

FMH Marriage 1801

Chapter 1801: My Daughter-In-Law

The few of them had just entered when they suddenly saw Lu Chongshan's faltering figure walking down the stairs with the help of the servants' support.

When Lu Chongshan saw the girl who was intimately held onto by his wife, he was suddenly so emotional that he started to tremble.

"Father, why did you get down from bed?" Lu Jingli quickly went up to hold him steady.

Lu Chongshan had a stern face as he waved his hand. "Not that weak."

Lu Jingli was speechless. "Not yet! Yesterday, you were still lying on the bed and couldn't move. You even needed Little Treasure to coax you before you forcefully ate two bites of food!"

"Punk!"

"Okay, okay, okay, I'm wrong. You're not that weak. You still have the energy to scold me. Quickly sit down, you!"

After everyone had sat down at the dining table, no one said anything. Suddenly, the atmosphere was a little awkward.

Yan Ruyi quickly signaled her husband with her eyes, telling him not to look so stern and to say something.

Lu Chongshan really did not know how to start. Moments later, he finally cleared his throat and looked at his son opposite him. "Tingxiao, how's your wife's health? Has it been checked?"

"The check-up is done. There're no issues. She just needs rehabilitation and to recuperate for a period of time," said Lu Tingxiao.

"That's good then... That's good..." When Lu Chongshan heard the outcome, he let out a long sigh of relief as if this huge mountain that had been a weight on him for a long time had finally been lifted. He finally had the room to breathe.

"Okay, let's eat first. We'll talk after we eat. Don't let Xiao Xi and Little Treasure starve," Yan Ruyi said as she started to scoop dishes for Ning Xi.

Little Treasure and Lu Tingxiao kept spooning Ning Xi dishes too. Very soon, her bowl had already turned into a little mountain.

It was at this moment that Lu Chongshan said, "Get your wife some fish maw and lingzhi soup..."

Ning Xi had initially mentally prepared herself with all sorts of ways to respond, yet later on, she realized that the change in the two elders' attitudes towards her was even more exaggerated than what Lu Jingli had told her earlier. On the contrary, she did not know how to respond, so as to conceal her helplessness at the meal, she could only keep striving to eat and eat.

After dinner, Yan Ruyi pulled Ning Xi's hand and said sincerely and earnestly, "Xiao Xi, can I chat with you alone?"

When she heard this, Ning Xi stayed silent as Lu Tingxiao instantly frowned.

Yan Ruyi knew what he was thinking the moment she saw her son's expression. "What are you frowning for? Could I possibly eat up your wife? Xiao Xi is also my daughter-in-law, alright?"

Lu Tingxiao pinched between his brows. "I didn't mean it that way."

"I gave birth to you. Do you think I wouldn't know what you're thinking?"

When she saw that the mother and son pair was probably going to start arguing, Ning Xi first signaled Lu Tingxiao and then quickly cleared her throat to say, "Elder Madam Lu, we don't have to care about him. You can just tell me anything!"

The wife had already spoken up, so Lu Tingxiao could only compromise helplessly.

Yan Ruyi held onto Ning Xi and walked to the beautiful greenhouse in the courtyard behind. On the round table in the middle was a steaming pot of fruit tea brewing.

"Try this fruit tea. It's fresh and tasty, and aids digestion too."

"Thank you."

As she watched Ning Xi's courteous manner, Yan Ruyi's looked miserable. However, when she recalled how the girl had been unconscious for a year and had finally woken up, her eyes were filled with gladness and she felt gratified again. "It's Bodhisattva's blessing. It's been a year and you've finally woken up! Later on, I'll go to all the temples to redeem the vow!"

Yan Ruyi's tone was filled with regret. A momentary silence later, she said, "Xiao Xi, today I've asked you to come. On one hand, it's to thank you. Thank you for everything that you've done for Little Treasure and Tingxiao. On the other hand, it's to apologize to you. Tingxiao's father and I have misunderstood you very much. Other than that, there're still some things that I want to explain to you..."

Chapter 1802: The Whole Story Back Then

Ning Xi realized that the things Yan Ruyi were about to say might be very important, so she listened quietly.

Yan Ruyi released a long sigh. "Xiao Xi, actually, a lot of things are not the way you think they are. When we first knew that Tingxiao liked a girl and that even Little Treasure liked that girl too, Tingxiao's father and I were extremely happy until... we found out... that you're an actress..."

"So, it's because of my profession," Ning Xi muttered.

Yan Ruyi shook her head. "Later on, the reason we had been so against you getting together with Tingxiao, and even objected you getting too close to Little Treasure was not because of your family background. It's not even because of your profession..."

“Or rather, it was indeed because of your profession, but it’s not the way you think it is. We don’t flaunt ourselves to be superior and look down on people in the entertainment industry.

“Actually, we respect everyone who works hard earnestly in every industry. Even I had been an idolator and until now there are still some old actors that I really like...”

When she said this, Yan Ruyi paused, then she continued, “The reason we have a prejudice against the acting profession would need to start from when Little Treasure was kidnapped years ago...”

When she heard this, Ning Xi’s gaze suddenly changed. Her expression was solemn as she continued to listen.

“Years ago, this incident caused a huge ruckus. It’s also one of the biggest taboo in our Lu family, that’s why we have never mentioned it to anyone. We’ve also erased all traces of what happened.

“But, Xiao Xi, you’re not an outsider. You’re Tingxiao’s wife and our daughter-in-law. There are many things that I still hope you will know. As for how you’d think after finding out, that is your freedom.”

Ning Xi knew a little about Little Treasure being kidnapped too, but she also knew that this incident was considered a secret, so she had never looked into it much.

Yan Ruyi was deep in thought as she recalled the incident. She took a deep breath and continued, “Ever since he was young, Tingxiao has been keeping to himself. He’s relatively detached. Even when he became an adult and reached the age of discussing marriage, he had never dated any girl and never had the desire to date.

“For this reason, his father and I had been worried silly. We also used all sorts of ways, hoping that he could settle down soon, yet we didn’t succeed.

“Initially, his father and I had already given up and were hopeless. We even acknowledged that Tingxiao... He, ahem, might not like girls... It was at this moment that Little Treasure appeared...”

When she mentioned Little Treasure, Yan Ruyi’s eyes were filled with tenderness and affection. “As one can well imagine, our entire family was happy with the arrival of Little Treasure. Of course, Little Treasure was indeed very lovable too! The only regret was that this child did not have a mother to be by his side!”

Yan Ruyi sighed, “Back then, Little Treasure was directly sent to the doorstep of the Lu family. When he was dropped off, he did not have anything with him. There was just a note that said he was Tingxiao’s child.

“In such an absurd situation with unknown origins, I just looked at Little Treasure once and almost immediately believed it by a distance. It was truly because this child looked so similar to Tingxiao when he was younger. Later on, we did a DNA test and indeed he was Tingxiao’s child.

“Tingxiao has probably told you how Little Treasure came about. Don’t misunderstand Tingxiao. All of this was because we were desperate in the crisis back then. Tingxiao was unwilling too.

“That time Jingli had gone to investigate the girls that he had initially arranged, yet he did not find Little Treasure’s biological mother... Until Little Treasure was three years old, a woman appeared...”

When she heard this, Ning Xi’s expression was solemn. “A woman?”

Chapter 1803: A Nightmare

Yan Ruyi picked her words carefully and told Ning Xi, “That woman was the same as you. She was an actress.”

Ning Xi frowned slightly and started to understand why the two of them would have such a huge prejudice towards actresses.

“Actually, Little Treasure wasn’t as cold as Tingxiao. Little Treasure was much more active. While he would sometimes go quiet and become focused when he saw something that interested him, most of the time he was pretty lively. Don’t get me started on how sweet his tongue was...”

Just as Yan Ruyi was narrating with a gentle expression, her face soon turned glum. “Although we’ve been protecting him well, Little Treasure matured much earlier than others. When he was a little older, he then realized he was different. He knew that he was different from other children as he didn’t have a mother...”

Ning Xi’s heart clenched when she heard Yan Ruyi’s words.

“Little Treasure kept on asking about it in the beginning. However, probably because we looked uneasy every time he asked, and with him being really observant, he stopped asking. But anyhow, he did mind.

“With Tingxiao’s personality, he wasn’t a person who’d take care of a child, plus at that time, he was really busy with work and frequently went overseas. The love Little Treasure received from his parents was very little.”

Yan Ruyi let out a long sigh. “At this moment, that woman suddenly came up to us and said that she was Little Treasure’s biological mother...”

Ning Xi looked surprised. “Little Treasure’s biological mother...”

Yan Ruyi nodded. “Yes, that girl looked really pure and beautiful. She seemed pretty simple. She gave us a really detailed walkthrough of what had happened back then. She said that with her identity, she’s surely not worthy of marrying into the Lu family, but if she kept the child, her career would be over. Out of choices, she sent Little Treasure to the Lu family. She said she really missed Little Treasure over the years, which was why she came to us.

“Little Treasure was so young and very protected by us. Being the kind child that he is, in addition to his desire to have a mother, he went head over heels for the girl at first sight.

“As for Tingxiao, he was really elusive about what happened that night. We did not dare to mention anything about it in front of him. Moreover, he didn’t know who the girl was himself, so we asked Jingli.

“Jingli said that this girl was indeed one of the girls he arranged for Tingxiao. Since Little Treasure liked her so much and they got along well, we believed her words almost instantly!”

“Then... what happened?” Ning Xi felt like she could not take the suspense anymore as she thought about Little Treasure’s experience.

Yan Ruyi closed her eyes as if she was in pain. “Afterwards... it was a nightmare! That girl was so skilled at acting and that she won us over in a short amount of time, especially Little Treasure!

“Little Treasure’s grandfather and I were thinking that since Little Treasure liked her so much, her career and family status didn’t matter. As long as Little Treasure liked her and she was from a clean family, it wasn’t a problem for Tingxiao to marry her, even if Tingxiao didn’t want to. We already planned to have her stay in the Lu family to keep Little Treasure company. Who’d have known that after some time, Tingxiao might change his mind?”

Chapter 1804: Head Lady

Based on Yan Ruyi’s tone, that girl seemed to have been a fake...

Ning Xi then asked, “Didn’t you guys have the girl and Little Treasure do a DNA test?”

Yan Ruyi looked regretful when she heard Ning Xi’s question. “We were too excited and happy, so we didn’t doubt her at all. Little Treasure arrived that fateful night, and we never expected anyone to come and deceive us!

“Afterward, the girl was getting better and better with Little Treasure. We did think about having them do a DNA test before, but Little Treasure rejected us every time. Little Treasure would do anything for that woman!

“We were delighted to see Little Treasure happy, so we did things his way. We treated that woman pretty well too...”

“Didn’t Tingxiao say something about this?” Ning Xi did not understand.

Yan Ruyi sighed, “Tingxiao was really mad about what happened. He couldn’t care any less about this woman. He just reminded us to do a DNA test and didn’t say anything else...”

“What I regret the most was my blind trust towards that woman and never having bothered to confirm it...”

“Only until Tingxiao came back and asked to see the DNA report, we thought about it and decided that it was safer to do the test as well, so we brought it up again.

“Little Treasure argued with us over this matter, but that woman calmed him down. She said it was alright and let the doctor take her blood obediently.

“We thought that we were overthinking and were being rude to the girl. We blamed Tingxiao for being cold. Not only did this hurt Little Treasure, it hurt the girl too...”

Yan Ruyi was reminded of something and her voice shuddered, “And then... on the night when we were waiting for the DNA test results, Little Treasure was kidnapped...”

The atmosphere became heavy all of a sudden.

It took a while for Yan Ruyi to calm down. “We then realized the girl was part of the plan of an old core member of the company who had been kicked out when he was found out to be misusing company funds! Although we were able to get there on time to stop the worst from happening and Little Treasure didn’t get hurt, he was hurt by a person he trusted dearly. Ever since then, Little Treasure closed himself up completely...”

“As for us, we didn’t believe anyone easily anymore. We also forbid Jingli from getting too close with any of the artistes under him...”

Yan Ruyi then grabbed Ning Xi’s hands tightly. “Xiao Xi, I’m sorry... What happened back then had a really huge impact on us. No matter who we saw, we just thought that they had bad intentions, especially you... You were much too similar to the woman back then...”

“We hoped Tingxiao would find a suitable mother for Little Treasure, partly for the family. At least, we hoped that the same tragedy won’t happen again. After that whole fiasco, there was a huge mess within the family. As everything added up, tragedy still struck...”

“Until... until you used your life to wake us up, to walk out of the past shadows and prejudice...”

“I know that we’ve done some irreversible damage. I don’t expect you to accept terrible in-laws like us as long as you wake up, as long as you’re safe with Tingxiao and Little Treasure!”

Tears welled up in Yan Ruyi’s eyes as she took a bracelet off of her wrist. “This is a bracelet that’s been handed down for generations. It’s for the head lady of every generation. I’m passing it to you now, I hope... you’ll accept it...”

Chapter 1805: Little Treasure’s Only Mother

Yan Ruyi looked at the girl nervously.

Ning Xi studied the bracelet quietly. After a while, she accepted it carefully and replied gently, "Thank you, Mother-in-law."

Yan Ruyi's expression was stunned for a moment, then her long-suppressed tears started falling as she sobbed and trembled.

Ning Xi patted the lady's shoulder gently.

In the end, Lu Chongshan and Yan Ruyi were not evil. They were just concerned about their children, and until now, they had never done anything to hurt her directly.

Moreover, they were Lu Tingxiao's parents and Little Treasure's grandparents after all.

It took Yan Ruyi some time to stop her sobbing. She held onto Ning Xi's hand. "Don't worry, Xiao Xi, as long as Tingxiao's father and I are around, you'll be the eldest daughter-in-law of the family. No one can waver your position. Even if Little Treasure's biological mother were to appear in the future, you're Little Treasure's only mother!"

...

Outside the room.

Little Treasure bolted towards Ning Xi when she came out.

Ning Xi hugged the little guy, feeling distressed about his past experiences.

After being betrayed by a person he had trusted so much, just how difficult was it for him to open up to her?

How precious was such dependence and trust?

"You both are finally done! If it took any longer, the two of them were about to take down the house!" As Lu Jingli was mumbling, he noticed a familiar-looking bracelet on Ning Xi's wrist. He hurried over like he had seen a rare treasure. "Wow! You're really giving it all, Mother! You even gave her this?"

Yan Ruyi slapped Lu Jingli's shoulder. "What are you talking about? Xiao Xi is the eldest daughter-in-law of the family. This should be hers!"

Yan Ruyi then looked at her elder son with a serious expression. "Come here, Tingxiao. I have something to tell you too!"

Lu Tingxiao took a glance at his wife and son, then he went over to his mother.

Yan Ruyi said with a stern face, "I've already explained to Xiao Xi how someone pretended to be Little Treasure's mother and caused him to be kidnapped back then. I've also told Xiao Xi that no matter what, even if Little Treasure's biological mother were to appear, Xiao Xi is Little Treasure's only mother and the only head lady of the Lu family. There shall be no accidents and nothing should ever hurt Xiao Xi's heart!"

Yan Ruyi pinched the space between her eyebrows regretfully as if she was afraid her peaceful life might be ruined once again.

Lu Tingxiao responded, "Rest assured, it'll be alright."

The truth about Ning Xi being Little Treasure's biological mother was not important anymore, but the identity and purpose of the person who had left Little Treasure with the Lu family were still unclear even after such a long investigation. However, he was able to make a guess from the tiny hints he had found...

Not many people, especially Ning Xi, could ever find out about it...

After he finished talking with his mother and was about to go back to Ning Xi, his phone suddenly rang.

Lu Tingxiao frowned when he saw the name of the incoming caller.

Gong Shangze...

Ever since Ning Xi had fallen into the coma, Spirit was doing well on its own, but Gong Shangze was facing a grave problem. He had slowly reached a bottleneck and was not able to come up with new designs. As the core of the company, the withering of the designer's creativity was fatal for the company. This impeded Spirit's plans to get listed.

Chapter 1806: Husband

"Hello, Mr. Lu..." From the other end of the phone came a raspy and haggard voice.

"Mmm."

"Apologies for presumptuously disturbing you. Today, I'm calling you because there's something I'd like to get your instructions on."

"Speak."

"I..." The young man on the other end seemed to have gone through a long struggle before he finally said, "Mr. Lu, I want to resign."

Lu Tingxiao's brows furrowed. "I'm not your boss. I don't have the authority to comment on your request."

When the young man heard this reply, his tone became a little impatient. "But you're the only person who can make this decision on behalf of the Boss. If I continue in my position, I'll only destroy Spirit. After I resign, with your capabilities, you can definitely hire a much better designer for Spirit!"

Lu Tingxiao pinched the space between his brows and did not say anything.

He never breathed a word about the truth behind Ning Xi's disappearance to anyone in Spirit. He did not know how Gong Shangze and the rest had guessed it.

Han Momo and Qiao Weilan were alright. Even though at first, there were some twists and turns, in the end, they still managed to hold the fort down and had been steadily running the company.

However, Ning Xi's departure had affected Gong Shangze significantly.

After all, designers were sentimental, especially since Ning Xi's existence had been like a belief to Gong Shangze. Now, this solid belief of his had suddenly left without a word, so one could well imagine how it affected him.

He could still somewhat assist running the company in secret. However, even he could not intervene with the designer's inspiration.

Previously, when Ning Xi had asked about Spirit, he did not mention much about Gong Shangze's situation but based on the current situation, he could not continue keeping it a secret.

After he finished the call with Gong Shangze, Lu Tingxiao hesitated momentarily, but in the end, he still told Ning Xi about it.

"Earlier, Gong Shangze called."

"Ah! Ah Ze! What did he say?" Ning Xi immediately asked.

"He wants to resign."

"What?" Ning Xi's expression instantly changed. "Why does he suddenly want to resign?"

Lu Tingxiao looked at her gravely. "Actually, Shangze's situation in the past year hasn't been great. After you disappeared, he's been turning into a worse and worse state, until he fell into a bottleneck. It's been half a year since he couldn't come up with a design that he's satisfied with. Initially, I didn't want you to worry and get worn out, so I didn't immediately tell you. I wanted to wait till you've recovered a little, but now, I'm afraid you'll need to step in."

"How did this happen?" Ning Xi massaged her temples, then she immediately said, "I want to look for him right now!"

Lu Tingxiao revealed a helpless expression. He knew that she would definitely react like this upon finding out.

Ning Xi observed Lu Tingxiao's tightly knitted brows and went over to hug him. She said with a gentle tone, "Husband, don't keep treating me like I'm made of glass. This isn't acting. I don't need to use any physical strength or energy. I don't need to draw designs and I don't need to settle any accounts. I won't be worn out.

"Besides, I must finish what I started. Spirit is a collective effort of a lot of us. I didn't even say anything and ditched them to sleep for a year. Indeed, it's my fault. Since I'm already awake now, no matter what, I should explain things to my partners who've worked hard together with me. Ah Ze definitely won't reveal my situation to anyone outside. Plus, aren't you here too!?"

At last, Lu Tingxiao sighed, "I'll go with you."

In reality, when Ning Xi had said the first word, he was already bound to compromise.

Chapter 1807: Still His Turf In The End

At the same time, at Eaton Bar.

Inside the VIP room, drinks were exchanged and raucous voices loudly chatted all around.

“Come, come! Let us all drink a toast to our designer, David!”

“Cheers!”

“Cheers! The last season’s sales were once again championed by History! Director David’s contributions can’t go unnoticed!”

“Before this, Spirit completely copied our style. They actually even attempted to steal our market share in vain. Our Director David probably had to teach them how to conduct themselves, hahaha!”

...

The room was filled with sounds of praises and David was red from drinking. He beamed as he said to the group of colleagues, “I’ve said that in this profession as a designer, it’s not to see who travels the fastest, but to see who can travel the furthest!”

“Director David speaks words of wisdom! I’m going to write this down. It’s best to let those rookies, who overestimate their abilities, see how a real designer is like!”

“That alphabet named guy... whatever genius designer he is... He showed parts of him and pretended to be mysterious, but after all of that, he just ended up being a short-lived dabbler. He’s only crossed swords for a few battles and he’s already been defeated by Boss David that he daren’t even leave his house!”

“Hahaha, Spirit hasn’t even released new designs for half a year! I think they’re not too far away from closing down!”

...

David was elated by all the compliments, but at least, he was not over his head. He turned to flatter the woman in the middle of the sofa. “I’m only responsible for splendid designing, but our company is only here today because of our Miss Ning’s brilliant leadership!”

When others heard him, they all quickly started to brown nose Ning Xueluo too.

“Our Boss is now not only the Finance Director of Ning International, and the Vice General Manager of Starlight Entertainment; it’s not too much to call her a woman Zhuge!”

“Say, in the entire Imperial, is there any lady or madam that can compare to our Boss?”

In the middle of the sofa, Ning Xueluo elegantly and gracefully sipped her red wine. “That’s enough. All of you, don’t place me on a pedestal. Everyone’s worked hard in this period of time. All of you will get a triple bonus this month.”

When she announced that, the entire room was instantly filled with cheers of excitement.

Ning Xueluo took out a set of car keys from her bag and casually tossed it at David. "Our Director David is the hero. There's no need for doubt about that!"

"Wow! A Ferrari! Boss, you're incredibly generous!"

"Boss David, later on, let me borrow it to drive it around!"

"Me too, me too! Lend it to me to drive too!"

...

David looked thrilled as he swiftly caught the keys in his hand. "Thank you, Boss, for the reward!"

Ning Xueluo smiled. "As long as you work earnestly with me, I won't discriminate when it comes to the company's profit. You'll all get returns that you're satisfied with!"

"Thank you, Boss! To work with Boss means great benefits!"

"Boss, we'll definitely work hard! To shine for the company! To ignite for the company!"

David said confidently, "Boss, don't worry! This time for the international Spring/Summer fashion week, I'll definitely render Spirit to a point where they won't be able to make a comeback so as to avoid them from even being there and being irksome!"

When Ning Xueluo heard his promise, she said plainly, "That's fine, actually."

David went along. "Boss, you're right. Spirit's not even worthy for us to pay them any attention!"

This past year was no doubt the year that David had lived most comfortably. Initially, he was gasping for air with Spirit suppressing him. He had even been scolded by Ning Xueluo all day long and suffered from all kinds of sneers from those in the industry. What had worried him most was that secret, mysterious designer XZ, whose design style was exactly the same as a particular person...

However, now, he did not need to worry about all of that anymore...

This world of fashion design was still his turf in the end!

Chapter 1808: History Was Written By The Victors

After it ended, everyone went home separately.

A Bentley had stopped steadily at the entrance of the bar. Ning Xueluo waved goodbye to everyone, then got into the car under everyone's envious and worshipping gazes.

After Ning Xueluo got into the car, she leaned over to the man in the driver's seat and kissed his lips. "I'm exhausting you, Bro Yan. It's already so late, yet you still picked me up! Our sales figures came first again this session, so I brought everyone over for some fun!"

"The person who's exhausted is you. Don't get so busy till you fall ill."

“I won’t! Work’s not exhausting at all!”

Su Yan rubbed the top of the girl’s head gently, then he started the engine.

Ning Xueluo took a peek at the man beside her. She pretended to nonchalantly say, “Bro Yan, ‘The World’ is going to be remade. Did you know that?”

Su Yan nodded. “I heard a bit about it.”

“Previously, the drama crew even invited me over to join the promotions and stuff. They said they wanted to invite all of the original cast and the new cast together to do a promotional stint, but I said that I’ve already quit the entertainment industry, so I was still considering whether I should go!”

Su Yan did not say anything for a moment, then Ning Xueluo realized that he was lost in his thoughts. “This time, Sister’s character, Meng Changge... is portrayed by our company’s Han Zixuan. She’s a pretty talented girl and is full of potential. She’s progressing very quickly, plus the company has also been largely promoting her...”

When she said this, Ning Xueluo changed the topic suddenly. “I wonder where Sister has gone for this past one year. She can’t be contacted at all. There isn’t even any news about her. All the people around her don’t know where she went either. No matter what the situation is, she should at least let the family know. Now, so many people are worried about her! Many people even like creating drama and created rumors about how she’s retired because she was taken in as a mistress...”

Su Yan pinched the space between his brows. He did not look very pleased. “Xiao Xi definitely has her reasons.”

Ning Xueluo nodded. She looked concerned as she comforted, “I trust Sister too. I’m just worried that something’s happened to her... I hope that there’ll be news about Sister soon...”

When Ning Xi had just gone missing, she had indeed become worried for a very long time. Secretly, she had been searching for traces of her, but after three months, then half a year, and until now, a whole year had passed, but no matter how the outside world had continued turning on its axis, Ning Xi still did not appear...

Finally, she had stopped looking for her too.

Now, Ning International was hers, while History was standing steadily on its feet. With Su Yan’s help, she had invested in Starlight and Han Zixuan had completely replaced Ning Xi’s position in the entertainment industry.

Right now, even if Ning Xi returned, she would just be a useless person, an outdated female star. She would even be inferior to a rookie. What could she possibly bring to compete with her?

As for the Su family, previously Zheng Minjun and Su Hongguang, who had been picking on her, were now worshipping her like a master too. That damned Su Xun and Zhao Shanshan would even avoid her when they saw her.

Only Ning Yaohua and Zhuang Lingyu’s side seemed to be somewhat odd recently. When she was done being busy, she probably needed to assign people to watch them, but now, all of the Ning

family was within her grasp. She had even gotten Ning Yaobang's shares and Ning Qitong could not do anything to her. Knowing them, they would not be able to cause any ruckus.

Hah, at the start if she had really stupidly followed those hillbillies, she would probably just be a village woman now. How would she be able to enjoy everything she had now?

Family background was a wide gap that a person could never move past.

If it had not been because she was the lady of the Ning family, how could she have smoothly entered the entertainment industry? How could she have matched up to Su Yan, and how could she have obtained everything she had today?

Wait till "The World"'s promotional activities launched! She could even use this opportunity to make a comeback, washing away all the past shame.

As the saying went, history was written by the victors!

Chapter 1809: How To Coax Someone?

Compared to the environment of a lively bar, this was a cold and lonely studio.

It was so dark that no light came into the room.

A young man curled into a fetal position in a corner as a mist-like spider web covered his hair and body.

Beside the young man was his phone that had gone flat. The whole room had scattered messy drafts, while blots of ink and multiple pens were strewn everywhere on the floor. As a gust blew into the room, the sound of the draft papers rustling echoed through the empty room...

The studio was pitch dark when Ning Xi and Lu Tingxiao arrived. It was as though no one was there.

"Is Ze here?" Ning Xi asked hesitantly.

This place exuded a vibe that it had been vacant for a very long time.

After Spirit had expanded and moved to a bigger company, only Gong Shangze remained there to design. He said that he could only find inspiration there. Ning Xi had not forced him at that time and he was still here after a year.

"According to the assistant, he's been keeping himself in here 24/7," Lu Tingxiao replied.

Ning Xi frowned.

Lu Tingxiao shielded Ning Xi and pushed the creaking door of the studio open.

He searched around and switched on the lights. The light bulbs flickered several times before emitting a dim light.

Ning Xi's pupils shrunk the moment she saw the condition of the studio.

Drafts were scattered everywhere in the room. From the half-completed drafts, the messy lines, and the destroyed sketches, it was obvious that the creator had gone through a difficult struggle.

The young man was lying down in the corner of the room. He did not move at all as if he was slowly becoming a part of the room.

Before going over, Ning Xi had prepared herself that Gong Shangze might not be in good shape, but she did not expect to see such a heartbreaking scene.

When she had picked him up back in Los Angeles, even though he was a disheveled beggar, he was very critical towards her outfit, yet the person in front of her right now was like a person who had been robbed of all his talents, dropping from the stage of heavens to the realm of mortals.

As if he was a child of faith being abandoned by God...

The young man did not notice someone was there. Ning Xi was not even sure if he was conscious.

After some time, Ning Xi came back to her senses from the mess she saw in front of her. She took a deep breath and walked slowly to the young man.

Ning Xi squatted down slowly and used her hands to remove the cobwebs on the young man's hair. She was afraid to startle him, so she called out to him gently, "Ze..."

The young man's body shivered the moment Ning Xi called him as if his soul had just received a shock.

"Ze... I'm back..."

The young man raised his head from his knee mechanically. His dead-looking eyes were staring at Ning Xi like a never-ending abyss.

The next moment, the young man covered his eyes with his arm.

Ning Xi then saw big drops of tears start to plop down on the drafts, blurring the painful colors and lines...

The young man did not say anything or make any sound. He just covered his eyes with his arm as he wept.

Ning Xi had never seen a man cry like this before. She never knew that a man could weep this much either, so she freaked out and turned around to Lu Tingxiao when she realized she had just made a grown man cry. "Uhh, darling... What should I do?"

Chapter 1810: Still King of The World

Ning Xi looked helpless. "What should I do?"

Lu Tingxiao massaged his temples. Apparently, he was not experienced with such a dilemma as well.

Ning Xi almost cried. Fine, she made this mess, so she was going to fix it.

Ning Xi crouched down and started explaining, "Ze, I'm really sorry for disappearing for so long. I didn't want to. I didn't mean to ignore Spirit's business as well. I've been injured gravely and have been lying in bed for the past year. I just woke up a few days ago, but because I was unconscious for too long, my body was weak and I couldn't even speak well, so I didn't contact Spirit right

away. We locked down the news and didn't tell anyone to avoid any negative rumors. I'm really sorry..."

After Ning Xi spoke for a long while to the point her mouth was nearly bruising, the young man finally replied, "I thought... I disappointed you..."

Ning Xi covered her forehead with her palm in horror. "How is that possible?! You're amazing! You're a treasure that I found!"

"I thought... I wasn't good enough... that I couldn't satisfy you... I thought Spirit didn't really matter to you... I suddenly didn't know... didn't know the meaning to persist any longer," the young man continued, his face full of dread and despair of being abandoned.

Ning Xi almost broke down. The way he phrased it made it sound like she was a cheater!

She had not!

"Gosh! Why do you like to overthink so much?! Shouldn't you understand best whether Spirit is important to me or not? From the very first design, the first customer, the first flagship store, we've come a long way since then. I haven't seen the Spirit brand go on the international stage yet! I haven't let everyone know that you're much better than that bastard David!"

Gong Shangze was still looking downwards as he clenched his fists tightly. "Boss, sorry... When you weren't around... I didn't... didn't do well... I'm sorry..."

"It's alright! It's my fault after all!" Ning Xi comforted him.

Actually, she could fully understand Gong Shangze's feelings at the moment.

Gong Shangze had undergone the trauma of being betrayed and abandoned once before, and this time, during a long wait, various guesses and doubts magnified by the tendency to blame himself slowly evolved into him hating himself and thinking that all his effort was useless. Soon, he felt that everything was meaningless.

The most fatal bottleneck for a creator besides self-doubt was the loss of meaning. Any one of these two situations was enough to destroy a designer.

Gong Shangze had gone through both and it was tough for him to hang on until now.

If she had woken up any later, this genius might have really fallen and never gotten back up on his feet ever again.

Ning Xi suddenly felt afraid about what could have happened. "There's more than one thing you should be sorry about. Look at you! I made you into a handsome young man, and you've turned yourself back into a dirty old man! Get up, follow me!"

Gong Shangze stood up slowly. "Boss... Where are we going?"

"To my place! Don't worry. I won't cause you trouble!"

Gong Shangze looked at Lu Tingxiao. "I... It's okay... I'm good to stay here..."

“What’s so good here? If I got here any later, you’d have become a dried corpse! Why are you looking at my darling? Don’t worry! The place is huge. You won’t be bothering at all! What inspiration could you get by locking yourself up inside here? Get into a new environment and you’ll realize you’re still the rocking genius designer XZ! You’re still the king of the world!”