off further antagonizing movements which could harm Ling Yunxiang. In other words, Ling Yunxiang now fell under Ling Qingyu's protection, without having to worry.

Her status had been raised again and the previous salty black reputation now overturned with appropriate analysis by eager netizens and experts, including those hired by Ling Qingyu.

Overall, letting Ling Yunxiang work for Yang Qingyue, even for a short moment, was a suitable option. Yang Qingyue thought more and didn't agree straight away.

She felt hiring celebrities to promote her police force wasn't a down-to-earth approach. What if her subordinates broadcasted themselves to the public, providing a close look at their work? The idea seemed feasible.

Hearing Yang Qingyue's approach, Ling Qingyu beamed with smiles and nodded. "But your public relations department will become busy soon. I'm sure, once you make an announcement, so many platforms will come to you."

"Aren't you envious?" Yang Qingyue asked cheekily, obviously pointing out another source of wealth.

"Didn't you just say a moment ago, not to bite more than you can chew?" Ling Qingyu said with a smile. "If you're willing to wait a while, I can complete the platform for you but the disadvantage is as a newcomer, the exposure will be extremely low. I'm sure it will be fine after a while but your intended goals might be late."

Yang Qingyue's eyes turned gentle. Even though the greedy businesswoman in front of her always sought wealth, she wouldn't cheat her friend, especially after pointing out the pros and cons.

Ling Qingyu: Excuse me?

Actually, Yang Qingyue already noticed the situation but she was willing to sell a bit to repay gratitude toward Ling Qingyu.

Both conversed while in the background competition of price tags ensued. Ling Qingyu's and Yang Qingyue's harmonious scene contrasted the heated battle of wealth.

The two women also stopped chatting and focused their attention on the items presented. Another 2 items had already been auctioned after Ling Qingyu bought the epee.

There were more expensive than hers and she wasn't surprised. The latter the line the more valuable the items were. Every arrangement followed such principle.

"Now, let us see the ancient vases from the Alyssian era." The host exclaimed with excitement. "We've two emerald vases, inscribed with sculptures and patterns, describing the history. Don't worry, guests, we've verified with pertinent experts about the authenticity of the items. Now, let's begin with 1 million, each increment is 100,000."

Ling Qingyu's eyes lit up after the items were unveiled. The emerald vase with golden lining, despite lacking in luster, its aura told the onlookers what legend it had witnessed. Alyssian era, which Ling Qingyu had no idea whether it resembled the Roman Empire in her past world.

A short while later, a burst of cries, calling the prices, increased the amount rapidly. "1.1 million!"

"1.5 million."

"1.6 million."

"1.8 million."

Ling Qingyu was a bit surprised, the tendency to rise up didn't even slow down. She was puzzled at the crowd's reaction. After all, even though she had been in this world for several weeks and studied the complete history, she couldn't understand the legacy of the Alyssian Empire yet.

How much was it sought after, especially in a different continent? Ironically, the items from different continents spread because of the tentacle injection of democratic schools of thought on other continents, beginning from the Alyssia Empire.

A strong empire disintegrated after several centuries yet people still respected the supreme empress, who laid down the peaceful system and path of status upgrade.

Ling Qingyu wanted to laugh but she thought things always went unexpectedly. An empire transformed into several democratic states and the influence even reached other continents.

However, Ling Qingyu still gave maximum respect to the empress and even wondered if she was a transmigrator like her, because the empress's deeds were too miraculous and appeared like a mythology.

As items belonging to the empress era, Ling Qingyu also followed suit and raised her banner. "3 million."

"3 million!" The host shouted feverishly. "Anyone else...going once—"

"3.1 million." Another man shouted and raised his brows at Ling Qingyu in mockery as if to tell Ling Qingyu to keep going, she would only raise more.

Ling Qingyu ignored his psychological attack, her voice remained calm. "3.5 million" She opened her mouth.

"3.6 million." Another woman also raised the prices. For now, the items were wrestled between the people, sitting at the forefront.

"3.7 million." This time it was the man who was sitting in the same table as the woman.

Ling Qingyu decided to stay put and as she expected all the guests sitting in the same front arrangement shouted one after another until the price stagnated at 4.4 million yuan.

Only then Ling Qingyu entered the stage when fewer participants were involved. Her cold yet soft voice uttered, silencing the hall. "4.5 million."

Many had begun to think twice. Spending this amount for a pair of mere antique vases wasn't worth it.

There were many auction objects remaining to be unveiled. Spending a colossal amount and not having enough when one desired would become an embarrassment.

Still, some didn't want to give up. "4.6 million!"

"4.85 million."

Ling Qingyu's expression remained stoic as she followed. "5 million."

She had already shown her attitude and trying to compete more meant offending her, or so many thought. In fact, Ling Qingyu didn't care as long as no one cheated her. This was the battlefield of who could throw more money, not status competition or bullying others.

"Going once; going twice,—" Just when the host was about to hammer, a distinct male voice attracted attention.

"5.1 million." Ling Qingyu tilted her head in the direction of the voice and saw the same man who gave a mocking smile at her before.

This time, his expression proved something was amiss. Ling Qingyu's intuition believed the sudden conjecture to avoid trouble and let the man take the vases away.

Nonetheless, Ling Qingyu wasn't someone who easily gave up and fought for it. To dissuade the opponent from continuing to follow, Ling Qingyu returned the gentle smile, her expression difficult to interpret.

But what she said brought a strong deterrence. "6 million."

The host was also in utter disbelief. Everyone eyed Ling Qingyu in a different light, who had become more and more unfathomable.

Ling Qingyu noticed the change in attitudes of the onlookers. The corner of her eyes even captured Lin Fan deeply scrutinizing her. Ling Qingyu was keen on grabbing the antique vases.

Her heart somehow yearned as if these vases had something she highly sought. Having asked Miss System several times, Ling Qingyu received a negative answer. However, she was by no means giving up on them.

She hoped the male protagonist didn't get involved. Otherwise, she didn't mind killing his prestige and confidence.

Although she didn't admit herself, she liked pressing the protagonist's head to the ground so much, given any opportunity.

But her enjoyment wasn't for long, the man pursued: "6.1 million."

Ling Qingyu had a suspicion—wouldn't this man trying to disrupt her? She didn't mind, since money could solve problems, what was the matter with spending a little more millions.

"6.5 million." Ling Qingyu said.

"6.6 million." By now Ling Qingyu would be a fool if she didn't recognize the man wasn't giving some trouble.

The onlookers also discovered the situation and sat behind the scenes, eating melons. Two big individuals were now fighting and the show was exclusively for them to watch.

Ling Qingyu breathed to calm down, analyzed the reason why this man was antagonizing her, and responded harder. In terms of wealth, there was no one who could match her in this world.

Of course, when it was time to give up, she would. But if she didn't teach a hard lesson, she wouldn't be Ling Qingyu.

"7 million."

"7.1 million."

Sure enough, he was adding 100,000 yuan every time she pronounced a price. Yang Qingyue held Ling Qingyu to stop following the opponents' rhythm. "You should know, someone is trying to calculate you. Where's the talented woman I see?"

Ling Qingyu patted her hand to assure her, she had her emotions in control and announced. "7.5 million."

"7.6 million."

"What is the identity of the man and why is he trying to fight me?" Ling Qingyu asked with a confused face.

Yang Qingyue sighed and shook her head. She also didn't know. Otherwise, she had already informed the man's background.

Chapter 244: Mental tug of war

Amidst the commotion, the tone of Ling Qingyu's whisper with Yang Qingyue was hard to discern but Tang Ziyi, Xiao Yue and Athena heard it clearly.

Before Tang Ziyi took action, Athena was swifter. Ling Qingyu's phone vibrated, capturing her attention.

She swiped the screen and discovered a message written by her cheap daughter. It was the information of the man, who was provoking her to spend more or attempting to suppress her rising prestige.

In any case, the man was already an eyesore and enemy of Ling Qingyu. Athena quickly stated the reason why the man was against her.

He was a close confidante of a fat guy who tried to encroach or commit sexual harassment. Now, Ling Qingyu understood but she didn't forget to raise the price.

"7.8 million." Her lips curled as she thought teaching this guy a memorable lesson. Offending her meant he would soon be in trouble.

Of course, so long as the man's hands were clean and had no stain of innocent blood, Ling Qingyu wouldn't retaliate too much.

Nonetheless, having a close relationship with the fat guy meant the above conjecture was impossible. The same flock of birds lived and ate together.

"7.9 mill—"

"8 million." Ling Qingyu interrupted. The price rose more and more until Ling Qingyu uttered: "12 million!"

Her eyes narrowed as she glanced at her so-called competitor. The man hesitated a little but still added another 100,000 yuan.

Every time Ling Qingyu uttered a number, he always added the same amount. This was already breaking the hidden unspoken rules among the rich.

Nobody said anything but their disdains expressed everything. No one liked having a person always finding troubles by their side like the man did. Who could say he wouldn't affect the rest?

Perhaps because the man only targeted Ling Qingyu the majority endured but once it spread the man wasn't far from trouble. The man also felt it but what could they do? He hadn't broken any laws or rules.

And he only aimed his action against Ling Qingyu. Maybe some other rich individual thought the same as him to suppress Ling Qingyu's momentum.

Many already predicted the reputation Ling Qingyu gained tonight already overwhelmed theirs. In the coming future, they might even have to crawl before Ling Qingyu, with her talent and luck.

"15 million." Ling Qingyu waited for the man's next move and as expected he followed. But this time Ling Qingyu didn't open his mouth.

The man became anxious; he didn't want to pay a colossal amount just for a mere pair of vases. Despite the deep cultural heritage, it was also a bit straining for him to pay more than 15 million yuan.

"Going once...going twice..." The host, knowing more about the world, slowed down his pacing and each of his hammers struck the man, fighting against Ling Qingyu, to panic.

How much he wished Ling Qingyu to continue? He studied her expression and knew Ling Qingyu delivered a teasing face.

The two were now in a mental tug of war. Whoever lost their concentration first would be defeated?

Although Ling Qingyu didn't mind spending more money, she abhorred others trying to exploit her. After studying the man meticulously, especially the moment when the item nearly belonged to him, Ling Qingyu discovered, the man's complexion changing and smiled.

She knew she already won and said. "20 million."

Ling Qingyu turned her head toward the man again and gestured for him to keep up. This time, she had really decided to give up if the man continued, teaching him a profound lesson.

"Sold!" The host clapped and congratulated Ling Qingyu. He was satisfied with the amount received from selling two simple vases. Even if he worked elsewhere, his resume shone; so, his heart was warmer whenever Ling Qingyu was present.

In fact, Ling Qingyu felt relieved whenever she thought most of her money would go to the charitable fund. At least, her spending wasn't in vain. Ling Qingyu comforted herself.

The others also were aware of Ling Qingyu's victory, who thoroughly rubbed the man's face to the ground.

Lin Fan appreciated Ling Qingyu's action—as expected from his near-to-be wife, until Lan Xi beside him, twisted his waist muscle.

Miss System who was overwatching from the background sneered. Wanting her daughter to become a woman accompanying a husband, hmph!

Ling Qingyu's eyes wandered around, suspecting she heard someone humphing nearby and trying to find the culprit, having no idea Miss System was with her while Yang Qingyue complained multiple times for the wasteful action Ling Qingyu did.

Fortunately, Ling Qingyu explained quickly the battle of prestige and the importance of the results for her future plan to Yang Qingyue, who immediately rolled her eyes, hateful at the bureaucratic fight between high-ranking seats.

Afterward, the auction resumed its normal progress, without any additional gunpowder. A painting by an emperor from an unknown dynasty came and was sold at 18 million yuan.

Since Ling Qingyu had no love or hobbies concerning collectibles, she wasn't interested and didn't bid. Many were relieved at her non-interference Buddhist reaction.

They understood by now, that once Ling Qingyu had an interest on something, nobody could fight her at all. Even if they won, the final results described misery.

Another item came up and after the female staff dragged away the red drape, people gasped. Ling Qingyu was stunned— too beautiful, she muttered.

Even for someone who didn't have a sense of beauty, the reaction was stumped. What about other girls who cared more?

Especially Ling Yunxiang and Zhao Xiurong almost stood up from their seats. Every female had red eyes, their insanity took over.

Some who were wives of the rich men urged their husbands, while the rich ladies themselves, began to calculate how much they could afford.

The host knowingly waited for a while, feasting on many eager expressions and generating heat amongst the guests. To be frank, Shen family was also reluctant to auction the item, but if they didn't, the entire auction would become a laughingstock, where the family couldn't even come up with an excellent collectible.

What was unfolded on the stage was a piece of pearl jewelry. A large gorgeous natural pearl attached underneath shiny diamonds and strings of smaller pearl beads to form a necklace.

A mere reflection from the light illuminated the entire hall. Seeing the crowds about to move, the host professionally controlled the rhythm and introduced its history.

This pearl dated back to 600 years ago, witnessing the rise and fall of several dynasties. Originally, the jewelry was only made from a single big natural pearl, bought by the earl for his loving wife from the southeastern sea.

Later on, the possession changed hands through several officials and nobles until it reached the empress dowager and then got lost after the fall of the dynasty.

Through various hands, the jewelry was upgraded with additional diamonds and beads of smaller pearls. Owning one satisfied vanity because the pearl had been touched by various high-class ladies.

Ling Qingyu listened with relish, not moved at all by the legends because she wasn't planning to own one at all. In contrast to many ladies with greed, she seemed too nonchalant.

Although Ling Qingyu decided to let go, the women around her would never do that. Ling Yunxiang, Zhao Xiurong, Xiao Yue and even Yang Qingyue pierced their gazes at her.

Ling Qingyu rubbed her skin and asked back with fright. The intensity her companions stared at her scared the baby to death, Ling Qingyu uttered inwardly. "What are you girls looking at?"

"Sis, you must get that jewelry." Ling Yunxiang said with gritted teeth.

"President Ling, if I have the wealth, I would participate but I can't." Zhao Xiurong sighed and said. "Just one moment for me to hold it in my arms."

"What about you, Sister Yang?" Ling Qingyu glanced at Yang Qingyue strangely. "I thought you're like me, who isn't interested in those aspects."

"Not like you, I also want to be beautiful. It's just my demand isn't much. But this time, I also want to see what it looks like on my body." Yang Qingyue replied.

Xiao Yue said nothing but her gaze explained everything. Fortunately, Tang Ziyi seemed uninterested like hers but the moment Xiao Yue expressed desire, she signaled Ling Qingyu—You better move your ass!

Being threatened and pressured by her companions, Ling Qingyu swallowed and decided to enter the bidding 'willingly'. She already saw her sister and secretary displaying their greed too, despite in a hidden manner.

As the head of a family, how could she bear to ignore the members' needs? It was a matter of spending more money and nothing else.

Ling Qingyu never had fear. It was love that moved her to participate. How much she wanted to see their smiles?

Although doing so and competing against wealthy ladies might offend several parties, Ling Qingyu dare! But what she dared not was upsetting the women around her. She had a strong premonition if she lost the bidding battle for the coming jewelry, her following days would never have sunshine.

Chapter 245: How husband felt when their wives glanced at them

"Now that everyone's eyes are feverish. We begin selling from 5 million, each increment should not be less than half a million!" The host slapped the hammer.

And the reaction was quick. "10 million."

"11 million."

"14 million."

"19 million."

"19.5 million."

"...30 million." The price went up steeply and the host smiled knowing fully well, how much this jewelry was worth.

As the crowd jeered against each other, the five women around Ling Qingyu stared at her, as if asking why she hadn't participated yet.

Ling Qingyu gulped with some difficulty and her survival instinct drove her to explain quickly. "Hey, hey. Please don't give me such looks. Be a bit merciful. I will bid; don't worry. Let me tell you why I'm not saying anything."

Ling Qingyu continued her words without pausing, fearing the women's future retaliation if she didn't satisfy any of them. "Given the jewelry's vast background, timeline and present outlook, I estimate the value of around 80-100 million yuan. That refers to a single buyout. When the auction comes into the equation, the number quickly fluctuates. If I bid now, it's a waste of my energy and time.

Only those who can afford will come into play later."

In fact, among the rich, who didn't understand her concept? Sometimes, when realities poured cold water, some individuals hoped for a miracle. Like here by calling for a low price and wishing no one further competed with them, even though the scenario was close to zero.

People always had a dream. What if their wishes come true? What if the real powerful ones lost interest and didn't intervene? A lot of what-ifs were involved but it didn't cost too much at all for a wish; so, why not go for it.

Ling Qingyu's explanation cooled her confidante's eagerness and the women quietly discussed who should the necklace belong to, creating black lines over her forehead. She bought it and still didn't own the necklace.

But Ling Qingyu was too frightened to fight for her rights. No matter the angle, she was fighting a defeating war. Soon, they quickly came to an agreement to share with each other.

Now, she immediately comprehended the feeling, good husbands encountered when their beloved wives delivered a single look, which expressed their demands. The urge to survive and avoid disappointing loved ones, sprung the men into actions. Ling Qingyu was also in a similar state.

Seeing frustration and disappointment in her confidantes' expressions, Ling Qingyu was certain, she would never like to experience it personally.

She swore it was definitely her great love, which caused her to participate in the bidding, not fearful of the wives. Although she addressed them as sisters, in her eyes, they were her wives. Of course, Ling Yunxiang might be a separate entity.

While listening to the back-and-forth negotiations among the women, Ling Qingyu paid attention to the stage. The price had risen to an astonishing 50 million and the pace had yet to show signs of slowing down.

Despite a significant decrease in commotions, because most could no longer afford it, the arena was still heavily contested, upgrading stage after stage, in an appropriate specific wealth level.

Gradually, the people at the forefront began to bid. The trend stopped rising after reaching 70 million yuan.

Ling Qingyu still hadn't opened her mouth, causing her confidantes to pierce their gazes over her body. She placated them saying. "Ease. At ease, we haven't reached the climax yet."

Being around the strong women felt like sitting on arrays of needles and pins. One small mistake could ruin her firm willpower.

Soon, only two competitors remained, wrestling the weight of the cash to own the pearl jewelry. The price hovered above 130 million and frankly had exceeded Ling Qingyu's estimation.

Some items were really worth more when there was a competition and the auction provided the perfect stage. Finally, the victorious wealthy individual emerged when his opponent seemed to have given in and smiled at his companion, sitting beside him, as if the item was already his and soon about to present toward his beloved.

Ling Qingyu, noticing this romantic drama played from the corner of her eyes, sighed helplessly. She couldn't bear to ruin his stage but her hands were also tied.

Forgive her. If she failed to complete the mission, she must struggle the coming days, under the women, who knew how many methods and conspiracies they could come up with.

Under the fervent eyes of the women, Ling Qingyu coughed and announced, raising her banner. "160 million."

The man who was about to grasp the pinnacle of his life was stunned and turned his head to see Ling Qingyu's bidding. His eyelids twitched; his worry peaked when this woman intervened.

He couldn't help but swear when would Ling Qingyu's wallet vanish. Counting the number of times and the amount Ling Qingyu spent, his mind almost collapsed.

Throughout his career, he earned such an amount, wasting his youth and time but compared with Ling Qingyu's struggle, he felt ashamed. Since Ling Qingyu participated, it appeared the jewelry could no longer be given to his wife.

His eyes glanced at his wife with guilt, who comforted gently, understanding the situation clearly. He gritted his teeth and bellowed. "200 million."

Ling Qingyu widened her eyes and exchanged a fierce glance with this man, knowing it was the final offer. Plus, she saw his wife, trying to prevent him from spending more.

Despite saying sorry in her mind, she still crushed him as she followed. "220 million."

As soon as Ling Qingyu's words finished, the man slumped as if drained out of energy and gave his wife an apologetic smile. The wife's eyes melted with love

While the couple fed the other guests with dog food, Ling Qingyu took note of the two because these types of people were very rare in the wealthy circle, loyal to one another and fulfilling each other's needs.

Most lost their discipline, the moment they had power and wealth at their fingers, indulging in depravity. So, seeing the loving couple, Ling Qingyu wished them the best.

The host excitedly slammed the hammer. The jewelry was sold twice the estimates they had calculated. His eyes brightened whenever the pair landed in the direction of Ling Qingyu.

Nonetheless, every girl around Ling Qingyu clapped and shrieked with excitement. Yet, their eyes seemed to contain the message—hmph! Luckily, you listen to us.

Ling Qingyu nodded eagerly, lamenting her status. In contrast, the women at other tables pierced their deadly gazes at Ling Qingyu, who had now become the number one enemy of all wealthy women in Province N from this day onward.

Well, it was an exaggeration but their green eyes filled with envy and jealousy seemed not far from matching the description. After all, any items Ling Qingyu was extremely keen on could only belong to her.

Ling Qingyu faced with oppressive glances from the crowd was expressionless. She had no fear whatsoever. Comparing the two sides—the crowd and her girls—she must satisfy the latter.

Ling Qingyu affirmed herself, it wasn't she cherishing her life; it was her generosity for love. Looking at the happy faces of the girls, the money was indeed well spent. No more worries about thinking where to spend her 1 trillion reward.

On the other hand, those with calculative minds, had worries and frightening speculations. Why did Ling Qingyu suddenly show her claws explicitly? What was she thinking in her mind? Were there any hidden plans behind her every action?

In fact, Ling Qingyu naturally laid out her business plan—the path toward a big empire. It wasn't a spontaneous action from her to show off wealth. Earning prestige and enhancing her network were the number one goals to facilitate her huge wealth.

Otherwise, her spending had to be calculative and meticulous, wasting her energy and time, in order to avoid drawing attention, just because she was weak. From tonight onward, she would break out of the cocoon like a butterfly, transforming itself to a new being.

The name Ling Qingyu should resound throughout the entire province. She no longer wanted to hide and delay her plan. Given Yang Qingyue's backing and her power at hand, the path had become clearer.

In order to avoid the stampede from occurring, the host also announced and reminded everyone, that the pearl jewelry would be picked up later after the event was over. He rubbed the cold sweat on his forehead.

Perhaps his words worked the rest of the women recovered their eyes. Ling Qingyu sighed in relief. Although she said, there wasn't any fear, the suppression still existed.

Now that she had become a public enemy, she must stay low. The rest of the time, people were relieved Ling Qingyu didn't bid again. They now had instinctive fear and powerlessness against Ling Qingyu.

The main reason was she had no interest at all. She sometimes felt out of the world whenever she noticed her favorites never matched the majority.

Soon, after some items were sold, Ling Qingyu's heart palpitated when one of the girls on stage brought over the next item to be auctioned.

Her intuition told her, she must get it or she would regret herself in the future.

Chapter 246: Bracelet relic

After unveiling, everyone saw a woman's bracelet exuding an ancient vibe. The host introduced. "This beautiful bracelet is a masterpiece from the ancient era, properly from a queen-like existence, dating around 2000 years ago. We don't know its detailed historical background but the test conducted by experts proves our statement."

The people whose attention heightened after knowing the timeline lost their interest when the host mentioned they had no idea about the bracelets.

The host also swallowed with difficulty. He knew this one wouldn't sell well; the design outlook was too simple and who knew how fragile the material was after all those years.

People would never want to be fooled. Unlike the famous pearl, whose reputation ranked very high, this antique bracelet had no distinct attraction other than its age.

"Why don't you donate one to the museum?" One person from the crowd said. The rest couldn't help but nod. The host explained the situation and the unwillingness of the Shen family.

Since the bracelet belonged to them, it was their decision on what to do next. Being morally kidnapped to donate for the public was a nuisance. Fortunately, everyone was a wealthy individual and didn't press the issue further.

If moral kidnapping was the correct path, every rich individual would no longer persevere to climb up, because everything they earned must be shared, and who in the right mind would be willing?

It was as if a lazy being could gain benefits without doing much. Who in the right mind would continue struggling while others enjoy your hard work?

"The price will begin at 1 million. 100,000 plus every bid. Please start." The host announced. His eyes lacked of luster since he knew the price would never go up well.

As expected in contrast to the fierce fight for the pearl, the atmosphere seemed dull until some called out a number.

In contrast, the women around Ling Qingyu noticed her eagerness to own the bracelet though she thought she hid well. After all, they had stayed together for a couple of days and understood each other deeply.

Yang Qingyue, despite not living together, could sense Ling Qingyu's mood from her detective's eyes. Nudging Ling Qingyu's soft waist with her elbow, she drew her attention.

"What's the matter again now?" Ling Qingyu asked but her eyes were still drawn to the bracelet.

"You like the bracelet?" Yang Qingyue asked.

"En...it must be mine. I can't explain my feelings." Ling Qingyu hummed back and explained. In fact, her mind was communicating with Miss System.

'Miss System, what's the matter with the auctioned bracelet? Why do I feel keen to take it to myself?'
Ling Qingyu asked inwardly.

[Really? I'll also take a look...Huh?!]

Miss System's doubtful voice raised questions. Ling Qingyu's heart raced as she thought of the previous inexplicable premonition. Was there something she was destined to be?

[I don't know whether to praise your physique or your luck.]

She heard sourness in Miss System's speech. Ling Qingyu wondered if everything was her illusion.

'What's wrong with the bracelet? Why do I feel strange whenever my eyes land on it?'

[It's definitely a precious relic from ancient times. The reason why you sense inexplicableness is the large merits contained inside the bracelet's space.]

Miss System's explanation shed some light but Ling Qingyu realized something amiss. 'You mean there's a storage space? How large is it?'

[Not sure till you grasp it with your hand. Anyway it's hidden too deep.]

'Who's the previous owner?' Ling Qingyu was curious. The wearer was definitely a woman and a strong one too.

[A female immortal who did so many good deeds. Unfortunately, good karma couldn't help her breakthrough tribulation. She got injured and lost her cultivation, banished to the mortal world, and died after spending her lifespan.]

Huge tides rushed through Ling Qingyu's brain. Excitement. Eagerness. Immortality. Well, the host wasn't wrong in describing the owner, who definitely matched the queen-like figure. No, to be frank, an empress.

'Wait, something's not right. Didn't you say only technological objects will exist in this world? How come something from the cultivation world stayed here?' Ling Qingyu asked with a pair of suspicious eyes.

Her gaze was too intense, even Miss System felt embarrassed.

[Ahem—sometimes, people overlook—]

'Please, didn't I just ask you to scan if there are similar items and what did you say? Nothing, none. And now this one slaps your face, Miss System.' Ling Qingyu folded her arms. 'Don't tell me when I requested, you reply perfunctorily. Now, this bracelet is a superb relic belonging to me!'

While Ling Qingyu conversed inside, she didn't forget to bid when the price stagnated at 13 million and obtained the bracelet. Feeling happy, she decided to forget Miss System's carelessness.

[Stop trying to blame me. Without my presence, you won't even know what its function is in the first place...hmph.]

Ling Qingyu's eyelids twitched. Although the truth was hurtful, Miss System really didn't care about her fragile mood.

'Alright, I'm just too anxious. I never blame my benefactor.' Ling Qingyu instantly comforted.

[I'm too lazy to care about you. But I must thank you for providing such large merits and energy.] Miss System's reply brought joy to Ling Qingyu.

'No problem. We got each other's back.' Ling Qingyu replied.

[Since this bracelet shouldn't possess the perks from cultivation world, I'll destroy them after absorbing what I need.]

Ling Qingyu's spine chilled and immediately objected. 'No way, why would you do that? At least, save the storage space for me to use.'

[These shouldn't exist in this world from the beginning. The alien item isn't a good sign for this world.]

'Please, Miss System, hold your thoughts. Remember, I buy the bracelet with my money.' Ling Qingyu exclaimed inside her head.

[And who gives you the money as a gift? Do you have a temporary amnesia?]

Ling Qingyu's corner of the mouth twitched, hearing the System's mockery. She almost choked, speechless. F**k, when the real truth came, it hurt.

Alas, Ling Qingyu had to resort to cuteness, whining coquettishly. 'Miss System! Please give me some benefits. I don't need aura or anything but the spacial ability can come into hand one day. I promise I won't abuse.'

[Tsk...I don't why you're always lucky to find treasure. But I must remind you again, today's era resembles a desolate era, where there's a lack of aura. Immortal cultivation is impossible except for body-strengthening skills, like ancient martial arts. Even then you can only improve physique strengthening, as for the rest including internal energy, everything is a dream.]

'Miss System is always pessimistic. Don't think too much.' Ling Qingyu pursed her lips. 'This bracelet already shows I'm destined to meet immortal fate.'

[...] Miss System went quiet for a while and agreed with Ling Qingyu, who didn't yet know surprises were laid down before her.

'Speaking of, what's your decision then? Are you going to destroy after absorbing the merits?' Ling Qingyu asked.

[Yes. Things that shouldn't exist, should be destroyed.]

'Then, never mind, I won't touch that bracelet any longer.'

[You...what do you mean?]

'Based on my knowledge of existence like yours, you need a medium like us to absorb. So, if I didn't touch the bracelet, don't even think about it.' Ling Qingyu's expression was smug.

Studying Ling Qingyu's altering expressions, Yang Qingyue and the women around were worried. Their previous request shouldn't stimulate Ling Qingyu too much, right? Tang Ziyi and Xiao Yue exchanged glances and relieved the others' tension.

They understood some kind of communication was taking place and the topic must revolve around the bracelet Ling Qingyu bought. What secrets did it hold? Tang Ziyi and Xiao Yue became restless eager to hear Ling Qingyu's explanation.

[You're really despicable.]

'Thank you.' Ling Qingyu was glad she guessed right, based on conjectures in many novels.

[Huh...fine, I won't destroy the storage space for you; as for other energies, I'm sorry.] In fact, Miss System could absorb what she desired without going through Ling Qingyu but the cost outweighed the gain.

Miss System had no idea how Ling Qingyu predicted some universal laws pertinent to her existence. In any case, it didn't matter whether Ling Qingyu abused the storage space bracelet, this world should bear the consequences, not hers.

Of course, Ling Qingyu utilized the maximum push and pull method to coax Miss System. As a businesswoman, she sought for maximum gain.

From Miss System's tone, Ling Qingyu realized she could negotiate more and remembered her sign-in reward, which was nullified for half a year because of her mother. Well, she didn't have any regret but her heart ached whenever she recalled of losing her monthly golden finger.

'How about changing my 6-month delay to 1 month for the sign-in gift?'

[Impossible! The maximum 4 months.]

'One month or else don't even think about the bracelet; I'll put it further away and don't even try to touch it.' Ling Qingyu retorted. 'You can only look but cannot eat.'

Although she had no idea how much merit was contained in the bracelet, the amount should be substantial based on Miss System's urgency.

An existence which could easily create an underground realm, was eager for the energy inside the bracelet. Even an idiot could estimate roughly and exploit Miss System.

As her benefactor, Ling Qingyu never thought of cheating Miss System. She would be repaying gratitude with swords. She wasn't a vile character. But principle firmly stated, that she must attain what she deserved, taking advantage of the world will's restriction against Miss System.

[You're really necrotic. With all the aids I deliver, how could you? Woowoo!] Miss System cried bitterly.

Hearing a grievance from a little girl, Ling Qingyu felt guilty, wondering if she overstepped and signed. 'Alright, 2 months then, no more. Please don't forget the storage space.'

[Deal!] Miss System laughed jubilantly.

Ling Qingyu's face darkened. She was being outwitted completely. But she wasn't angry—each going tit-for-a-tat of acting skills. Not to mention, her benefits weren't small.

A mere storage space had elated her mood to nine heavens. Nonetheless, despite being played around, Ling Qingyu was happy for Miss System

'Can I use other treasure to lift away the remaining months?'

[Don't even think about it. Focus more on how to gain merits through your actions.]

It appeared, Ling Qingyu couldn't retrieve more loopholes from Miss System. Bargaining for the sign-in reward continuation 2 months later seemed not bad.

'Now that we met one which helps you, can you find others?'

[Hmm, let me carefully—Huh, your luck is not bad. Although this one isn't any use for me, or even you, I'm sure, you'll be delighted to own it.]

'Which one?' Ling Qingyu's eyes shone with excitement.

[Number 19, the one before the last one go on stage.]

'Oh, I have to wait for a while. Tonight's journey isn't bad at all,' Ling Qingyu said. 'I'm curious why this world has something it shouldn't?'

Chapter 247: Satisfied Ling Qingyu

[Life is indeed full of surprises, even I miss some important components.]

Ling Qingyu almost laughed, hearing personally from Miss System. Missing components? Did it mean Miss System having a problem with her logic? After all, she addressed herself as a machine.

Clearly, Ling Qingyu knew she was never a system but an existence that pretended to be, since personal emotions and tsundere vibes could be felt from miles away.

'Well, aren't you thinking in the wrong direction beginning from the first step?' Ling Qingyu asked a good question.

[How?]

'Well, you've told me there are two novel-like worlds on this planet. One is harem male, collecting women as decorations non-stop; the other is abusive sadomasochistic drama.'

[So?!]

Ling Qingyu wanted to slap Miss System's head if it existed. She had already hinted at the obvious.

'Please that means this world is messed up since the beginning. It's like a sieve where different worlds fit in like a new realm. So many combinations of novels, don't you think the answer is already displayed to you.'

[You're correct, but a mere two examples don't prove your conjecture. What if both exist in a single universe? Every person is a protagonist in their stories. By your logic, every world is a mess.]

'Damn it, don't you get it? It's so obvious, even you can see how much luck is bestowed on the protagonists, especially the two male leads. However, I admit I didn't take a single universe probability into consideration.'

[I understand what you meant. You're making a hypothesis, whether this world is broken from the beginning or its boundary layer is diminishing.]

Ling Qingyu nodded.

[With my surveillance the latter is impossible.]

'What about the first? Try to scan carefully one more time.'

[Okay—*sigh*— Hmm?]

'Did you find anything?'

[It seems your statement is true. When I look closely, multiple realms like stories are combined here.]

'Exactly, this should be the reason why materials from the cultivation world get in here. Speaking of, did you find any power-level world like cultivation and martial arts in this world?'

[Nope, be at ease, there's no so-called cultivation here.]

Ling Qingyu patted her chest. 'Thank the heaven and thank Miss System. I don't want to discover one day on top of my head, I hear—Presumptuous! You're courting death above my head. All of my wealth and struggle are nothing in the face of those perverted superhumans. The rich lists meant nothing but gold asking for a favor from bandits.'

To be honest, Ling Qingyu's greatest fear was the cultivators in the modern urban settings. Their presence shuffled the entire pyramids and brought chaos.

[hahaha! Don't worry, this system will never let you face such a scenario. Even if it does, what you should worry about is the aftermath after I slaughter them.]

'Where's your statement of not intervening? I wonder the World Will will be pissed off.'

[Screw that will. Any dangers that come to you in a way, your level could never solve will be wiped out by me.]

Miss System's arrogant and domineering declaration, sparkled stars in Ling Qingyu's eyes. At least, Ling Qingyu found some comfort, reassured, knowing her system wasn't someone exploiting her.

'Thank you, Miss System. I love you.'

[Hmph.]

'So, about the bracelet, where does it come from?'

[Through some space cracks. I have no idea about the coordinates of the world it came from but once I absorb what's inside, I'll know.]

After conversing with Miss System, Ling Qingyu's attention was on Yang Qingyue, who asked worriedly if everything was okay. Initially, Ling Qingyu was stumped, puzzled by her reaction and Tang Ziyi's eye language allowed her to understand what was going on.

It seemed in the future, talking deeply with Miss System should be in private. Otherwise, every change in her expression would be captured by others.

The lighthearted conversation appeared fine because she didn't lose the present moment. Ling Qingyu hurriedly diverted the attention of the suspicious policewoman and held her hand.

Yang Qingyue's cheeks reddened and her eyes only laid on the stage. Ling Qingyu snickered happily. She was no longer a love idiot, able to step-by-step approach the same-sex love.

Lust was for heterosexuals. True love only existed between the same sex. Bah, Ling Qingyu amused herself.

Now knowing there was another item, Miss System listed, Ling Qingyu lost her interest in the coming relics, and fought fiercely between individuals.

Soon, the item, Miss System told her, was brought forward. It was nothing but an ancient tablet with scriptures of traditional Chinese.

It was 2 feet long and one foot wide. In contrast to the bracelet, she really felt nothing. There must be something strange to attract Miss System.

She had asked the tablet's function and Miss System's reply induced mysteriousness. Only those destined should understand the scripture inscribed on the tablet.

The suggestion given by Miss System was to show it to Tang Ziyi for maximum benefit. With her full trust in Miss System, she decided to follow her advice.

She wasn't too greedy or demanding. With internal space storage, no other people had the ability to possess one, Ling Qingyu was satisfied.

What was the matter with gifting one to Tang Ziyi? If her confidantes could share her burden and goals, Ling Qingyu was happy to diverge some hidden news, as long as they brought benefits, provided they were trustworthy enough to prevent the secrets from spreading.

The tablet, similar to her bracelet, drew little attention. No background except for the timeline and translated poem from the inscribed text.

Those, who were interested in poetry and collectibles did bid but in the end, it belonged to Ling Qingyu without problems. Although she received inquired gazes from the girls, Ling Qingyu shook her head.

It was indeed weird for her to participate twice in bidding on two strange items. Even some people like Lin Fan took note of her behavior and frowned, contemplating her intent.

Ling Qingyu's eyes told them, she would explain later and no one continued to press further. Everyone fixed their posture for the final moment.

The last one to be auctioned. Based on the premise of saving the best for last, Ling Qingyu leaned forward, her arm resting on the table.

But when the mystery was unveiled, the hall went quiet, mostly from disbelief. Glances exchanged, probably ascertaining whether what they saw together was serious and the truth. Everyone had suspicions of their eyes.

Some even rubbed them. Yet, one similar reaction was shared between women, who blushed after seeing what unfolded before them. Ling Qingyu's face also turned unnatural.

Tang Ziyi coughed uncomfortably but as an old mature one, her skin was thicker. In contrast, the rest ripened like a strawberry fruit.

The men, on the other hand, laughed hard and some whistled from the crowd echoed lecherously. They were excited beyond control but most thought someone might have made a mistake on the stage.

Such a problem occurred rarely but it always happened by accident or some parties intending to undermine the host party.

All the commotions were for nothing else but the item unveiled. Ling Qingyu saw nothing except for a pair of cute yet sexy female underwear.

Even a doll to display dresses was included. The color lining resembled jaguar skin with slits and a cute Pikachu figure in an important place.

Chapter 248: Fan Xi

Amidst the idiotic atmosphere, the host coughed and introduced, on the contrary to many expecting apologies. "Ahem. I know some of us might be thinking something went wrong. In fact, everything is in order. This bra and panty will be our last item for tonight's auction."

The audience went into uproar in shock. Was the Shen family kidding them or testing their attitudes?

Conspiracy theories came up one after another. After all, even if they weren't treated well, they had to give some face to the Shen family to survive the harsh market conditions in Province N, especially for the mid-tier.

Ling Qingyu narrowed her eyes in thought, ignoring the blatant accusation and outrages from the girls beside her. She understood it was impossible for the Shen family to ruin the party and there must be a reason.

A glimmer stretched across her pupils as she realized a light bulb. Only that could explain why the lady's underwear became the hottest item.

Her eyes glanced at some artists in the entertainment industry and seeing their attitude of contemptuous mockery, she sighed.

Ling Qingyu somehow felt anger congested in her chest. Her eyes getting colder, thinking of the Shen family.

Although the seller and organizer might have deals, exchanging benefits and selling faces, Ling Qingyu abhorred such practice of coercing others to do against their will.

Some might argue, that the artists themselves made a deal and they could just outright refuse. For them, Ling Qingyu only had one word to describe—fools.

The entertainment industry was never simple. A network of so many circles intertwined that people had to tread carefully. Sometimes, people couldn't spit out the hard bones they had eaten mistakenly and instead had to swallow unwillingly.

One wrong step could follow you throughout your later life like a nightmare.

Continuing to uphold the view not to work in the industry at all, Ling Qingyu would agree in the past. However, most always found the easiest solution, but failed to solve the the root cause.

Because they couldn't enforce or take care of the real culprit, the blame shifted to another party. If they weren't there in the first place, they wouldn't suffer injustice.

Such kind of actions killing others' dreams were never the correct way. It was people's cowardice to not pursue the real cause.

Of course, her thoughts flew in many directions but she hadn't made up her mind until the host announced clearly.

"This is the belonging of Ms. Fan Xi, our most famous actress, who decided to auction, in order to come up with sufficient funds to donate." The host said.

Ling Qingyu didn't listen anymore and turned her attention to the so-called famous actress, who stood up and waved her hand.

Though Ling Qingyu noticed reluctance in Fan Xi's eyes, unsure whether her sight captured the correct picture, Fan Xi still smiled and affirmed it was her belonging to the audience.

Fan Xi wore a black evening gown with slits and appeared not very old. But she guessed she had reached her mid-thirties when the popularity became stagnant and was hard to improve further.

She was already a national superstar, and had a large strong fan base, but she was still a wage earner for the company after all. Ling Qingyu had no idea why Fan Xi made such a drastic move.

The repercussions of her action could ruin her entire past history. Were there some deals or problems Fan Xi had trouble?

Ling Qingyu studied the actress from a distance. She had a slender and tall figure, beautiful and clean face with her eyes drawing in anyone who watched her for a long time.

Before she had time to delve further, screams like a little fan uttered from her side. It was her cheap sister, Ling Yunxiang, who gasped in excitement, muttering.

"That's Fan Xi. Oh my...I can now brag to others, I've seen the real Fan Xi." Ling Qingyu frowned at Ling Yunxiang's behavior of losing control in exhilaration.

Her eyes moved toward Zhao Xiurong and she wasn't any better. It appeared Fan Xi's fame was huge, affecting even her secretary. But with her status, Ling Qingyu was deep in doubt—why auction?

When Ling Qingyu saw Yang Qingyue's reaction, she was surprised. Heck, even this policewoman who never sought idols or hadn't shown any interest in the people in the entertainment circle, displayed outright gleeful joy.

Likewise, some fans uttered their support and Fan Xi calmly bowed in gratitude. No one talked about her action of selling the underwear.

Of course, some discordant voices from jealous people and enemies of Fan Xi expressed disgust.

"In addition to the donation, the one who owned this masterpiece will have an opportunity to meet with our superstar, Fan Xi." The host brewed a more energetic atmosphere.

Many men had their eyes turned red. They already swore to win this competition. Being able to have a private meeting with their favorite goddess, only fool wouldn't try.

Soon, with the host's hammer, the price went high. While Ling Qingyu tried to look from far away but couldn't grab Fan Xi's real thoughts, Yang Qingyue and Ling Yunxiang, two troublemakers became restless.

"Sister, please save Fan Xi, I know you can do it." Ling Yunxiang begged her with a soft voice.

Save? Ling Qingyu was confused. What made her think Fan Xi needed their help? As a mature artist, working in an industry for a long time, her methods of dealing with crisis weren't simple.

Seeing Ling Qingyu's passive reaction, Ling Yunxiang urged. "In any case, you must never let any males stain our goddess."

"Little sister Ling is right. Although I have no idea why Fan Xi behaved like this today; there must be a reason. Perhaps we can find out more in detail about the muddy water if we meet with her." Yang Qingyue echoed her view.

"So, who's this Fan Xi? Is she that famous? Are you two girls exaggerating?" Ling Qingyu asked.

"OMG! Elder sis, you?! I have no words. What generation did you come from? A boomer?" Ling Yunxiang was truly merciless with her words. "Well, it's not wrong to regard you in this generation.

Everyone knows. Look at Sister Zhao, even your secretary who works in the same field as yours knows more."

Zhao Xiurong was embarrassed to be brought out to the frontline by Ling Yunxiang in the sister's civil war.

Ling Qingyu rolled her eyes at her cheap sister's remarks. "Alright, your elder sister works hard too much; I can't even read what's happening in your industry."

"I think this is more than just an industry. Any passerby can at least answer who Fan Xi is." Yang Qingyue added. "Let's ask your friends. Sister Tang and Sister Xiao, you should know Fan Xi, right?"

Tang Ziyi and Xiao Yue, who were snickering at Ling Qingyu's powerless expression, almost exclaimed their protest. Why did the bomb jump into their hands? Please, they just arrived here, not long ago, and hadn't even been culturally immersed yet.

Both coughed and looked elsewhere, pretending not to hear. Yang Qingyue and Ling Yunxiang widened their eyes in disbelief.

The same flock of birds really flew together, Yang Qingyue muttered helplessly. "I'll introduce you girls later about Fan Xi's background. She's the inspiration and cleanest person in the acting industry. I'm not sure what happens tonight yet. So, Sister Ling, I beg you to help her." She said.

Yang Qingyue's request straightened Ling Qingyu's spine. She patted her chest that she would complete the mission, assuring Yang Qingyue and Ling Yunxiang to calm down.

Listening to the girls' description, there might be something hidden, enough to arouse her curiosity. Ling Qingyu would also participate to protect the actress from some worse infamy.

Privately meeting with a man and with a woman sounded a huge different bombshell. Even without the urging from the girls around, Ling Qingyu would come to the same decision.

Anyway, she was rich and willful. She also liked to see the goddess personally and became a close friend too.

Chapter 249: The reason

As female artists working under a particular entertainment company, they had a harsher time, being exploited, compared to their male counterparts generally.

There were indeed differences in treatment across the genders and naturally the obligations each party must undertake were different.

The pay gap had been the most argued topic in the modern world. However, the treatment was based on the fan values each artist possessed.

The requirements for the male artist were stringent and highly demanding; so, their incomes appeared higher.

However, the main problem was in a situation the female artist completed everything the same as demanded by the male artist, would their salary and treatment be equal?

In the end, they were still exploited by the capitalists who would try any means necessary to raise their cash inflow and lower the cost, which included the artists' salaries.

The females were mostly targeted because they were prone to enduring grievance and tolerating, and never really fought for their rights. In fact, the number one reason could be that most easily accepted the situation.

Not to mention, the women in the entertainment industry were easier prey for the men in power. Most women, deep in their genes, desired popularity and the feeling of being worshiped. It was as if branded like an instinct.

Very rarely, women remained calm in the face of the possibility of becoming famous. It didn't mean the rational ones never existed but the numbers were rare.

How many flocked to curry favor from others or even sold themselves to pursue their dreams? Willingly or unwillingly, they found out hard to extract themselves out of the quicksand later on.

The capitalists benefited from the situation and treated them as toys. Of course, some rich women played with male artists but the proportion was in a lower margin. Therefore, the capitalists never respected artists, no matter how high their popularity was.

That was the reason why ordinary parents were reluctant to let their kids enter the entertainment because they saw through the bridges full of dangers and malice.

Fan Xi, who was highly praised by Yang Qingyue, for her actions and deeds, amazed Ling Qingyu, listening to her sister's narration.

After all, Ling Yunxiang knew more about the gossip than others and her news seemed reliable. Besides, Ling Qingyu could fact-check later with Athena's support.

Based on their words, Fan Xi was also an incredible woman, brilliant at navigating through the stormy seas and reaching the end of the road. Ling Qingyu admired this actress, even without having met with her.

Fan Xi's age limited her path and the fame had become to cool down. Ling Qingyu sighed at the short-lived success and learned a crucial lesson.

When the destiny gave one an opportunity to earn vast wealth, try everything to achieve success and ensure the wealth one sought lasted for a generation to spend. Don't be a wage earner and look toward a pension. Otherwise, Fan Xi's situation would become a reality.

Naturally, Ling Qingyu was in distinct circumstances. Her position was already on the upper echelon. Her wealth couldn't even be squandered for a lifetime so long as she made no mistake.

Hearing the noises made by men, Ling Qingyu chuckled. As expected of them, like wolves when they heard the opportunity to get close to the goddess, no one liked to give up.

Similar to the women's competition for the pearl jewelry Ling Qingyu won, the price sprung up dramatically.

This time, Yang Qingyue and Ling Yunxiang no longer urged Ling Qingyu after learning the past lessons. They remained calm and composed, fully trusting Ling Qingyu would live up to their expectation.

On the other side, Fan Xi, who was now the protagonist, felt helpless and relieved. Satisfied yet worried. Every contradictory emotion flooded her mind, whether her judgment was right or wrong.

It wasn't wrong to say Fan Xi was coerced to auction her inner clothing. For the women in the nations still in conservative mindsets, selling one's underwear was embarrassing, to say the least.

In order to drain the last value, Fan Xi had, the company she sighed led her to come up with the fascinating idea. She and the management in the company had clashes big and small in the past years.

Both knew each party would go in a separate direction soon. Many of the company's act was ruining her career and it was Fan Xi's remaining influence which had mitigated the predicaments created by their actions.

Fan Xi desired to leave, more than 5 years ago. But the clever management had maintained a tight grip on the contract and tricked Fan Xi into signing the overlord clause during her naive youth.

The fines required to pay the breach of contract had troubled Fan Xi from quitting the company completely, when she realized their actions. She attempted many times, consulting legal experts and her network but was to no avail.

Tonight's auction caused Fan Xi to come up with an ingenious plan, cooperating with her agent who had been like a sister to her, despite the company's stance—selling her belongings and a certain proportion of the income goes toward the company while she retained the other half, which was to be donated like in the announcement.

The company agreed after discussions and Fan Xi moved forward to her freedom. She had had enough of the restraint and causes applied from the top. She wanted to leave and enjoy her life, while also working as an artist without any external pressure.

The Shen family understanding the situation quickly came up with an idea to exploit further. To raise the preciousness, they announced the winner could meet with her in private, without her consultation.

Although the public announcement was a donation, how much to be handed over to the donation remained in their hands.

Fan Xi's head bowed powerlessly. Against the Shen family, her prestige, fame, and influence meant nothing. Even pursuing legal action to sanction their prior behavior, Fan Xi saw no possibility.

Perhaps, her company and Shen family already cooperated and planned together, trying to drain out her value.

Fan Xi's method of avoiding unspoken rules might have offended several parties. They thought through tonight's scene, that those who attempted to seek her body in the past would be pleased and no longer pressure the company.

Thinking of the reasons, Fan Xi rubbed her almost watery eyes. She had to present her strong side and practiced deep breathing to calm down. Oh! How she wished for a prince charming to rescue her from the evil's grasp, like a little girl in a dream?

Fan Xi shook her head in dismay. Now, she must come up with a countermeasure to protect herself against the winner.

"300 million!"

People had given up due to the high stakes and were afraid of offending the large bidder. Although unwillingly, life and their wealth were more important compared to attaining beauty in their arms.

Fan Xi glanced at the person who bid and saw it was Young Master Xia. The second rich generation and an heir to the Xia family, equal to the Shen family. She had heard about his frivolous history, changing girlfriends like clothes and fancied capturing the hearts of female artists.

As for whether he acted gentlemanly or savagely, Fan Xi had no idea but both were possible. No news didn't mean, it never happened. And Fan Xi wasn't ignorant to believe, the boy abided by law.

"350 million!"

Another man captured Fan Xi's attention. Who dared to compete with Xia family? She turned her head and found the bidder from behind.

His seat was inconspicuous, near the last back row. Those who went against Xia family knowingly was either an idiot or confident man.

Her eyes were drawn to a handsome man, whose hand wrapped around another woman's waist. Compared to Young Master Xia, he seemed more masculine and trustworthy. The confidence exuded from his gestures intrigued Fan Xi.

But the presence of another woman threw away her prior thought. Another frivolous young man, similar to the Xia family.

Chapter 250: Scarier than male pervert

The young man's behavior attracted attention from the crowd. They laid back on their seats to watch the play. Yang Qingyue's presence and her ruthless move against the fat guy deterred people from threatening others.

Who knew, whether this police witch might put extra punishment clauses and ruin their business. No sane businessperson was willing to risk their life by coercing others and the new police chief took note of their behavior.

Young Master Xia trembled in anger, seeing someone dared to go against him. But he was helpless, apart from increasing his bid. Because if he attempted to use her background, he was worried Yang Qingyue would take action.

He would have no place to cry, if tonight's bed was in jail. His father might even abolish his heir status to satisfy Yang Qingyue's aura. Plus, he wasn't the only son in the family.

Frankly, people thought too much. Yang Qingyue understood how the circle worked and wouldn't intervene as long as they weren't eyesores. The fat guy met her muzzle when Ling Qingyu was involved.

She also wanted to express her stance and power to Ling Qingyu that she wasn't useless. She didn't want to remain at a receiving end in the coming relationship.

Ling Qingyu had no idea Yang Qingyue thought had reached several miles ahead before the relationship began but she would applaud the young policewoman's behavior, should she know her darling had independent thoughts.

People had to be self-sufficient, to bring out the inner child and confidence, one already attained since birth. If one didn't live with dignity, why would others give respect?

Watching Lin Fan's pretentious behavior, making his entry superb, Ling Qingyu's mouth twitched. Here, it came again. Another face-slapping moment. He couldn't sit still without enjoying public eyes all on him for a single moment.

She realized most of the time, the protagonist always sought trouble on a daily chapter basis. Without face-slapping or awing others, his limelight should dim.

Her eyes turned toward Young Master Xia and wished for his luck. This guy had to face Lin Fan for no reason, who liked pretending to be a pig as a tiger.

Most people who offended the male stallion, especially males, were bad guys who deserved to be sent to eighteen layers of hell and be judged by Shura.

Young Master Xia wasn't excluded. If based on this analogy, Ling Qingyu should have a positive favorability for the male stallion at the very least, right?

Nope, the complete opposite. Although the male protagonist usually didn't have an evil trait or somehow hidden in the novel, his friends completely overthrew the view of the male protagonist as being a knight who fought against injustice.

His confidantes did bully girls and others too but wasn't shown too much in the novel. For example, Ling Qingyu dared to bet, how many innocent lives, the current Lin Fan and his companion killed with pleasure. Perhaps, many girls might be tortured by his companions.

The novels easily told the readers, that they deserved the punishment without any elaboration but Ling Qingyu understood this wasn't the case.

She remembered once when she started to read Stallion's pretentious novel for the first time, there were many but one scene sank deep inside her memory.

One of the stallion's companions was conversing on the phone with the male protagonist, and the girl whined her protest because the man's attention went elsewhere, like a coquettish play between lovers.

The girl's neck was snapped to death and thrown away in dirt, because the man blatantly pronounced—offending their big brother, this one deserved death.

Of course, as a mercenary background, the place they resided in was without law and order. Only the strongest made rules.

However, to kill one simply because they were eyesores caused Ling Qingyu to stop reading in utter disbelief. The girl might have stepped over her boundary, but the punishment was in no way logical.

While the male protagonist was shone with justice and a fair personality, his teammates said otherwise. A flock of the same birds always flew together.

There was no way, the male protagonist was shiny and fair as depicted in the novel. Although he seemed better at controlling his inner beast, Ling Qingyu guaranteed he wasn't any better.

It was because the women around him usually obeyed and acted according to his will. Once they went the opposite, Ling Qingyu couldn't bear to think.

To be fair, Ling Qingyu wanted to eliminate Lin Fan as soon as possible because his existence was the most unstable factor around her. Of course, that also included the future husband of Ling Yunxiang, who might just be worse.

The reality prevented her actions. One, she wasn't strong enough yet to resist the retribution after she completed her wish. Two, she had to think more about her subordinates because she was no longer alone. She was already being threatened once by Hu gang leader tonight and this should be the last time, she learned a precious lesson.

Fortunately, this guy only opened his mouth and hadn't acted yet. Else, Ling Qingyu might live the coming days in regret.

Three, the World Will's presence even caused Miss System to prevent Ling Qingyu from thinking about it. Unless, she could provide immense benefits to the world, more than the future of the children of destiny, whom she hated, there was no chance.

She lived in this world and found loved ones she cherished very much. She wouldn't want to leave the world alone, even if she knew Miss System could protect her and move to another.

Not to mention, her relationship with Yang Qingyue had only begun to heat up. Her singlehood would be over soon. How could she bear to leave after nearly feeling the love for the first time?

While her thoughts jumped around, the capital fight between the two energetic men ceased to decelerate.

"500 million."

"550 million."

"700 million."

"800 million." Lin Fan's number caused Young Master Xia's face to be pale. Even he, as an heir, couldn't draw out 800 million from his properties, given to him by his father.

How could this young man, whom he had never heard of nor anyone did, had the energy shown today? As for lying their wealth, Shen family's arrangement and their prestige weren't for nothing.

Anyone daring to cross them or pretend would suffer miserably. Even Young Master Xia, himself, didn't dare.

He clenched his fist, at a loss. He lost this battle and from tomorrow honor, this news would spread and his reputation as dandies would suffer. Thinking of teaching this man a lesson, Young Master Xia's eyes turned cold and requested the assistant near him to investigate Lin Fan's background.

Lin Fan, as protagonist had no fears. His network if displayed publicly would cause many to lick him. Currently, he enjoyed the limelight of declaring victory for having the opportunity to meet with Goddess Fan Xi.

Lan Xi had a gloomy face and snorted, causing Lin Fan to comfort the elder sister beside him immediately.

In fact, Ling Qingyu still couldn't understand Lin Fan's actions. Sometimes he was calculative but most of the time, he was like a youth with full blood, seeking death without fear.

Didn't he realize his trouble-causing behavior could endanger the women around him? Ling Qingyu sneered. When he lost his loved ones, he would cry miserably and uttered protest against fate. Disgusting. The more she looked, the angrier she got.

Before the host declared the ownership, Ling Qingyu said. "900 million."

Many people were stunned amidst the men's competition, so Ling Qingyu stepped in. In contrast, Fan Xi was exhilarated. Although she had no idea why the rich lady intervened, Ling Qingyu's existence was better than any man's.

Not to mention, she saw Ling Qingyu's cold demeanor and excellent figure. There was no need to protect herself from Ling Qingyu, who was also a perfect 10 beauty.

But Fan Xi forgot Ling Qingyu might just be worse than other men because she too was another version of stallion and the danger came from girls not protecting against her approach.