

## His Beloved 211

Chapter 211: Dare to swear? \_2

"Dare what?"

"Dare to swear? Swear that you're sure I have an inappropriate relationship with Jian Yan?"

"Do we have to be so childish? Aren't you clear in your heart whether you've done it or not?" Jing Qing scoffed, but her expression was very ugly.

"I am very clear, it's just that some people seem to pretend to be confused despite being clear, right?"

Qin Mu looked at her coldly, with a sharp gaze that seemed ready to devour her.

"Auntie, I have something else to do today, so I'll leave first. We'll come to see you another day."

Jing Qing suddenly fell silent towards Qin Mu, then turned to Feng Fanghua and said.

"Yes, auntie, you've been entertained with a farce today. We'll come to visit you again when this girl is not around, goodbye."

"You both take care, no need to see you out. I hope you won't encounter me again when you come next time."

Qin Mu, with her hands in her pockets, suddenly let out a laugh after they had walked a few steps, unable to hold back.

"You can still laugh?"

Feng Fanghua looked anxious on her behalf.

"What else can I do?"

Qin Mu said helplessly, then sat down beside her. Suddenly calming down, she looked at Feng Fanghua cautiously, and Feng Fanghua looked back at her.

"Mom, my relationship with my master is purely that of discipleship. It was I who pestered him to take me as a disciple, and he really agreed to teach me because he had no choice. But I feel that this is fate, and that's all."

"Didn't you say you were coming back to get your notebook? Why don't you hurry up and go?"

Feng Fanghua reminded her, and Qin Mu then remembered her business. Realizing that Feng Fanghua still held some trust in her, she nodded, fetched her notebook, and left.

After she had gone, Feng Fanghua sighed, feeling helpless. The maid quietly asked her, "Madam, do you also suspect the young madam?"

"I just recalled that the silly boy doesn't like Jian Yan."

Others might not understand the meaning of these words, but the maid who had been with her for many years did.

Feng Fanghua did not blindly believe or disbelieve; she had her own scale in her heart. Shortly after Qin Mu left, she took her granddaughter's coat and went to the grandson and granddaughter-in-law.

After returning to the private apartment, Jing Qing and Qin Mingzhu were still fuming: "You will never amount to anything in front of Qin Mu, do you know why?"

"Why?"

Qin Mingzhu weakly asked.

Jing Qing tossed her expensive bag carelessly and then turned with some anger in her eyes to look at her: "Because she has always been high and mighty in front of you, and in front of her, no matter how you raise your head, you will never be taller."

"Are you saying my height can't compare to hers? I feel like it's about the same."

"Height? Ha! Qin Mingzhu, what do I even say about you? Is it that all the children born from mistresses are foolishly sweet?"

Jing Qing looked up to the sky and after a long while, she scoffed with mockery.

Qin Mingzhu turned pale when she heard the words 'mistress': "Jing Qing, what do you mean by that? What mistress? What foolishly sweet?"

"Haven't you noticed that ever since she returned, even before she set foot in the Qin Family, she has already eclipsed all your glory there?"

Jing Qing continued, but Qin Mingzhu, being naive, didn't understand a word and just felt utterly wronged.

"Why do you think the Mu Family matriarch agreed to let her stay in the Mu Family? Is it really because Mu Yichen likes her? You're so wrong. It's merely because you both have the same father who is the mayor."

With Jing Qing repeatedly hitting her where it hurt, Qin Mingzhu felt a tickle in her throat as if she was inflamed, and it was a raging fire.

"If she were just any commoner's daughter, do you think she'd have set foot in the Mu Family's doorstep? No way."

Jing Qing was indeed desperate; she had never won when facing Qin Mu directly, and every time, Qin Mu left her breathless, flushed, and embarrassed. Especially today, in front of Mu Yichen's mother, she

couldn't bear the thought of losing face like that again in front of a senior. She hoped to forever maintain a pure and beautiful image in front of the elders of the Mu Family.

"—, just talking about this makes me angry. What gives her the right to outshine me the moment she returns? Jing Qing, you have no idea. Nowadays so many classmates are asking about her, and some even taunt me, saying I'm the daughter of a mistress. My mother was legitimately married to my dad, how did she become a mistress?"

After hearing this, Qin Mingzhu was staggered, recalling her recent life being bombarded with questions about Qin Mu, and she felt like her hair was on end.

"Are you really clueless about how your mother married the mayor of Qin City? Why did Qin Mu's mother die in a car accident? If it weren't for your mother bringing you out to expose her affair with the mayor of Qin City... You better think about it yourself."

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Jing Qing said, unconsciously letting out a sneer before eventually falling silent.

Qin Mingzhu felt a twinge of guilt after hearing her words, but soon puffed up her not-so-large chest, "My mom just wants to give me a home. Besides, my mom loves my dad, and my dad truly loves my mom."

"Love your mom? I witnessed with my own eyes how the mayor of Qin City was in love with Qin Mu's mother. Your mom's relationship with him doesn't count as love."

"What?"

What does being in love look like?

It seemed so distant and unrealistic that even Jing Qing felt it was something elusive, but she had truly witnessed it. She was five years older than Qin Mu, her memory was clearer, and she remembered many things from the past distinctly.

After talking with Jing Qing, Qin Mingzhu returned home full of resentment. The maid, seeing her come back, promptly served her a bowl of bird's nest soup: "Miss, the madam had me stew this bird's nest for you. Please have some."

"Get lost!"

She plopped down on the couch, cast a sideways glance at the bowl of bird's nest soup, and with a forceful swipe of her hand, knocked it aside. The maid was startled into jumping back as the bird's nest spilled onto the coffee table and from there, onto the floor, the couch, and all around, dirtying everything. The beautiful Jingdezhen porcelain bowl shattered into many pieces.

"Miss, what's wrong with you?" the maid asked in shock.

"When did it become okay for a servant in this house to ask questions? Get lost!"

Qin Mingzhu turned to question her coldly and then headed upstairs.

One maid came out and asked the one who was standing there stunned: "What's gotten into her again?"

"Who knows? The throwing and smashing were bad enough, but... never mind, I'm not staying here after this month is over."

The other maid had something to say, but after a moment's thought, she shook her head with a sigh and turned to fetch the cleaning supplies.

"Hey, what do you mean by that?"

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When Qin Haiming and Zhang Rujia returned from an event after ten o'clock at night and heard that the young miss was throwing a tantrum upstairs, he turned to Zhang Rujia and said, "Go check what's bothering her now."

"Okay!"

Zhang Rujia felt a jolt of alarm; she really didn't dare to send Qin Haiming upstairs at this hour, so she immediately went up to her daughter's room herself.

Qin Haiming glanced at that upstairs room with a look of helplessness and sighed, having no desire to sit down on the couch. He glanced at the sofa and then walked back outside.

After walking in, Zhang Rujia saw her daughter still sobbing face down on the bed and immediately went over to embrace her with concern: "What's the matter?"

"Mom, Jing Qing bullied me."

Qin Mingzhu immediately turned and buried herself into Zhang Rujia's embrace, clinging tightly to her waist, sobbing and pouring out her grievances.

"How did she bully you? Weren't you two getting along just fine this morning?"

"But when we visited the Mu Family, we encountered that little bitch Qin Mu. When she couldn't best that little bitch, she took her anger out on me, even saying you were a mistress, claiming that if you hadn't suddenly shown up at their door with me years ago, that bitch's mother wouldn't have died. Mom, how could she say that? You are the woman my father married openly and honorably."

"Jing Qing actually said that? It seems I had too high an opinion of her before. Since she looks down on us, mother and daughter, then Mingzhu, from now on you really can't be so open-hearted with her, understand? From now on, you need to keep your guard up, okay?"

"Yeah! But Mom, it still hurts so much. I've never felt so wronged before. These days, ever since Dad acknowledged that little bitch as his daughter, so many classmates have called to mock me. And today, with Jing Qing saying those things, I'm really so angry."

Qin Mingzhu was crying non-stop as she spoke, while Zhang Rujia looked down at her daughter, whose eyes were swollen from crying, and felt an ache in her heart. Gently wiping her tears, she asked, "Did you find out anything at the Mu house today? What is Feng Fanghua's relationship with that woman?"

"Relationship? I'm not sure. We were just chatting, and then that little bitch suddenly went back home, saying she had left her notebook. She was eavesdropping on our conversation and blocked me and Jing Qing completely. Oh right, Jing Qing seemed to have investigated her previously."

Qin Mingzhu stopped crying as she spoke, just recalling the scene at the time and trying her best to describe everything to Zhang Rujia.

"Hmph, Jing Qing is no good either. Seeing Qin Mu living with the Mu Family, obviously she got anxious. The methods she used against that little bitch were more than just investigating and following her."

Zhang Rujia had heard some stories about her and the more she thought about it, the more she felt that Jing Qing was placing herself too high. In reality, weren't they all similar?

Man is not for others, the universe punishes the self-centered!

"Mom, you're right. I really can't hang out with Jing Qing anymore. She truly looks down on me from the bottom of her heart."

Qin Mingzhu's biggest fear was actually Jing Qing scheming against her.

"You're clear about it now, and that's good. But on the surface, you still need to maintain a good relationship with her. Just keep clear in your heart that the only people in this world who are willing to help you selflessly are your own parents."

"Yeah! But does Dad still care about me?"

"Of course! The only thing he has for that woman is guilt. But you, you've grown up under his watchful eye. Look at what you eat, what you wear, tell me, does he cherish you more, or that woman?"

"It's Mom who is the best to me."

Having heard Zhang Rujia's words, Qin Mingzhu's mood immediately improved, and she hugged Zhang Rujia's waist and coquettishly snuggled up to her.

"My silly girl!"

Zhang Rujia hugged Qin Mingzhu back, full of tenderness and indulgence.

"By the way, your dad is downstairs. Go wash your face quickly and come down as if nothing has happened, okay? Show up in front of your father with a smile."

"Okay!"

Qin Mingzhu didn't understand why Zhang Rujia wanted her to meet the Mayor of Qin City with a smile, but as long as it was her mother's advice, it must be for her benefit, so she immediately went to do as told.

— —

At night, Qin Mu was dining out with clients, and when Mu Yichen returned home, Feng Fanghua called him to sit on the sofa and told him everything that had happened during the day. Mu Yichen listened and then looked up slightly, "You think she didn't speak well?"

Feng Fanghua sighed helplessly, seeing the look on her son's face as if everything his wife said was reasonable, and then spoke again.



"I was wondering about Jian Yan's situation. Is there really something ambiguous going on between her and Jian Yan?"

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"If she liked Jian Yan, would she still be in Rongcheng?"

Mu Yichen spoke with a lack of enthusiasm, his distinct facial contours extra cold.

"Look, aren't you still upset? Am I not worried for you? You've chased her for so many years, and it was not easy to win her heart, yet her heart isn't with you—can't I at least be suspicious?"

"You can doubt whether she loves your son, but you really can't insult her. Say what you want to me, but it's best not to mention a single word in front of her, not now, nor in the future."

After Mu Yichen finished speaking, he stood up and went upstairs to his daughter's room.

Feng Fanghua remained seated in the living room, the warm light shining on her head creating a beautiful halo, but her mood was not beautiful, despite her good intentions.

After he entered Huanhuan's room, Feng Fanghua sat alone on the sofa, sipping tea. She couldn't help but scoff, thinking that unless it was praising Qin Mu, he never seemed happy.

Mu Yichen gently closed the door and looked at his daughter who was sleeping with a Peppa Pig plushie, watching her for an extra moment, wanting to take it away but hesitating when she immediately clutched it tighter.

Beneath thick lashes, a pair of pitch-black eyes quietly observed the sleeping form of his little daughter, his lips involuntarily curling into a slight smile.

He knelt quietly by the bed, gazing at the sleeping Little Huanhuan, feeling as if his heart was filled with cotton candy—soft, sweet, and exceptionally comforting.

Even his usually cold gaze became tender. She didn't love him? Yet she gave him such a precious gift.

Thinking back to when he first met Huanhuan, those pure big eyes looking at him, even calling him 'daddy'...

All those beautiful moments from the past, though lacking at the time, seemed so wonderful in retrospect.

Perhaps because he was with his daughter, he later sat on the carpet beside the bed, his hand gently stroking his daughter's hair, looking every bit the immature boy.

When Qin Mu came back, Feng Fanghua and Mu Zihao had already gone to bed. She went straight upstairs and, finding no one in her room, was about to check her daughter's room when she saw him coming out of it.

"Have you been with Huanhuan all this time?"

"Hmm!"

He hummed lowly in response and then wrapped his arms around her, intending to head to the bedroom.

"I want to see her too."

They stood face to face, Qin Mu blocked by his embrace could only move backward, "Hey, Mu Yichen, aren't you being too domineering?"

Just because you looked at our daughter doesn't mean I can't, you can't take my place in this."

"First, take a good look at me, and then it won't be too late to go see our daughter."

The bedroom door closed.

Some say that whether two people love each other can be known in bed. She didn't know whether they were in the know or not.

In any case, they had always cooperated well, whether made love gently or roughly.

Later, after they both changed into pajamas, Mu Yichen went to Huanhuan's room and carried her from her bed. With the Peppa Pig plushie in her arms, she was placed in the middle of their big bed.

Mu Yichen covered her well with the blankets, his dark eagle eyes glanced at the woman across from him, and the next moment he walked around to her side.

Qin Mu didn't get angry, just gave an exasperated smile, and scooted over.

As her hand gently stroked Huanhuan, she too was embraced tightly from behind.

"I heard Jing Qing and Qin Mingzhu came to the house this morning?"

He asked in a low voice, in the quiet space.

"Hmm!"

She didn't say another word, feeling the moment was peaceful and warm, their family of three together, nothing could be more beautiful.

"They are all unimportant people, no matter what they say, don't get angry. It's not worth upsetting yourself, and it would hurt me too, alright?"

"I know what they are thinking, there's no use getting angry with them, I'd never win. I'm saving my energy to deal with them."

After saying that, she couldn't help but laugh involuntarily, and Mu Yichen let go of his worries seeing she didn't take it to heart.

"What should I do? I'm thinking about it again."

His voice, filled with an allure too magnetic to express, was simply captivating.

Qin Mu reflexively turned on her side, falling right into his expansive embrace.

"Stop it, Huanhuan is here!"

As the night deepened, she didn't know how she fell asleep, only recalling the next day that she vaguely felt him leave the room for a moment.

That probably wasn't an illusion?

Qin Mu subconsciously thought, and then she opened her eyes.

Seeing her husband and daughter were still asleep, she quietly got out of bed and went to the bathroom to make sure she was unharmed.

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She finally relaxed considerably once she found everything neat and clean, and then went to wash up.

By the time she went out again, her daughter had already been taken away, and Mu Yi still lay in bed with his shoulders bare. That feeling...

Well, he probably isn't wearing anything right now.

Qin Mu was still in her pajamas, but she had already freshened up, grabbing her long hair as she stepped forward: "I need to make a trip to the factory this morning, so..."

"So let's hurry up and finish what we didn't finish last night."

Qin Mu...

Didn't they finish last night's business?

She clearly remembered hearing his suppressed voice, unmistakably the kind of noise that would occur at that moment.

So when Qin Mu went to the factory, it was already late, but just as she was about to enter the workshop, she turned her head and saw a familiar car stop at the factory gate.

The driver opened the rear car door, and she unconsciously furrowed her brows at the sight of the man in a suit, and then walked out quite composedly.

Some people, since they can't be avoided, must be faced.

After she got into the car, the driver closed the door, and although the space was fairly spacious, it still felt almost suffocating, especially for Qin Mu.

She was not good at sitting together with this father, not good at all.

Qin Haiming spoke in a low voice, "I came for an inspection this morning and didn't expect to run into you."

Qin Mu didn't speak, only turned her head to look outside. Could she have expected this?

She was not someone's fan.

"I heard a few days ago that Mu Yichen took you to see a traditional Chinese medicine doctor. Is your health very poor?"

He looked up at her, and she was very thin, even thinner than when she first returned to the country.

"It's not that bad, just some chills."

What could she say? Say that she had been neglected outside since she was young, that an aunt without much devotion had caused her to suffer from malnutrition? Or tell him about the years she lived a life worse than death?

In the end, all that could be said was just a few words.

"It's all my fault. I haven't fulfilled my responsibilities as a father."

"You can't say that. You have two daughters. Fulfilling your duty for one is fulfilling your fatherly responsibility."

"If possible, I hope you'll give me a chance to make it up to you."

"This clothing factory was given to me by Mu Yichen, and I hope you can treat him differently."

Qin Mu finally turned to look at him, clearly stating her demands.

Qin Haiming nodded, pondered for a moment, and then said, "I will. I heard a while ago that he was having troubles with the Jing Family and lost a deal because of it. I wanted to step in, but then your relationship with him... I will pay more attention to these matters in the future."

"Thanks in advance. If there's nothing else, I'll get out of the car now."

She looked away from him, lifted her hand to grab the door handle, and pushed the door open.

"Mumu, join Dad for a meal when you have the time."

Qin Mu hadn't even stepped out when she heard these words. Her gaze shifted, but then she calmly got out of the car, nodded to the driver, and walked back into the factory.

As the car door closed behind her, Qin Haiming continued to watch her retreating figure. She was as stubborn as her mother had been before their separation years ago.

He had regretted, had struggled with sleep and appetite, but life still had to go on. He chose to keep living hard, to let go of it all. He thought that all memory of mother and daughter would be erased from his life, and everyone else would forget them too, until Qin Mu's reappearance.

It wasn't until Mu Yichen came to him later that he realized there are some things you can't forget just because you want to.

He picked up those past events again, and also picked up this daughter.

"Let's go!"

Later, when the driver got back into the car, he instructed wearily.

The clothing factory was almost ready, and there would be no problem opening in half a month.

Qin Mu went to the hospital directly after returning to the city in the afternoon. Xiaohao was already in a clean white coat, and as they met in the hallway, Qin Mu couldn't help but smile at the sight of Helian Hao's carefree appearance: "The clothes really look good on you."

"Borrow it to wear? I've already gotten blood on this, you still dare to wear it?"

Helian Hao arched an eyebrow and took her into his office.

"How did you end up in this field?"

"Sigh, you're only asking me now why I chose this profession. It shows how much you really care about me."

In the days they had missed each other over the years...

Helian Hao had been very lonely for many years. She didn't like making friends with others, except for those she had been close with since childhood.

Later, after Qin Mu put her wedding dress and Jing Feng's tuxedo in the trunk of her car, Helian Hao closed the trunk and let out an involuntary sigh: "Maybe it will never be needed."

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Qin Mu subconsciously looked at her, "Why suddenly so pessimistic?"

"It's just a feeling, maybe many years from now I'll marry a man I don't love, a decent-looking man, but without that spark, just to form a family."

Helian Hao spoke softly, then slammed the trunk shut with force.

Qin Mu stood to the side, watching. The gown had been in the trunk for several days. She had planned to give it to Helian Hao a few days earlier but ended up procrastinating till today. However, seeing Helian Hao's demeanor, she couldn't help feeling a twinge of heartache.

"I think Jing Feng would never let you marry someone else," Qin Mu said.

So before leaving, she tried to cheer up and said this to Helian Hao.



When Helian Hao heard it, she couldn't help but let out a chuckle.

Sometimes, some people, when giving up, are actually hoping someone will give them a hand.

Because giving up what one doesn't love is a release, while giving up what one loves is regret.

Nobody wants to live with regrets in life, especially not in matters of great importance.

Helian Hao hoped Jing Feng would stop her, that he would not give her a chance to marry anyone else.

Watching Qin Mu's car drive away, she turned back and took the elevator to the eighth floor.

By the time she returned to the studio and saw Liu Jingyuan's car parked near theirs, she slowed down. Her first thought was to stop and say hello, but her car just passed by his, slowly.

She simply couldn't bring herself to stop, and now that she knew his feelings, no matter whether he got married or had a family in the future, she felt she needed to draw a clear boundary with him.

Liu Jingyuan didn't realize she had seen his car. He just watched, his expression growing increasingly unfathomable as her small car drove away.

Having parked her car, Qin Mu entered the studio without looking back, her head down, her bag slung over her shoulder. Liu Jingyuan, however, was staring straight at her as she walked in.

For a few minutes, he actually wanted to get out of his car and go after her. But upon reflection, he thought, how could he approach her now that she was Mu Yichen's woman, loving Mu Yichen with an unflappable and dignified air?

Especially after she became aware of his feelings, she clearly began to intentionally avoid him.

Perhaps this was all it could ever be, Liu Jingyuan thought as he drove away.

Qin Mu, standing upstairs, watched his car leave and found herself unavoidably recalling his engagement party, which she had attended with Mu Yi. It was a discreet yet decorous engagement party, traditional and not overly grand. He had been like a man at work that day, executing every procedure flawlessly. She thought that such a self-restrained man must be ruthless, although he had never been so towards herself.

Suddenly, she remembered the night of Jing Qing's birthday when Liu Jingyuan and she were drugged. If he hadn't been drugged that night, how could such a restrained man have said such improper things to her?

And that wouldn't have led to all those nasty rumors.

The score she had with Jing Qing...

This time, Jing Qing going abroad to walk the red carpet didn't ask her to be the designer. Of course, she had her reasons for not asking.

But Wen Runuan wore the dress Qin Mu designed, tastefully supporting Jing Qing on one side, with the arm of Jingshang's president on the other, heading towards the media together.

How to describe that feeling?

Wen Runuan showcased both the charm and innocence of a young woman to the fullest, while Jing Qing's poise and propriety were fully displayed to the media at the event.

Qin Mu thought, if Wen Runuan emerged victorious from this event, it would be because she caught people off guard, right?

If Jing Qing won, it would be because of her strong aura, but if she lost, it would be due to her unvarying style.

Suddenly, rain began to fall that night, a chill accompanied each autumn rain. Qin Mu watched the drizzle outside the studio and hugged her arms lightly, a pair of clear eyes brimming with calm poise.

She was betting on Wen Runuan to win because Wen Runuan was young, she was new, and she was distinctive.

She also hoped Wen Runuan would win. Jing Qing had had too many moments in the limelight; probably she never knew the taste of defeat. Being crushed by someone she looked down upon would surely be a significant blow to Jing Qing.

In the future, the two women Jing Qing might hate the most could well be her and Wen Runuan.

Late on, the black sedan parked downstairs of her studio. Standing by the window, she watched him emerge from within, using the same old large black umbrella he'd had for ages.

Some rain splashed onto the legs of his suit, but it didn't seem to affect his composure.

She quickly opened the door, and as he put the umbrella down, he lifted his dark eyes to look at her, "Let's go!"

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"Um!"

Her gaze on him was filled with things she wanted to say but stopped herself.

This morning she had received a package from Paris, and she had wanted to show it to him, but after a second thought, she held back.

On the way back, the rain intensified. Mu Yichen, holding his patience, glanced outside and then said, "Go to the apartment."

Qin Mu subconsciously turned to look at him, and then he drove her to the nearby apartment.

It had been so long since they had been there; it felt abandoned.

After turning on the lights, she walked in slowly, recalling every little detail about this place, and then she turned to see the man who had taken off his suit jacket approaching, and she couldn't help but smile.

"What are you smiling at?"

He asked in a low voice.

"A man and a woman alone in a room!"

"Tonight, Mrs. Mu is in danger!"

Mu Yichen said to her with a teasing squint in his eyes.

"Tonight, Mr. Mu is also in danger!"

Mrs. Mu, her sparkling apricot eyes looking at Mr. Mu, mimicked his tone in response.

That's why she fell for him, so deeply attracted, caught in his trap.

The storm outside subsided for a moment, but then thunder flashed and roared.

The two sat in the dining room, eating noodles. Though simple, the atmosphere was warm and comfortable.

Qin Mu's eyes were misted by the steam from the noodles, and as she inadvertently raised her eyes, she collided with his gaze.

"Why are you looking at me?"

"How would you know I'm looking at you if you weren't watching me?"

Despite the cliché lines, they both couldn't help but laugh.

But she couldn't eat in peace throughout the meal, as the sound of thunder was too frightening.

Later, even the power went out. Mu Yichen immediately called the old house to make sure there was no power outage there, and then they both nestled comfortably on the living room sofa, holding each other.

"When will the thunder stop? In spring or summer?"

"Both."

He replied indifferently, his gaze involuntarily shifting to her.

"How annoying!"

She protested stubbornly, like a little girl hating how her skirt was stained with mud.

"Do you find me annoying?"

He whispered, his hand already warming itself inside her shirt.

Qin Mu lay on his legs, watching his dark eyes through the faint light from outside, his sharply defined profile, and his incomparable handsomeness.

How could she possibly find him annoying?

What woman could resist such a man?

Clearly without any beauty filter, yet he was a vision of perfect beauty.

Qin Mu couldn't help but lift her hands to cradle his face, her eyes filled with infatuation: "Not annoying."

The words were soft, yet they warmed Mu Yichen's heart deeply.

Just like many nights, she involuntarily succumbed, succumbed to his tender gaze and his fervent body.

No storm could shield their intimacy, or perhaps it was such days that made them more bewitched, deeper immersed, self-forgetting.

They didn't even have time to consider what they should do if they had to separate in the future.

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Three days after Jing Qing returned to the city, her first action upon arrival was to find Qin Mu's studio. Without regard for the customers sitting on the sofa in the reception area, she strode forward, bent down, picked up the teacup on the table, and forcefully splashed it on Qin Mu's face.

Qin Mu's white shirt was instantly drenched, and she stood up amidst the shocked gaze of the customers, looking coldly at Jing Qing: "What madness is this?"

"Madness? Today, I will let you witness what true madness is."

Jing Qing said and took another step forward, raising her hand to strike Qin Mu's face again.

The female customer sitting opposite Qin Mu stood up in fright, and Xiaomei, along with her colleagues, watched the scene from their stations.

Qin Mu instantly raised her hand to grab Jing Qing's wrist, and in a quick motion, she firmly slapped Jing Qing's face.

"Jing Qing, if you don't know how to respect others, at least consider the Jing Family's reputation and status."

The slap rang out sharply, and after that, Qin Mu pushed her back with a cold command.

Jing Qing was shoved back a meter, covering her face in shock as she looked at Qin Mu: "Do you believe that I can shut down your studio today?"

"Upset that someone stole your spotlight on the red carpet and you take it out on me? Do you think the law exists just for your family?"

"Qin Mu, I swear I will make you regret your actions today."

Jing Qing, pausing at the sight of a composed high-society lady nearby, then turned to glare at Qin Mu and spat out a vicious remark before walking away.

After she left, the high-society lady bent down to offer Qin Mu a tissue from the table: "Are you alright? Go change your clothes quickly."

"I'm sorry for the inconvenience just now!"

Qin Mu nodded and then immediately turned to change her clothes.

Xiaomei quickly stepped forward to clean the wet sofa.

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As she undid the buttons of her shirt and saw her skin reddened in the mirror, she unconsciously raised her hand to gently touch it, right on the chest.

The warmth of her touch met the scalded spot and swiftly retreated.

She hadn't even realized she was burned; she was simply burning with anger.

She hadn't expected Jing Qing to come looking for her as soon as she returned, let alone do something so impulsive.

What she expected even less was that Jing Qing would turn around and head to the Mu Family, crying her heart out in Feng Fanghua's arms. When Feng Fanghua asked her what was wrong, she wouldn't say, and it was only later that she dried her tears and said in a fragile voice, "Auntie, I'm sorry for crying on your shoulder as soon as I arrived. You truly feel closer to me than my own mother in my heart."

"How could I not know you, my child? Tell Auntie what happened. Who had the audacity to hit your beautiful face like this? Who in Rongcheng would ever dare to strike you?"

"Auntie, please don't ask. I just brought back some skincare products for you from abroad. When I saw you, I couldn't help but want to share my worries, but I shouldn't have," Jing Qing said, looking down, wiping away tears while speaking understandingly, her voice both soft and sincere.

"You just said I felt closer to you than your own mother, so why won't you share what's on your mind now?"

Feng Fanghua felt a pang of concern seeing her like this, but couldn't just lash out as she would with Qin Mu. She had to patiently ask again.

"It's really nothing serious, it's just... Never mind, Auntie, let me know long-term if you like the skincare products—I can bring more next time. I should be going now," Jing Qing said, then stood up to leave. Her hurried arrival and departure left Feng Fanghua thoroughly perplexed.



After Jing Qing left, Auntie exhaled impatiently, "I swear, Miss Jing is intentionally trying to upset me."

"Exactly, she should either spill it or not say anything at all. Now she's just made me irresistibly curious," Feng Fanghua muttered, feeling restless both in her eyes and heart.

During dinner that evening with the family, Feng Fanghua couldn't help but to talk about it, "Jing Qing came over today, cried in my arms for a good half hour. She said she wanted to confide her troubles, but then left without saying a word about them."

Mu Zihao glanced at her, curious but not feeling it appropriate to inquire further, and quietly continued eating.

Qin Mu paused momentarily while picking up vegetables, but then simply continued to serve herself without mentioning her encounter with Jing Qing during the day.

"It looked like she got into a fight, half of her face was swollen," Feng Fanghua kept muttering.

"Oh? Who in Rongcheng would dare to fight with her? Wouldn't that be a death wish?" Mu Zihao said casually.

Realizing that if she didn't speak up now, future trouble might take the elders by surprise, Qin Mu looked at them and casually said, "It was me."

The man who had been quietly eating finally put down his chopsticks and turned his eyes to his partner.

Qin Mu looked calm, meeting his gaze before she turned to explain to the elder couple, "She came to see me today, and we ended up fighting."

"And you actually hit her? You... Do you not realize their family's status?" Feng Fanghua was stunned.

"Did she hurt you?" Instead of addressing the elder's concern, the man beside her reached for her hand, pushing up her shirt sleeve to inspect her skin.

"I'm fine, it's just that when she tried to hit me, I managed to slap her back," Qin Mu said, her confidence waning as she remembered that she now had the Mu Family behind her and didn't want to cause them any more trouble.

"Haven't I told you? Even if we can't live in harmony, if you could avoid arguing with her, do so. It's not bad to take a loss when you're young. Why did you end up hitting her?" Feng Fanghua went on with many moral points, and Qin Mu wanted to argue, but feeling that talking back to an elder too harshly might anger them, she lowered her head and remained silent.

"If she didn't hit Jing Qing, she would have been hit. We learned in school that there's no need to endure beyond an unreasonable point, and isn't this especially true in society? Being weak only lets others walk all over you, and I don't think Mumu did anything wrong," Mu Yichen finally burst out, directly challenging his own mother.

Qin Mu couldn't help but look at him. His voice was steady yet offered her immense comfort.

"But isn't it better to avoid trouble when you can, and are you in such a rush to make an enemy of the Jing Family?"

Chapter 218: doesn't dare to make fun of Mrs. Mu\_6

Feng Fanghua asked.

"In the business arena I've never lacked enemies, and in private I've never feared losing a friend—come with me!"

After he finished with Feng Fanghua, he grabbed Qin Mu's hand and stood up. Qin Mu looked up at him with her large, dark eyes, and was subdued by his cold gaze as she stood up to leave with him.

Feng Fanghua and Mu Zihao watched them leave with their own eyes and afterwards, Feng Fanghua felt a coldness in her stomach: Does he really not understand that I'm doing this for his own good?

"Forget it, forget it!"

Mu Zihao soothed.

Meanwhile, Qin Mu was dragged into the room by Mu Yichen and was pressed against the door.

Several buttons immediately came off, and the burned area started to throb before his eyes.

"What are you doing?"

Qin Mu asked nervously, trying to struggle free, afraid he would see the area that was burned red.

"Don't move!"

His handsome features were extremely cold at that moment, faintly seeing the burned area.

In fact, she thought it was quite a coincidence that the guest had palpitations after drinking coffee, so she asked Xiaomei to brew a pot of tea that was extremely hot, just poured not a minute ago.

She knew he was going to check on her again, each time she had a minor problem he would give her a full-body check, she recalled the first time he did this, it was because he initially didn't notice, but then he found a large injury on her back, and since then he never took her lightly again.

"What happened here?"

Mu Yichen asked in a cold voice, reaching out his hand towards there.

"Don't poke it so hard!"

As soon as his hand touched there, she instinctively bent over.

"I got burned a bit!"

The words slipped out, and after she said them, she immediately regretted it, but then she could only let out a helpless sigh.

Her complexion didn't look good; she hadn't managed to hide it after all.

She especially didn't want Mu Yichen to know about this!

"Why is she suddenly acting crazy?" he asked sharply, his gaze cold and harsh, his voice turning cold as steel.

She just lowered her eyes at him, feeling his pain for her, her hand that was on his hair becoming gentler, gently running through it.

"We need to apply some medicine," he suddenly said, then turned around to look for ointment.

Qin Mu leaned against the door, her hands naturally drooping, like the tranquility after exhaustion.

Watching his anxious figure, she unintentionally let out a light chuckle: Perhaps you can get an answer; I can't.

She was really powerless against Jing Qing. If she were Jing Qing, what she would have needed to do was to keep a straight face and then find a way to turn things around as quickly as possible. Wouldn't that be more satisfying than a slap in the face?

"I will ask!"

He said, opening the drawer below and finding the medicine box full of various medicines.

Qin Mu looked at his stern profile and unconsciously felt a twinge in her heart, then turned and walked towards him.

Mu Yichen didn't notice her approach, and when he stood up, Qin Mu hugged him from behind.

At that moment, time seemed to stand still.

He could even feel his own angry breath, sensing her warmth as the breath quietly became gentle.

"Don't ask."

He didn't move, just lowering his eyes to look at her hands holding him.

That voice, so weak and lacking in strength, placed her only hope onto him.

"I'd rather you have no involvement with her at all."

Her face pressed against his broad back, her words became sadder and clearer.

Once she had pushed him towards another woman.

But now, at this moment...

After she knew he had returned to the country, what she feared the most was actually hearing news of him being with Jing Qing. She never dared to say it before, but now she couldn't control herself any longer.

She couldn't stop her words with reason, and after she spoke, tears streamed down her face.

"Jing Qing and I will someday have our showdown, but you, don't go looking for her on purpose."

Her rational mind still triumphed over emotion, allowing her to speak these words softly to him.

He lifted his hand and gently held hers that was stroking his chest: Mumu!

Saying no more, she just held him tightly.

Being scalded wasn't really an issue; she hadn't suffered any loss.

As long as she didn't cause trouble for the Mu Family, it really didn't matter if she suffered a bit. Besides, Feng Fanghua had said Jing Qing's face was swollen, so if anyone suffered a loss, it should be Jing Qing.

She couldn't let go of him, just holding on tightly until her heart found some peace.

These words had been delayed for many years.

Throughout the years, what she feared most was his letting go.

Latterly, he returned to the country, and she, left alone in Paris, was always thrilled yet extremely cautious every time he visited her. She didn't know when he would come next, she didn't know if he still liked her as the boy who kissed her back then, and she was terrified that he would meet another beautiful girl back home and then forget about her.

She never dared to initiate a hug because of this.

As for love, she didn't dare to ask for it or even to think about it now.

Mu Yichen looked down at her slender fingers, his own lightly twining and tightly holding hers.

It was at this moment, all those words he previously wanted to throw in her face when she finally recognized his goodness, he couldn't utter a single one.

How he had longed for such a day, to be able to point at her and scold her for having a taste of her own medicine, but now, looking at her hands holding him tightly, feeling the warmth of her touch, and seeing their matching rings, he had only one thought.

He cherished their journey to this day above all else.

Regardless of whether she loved him, she definitely had him in her heart.

Mu Yichen loosened their embrace, turned around, and wrapping her arms while arching his back, he rested his forehead against hers: Let's get you treated first, okay?

Qin Mu said nothing further, obediently nodding her head. He bent down and carried her in his arms, and Qin Mu, her gaze reluctantly falling, soon lifted her lifelike lashes to look up at his chiseled features tenderly.

She seemed like a little bird with injured wings, carefully placed by him.

It was also at this moment that the soft longing in Qin Mu's heart wished time could freeze.

She had thought that upon returning that evening, the lights would be out for sleep and, unseen, the matter would pass by.

Yet unexpectedly, Jing Qing had left her workshop and come to the Mu Family home, even crying in front of her mother-in-law.

The truth would always come out; she couldn't hide it.

But this was perhaps for the best.

"It's okay if you don't argue back when mom says those things, but don't listen to her, okay?"

"Okay!"

Her voice was weak as she agreed, a tickling sensation in her throat from his touch.

The dark eagle-like eyes lifted, gazing at her rosy cheeks and unwittingly smiling.

"Are you laughing at me?" Qin Mu immediately complained with a whine.

"How dare I laugh at Mrs. Mu?"

His words were sincere, but his smile grew even wider.

"Mu Yichen, you..."

## Chapter 219: Approval\_1

The words she wanted to scold him with ultimately remained unspoken.

Latter, Feng Fanghua sent her a message, and Qin Mu took the opportunity to sneak downstairs while President Mu was asleep. Feng Fanghua, in her nightgown with an overcoat draped over her shoulders, was sitting on the sofa waiting for her and drinking water, having prepared a cup for her as well.

At that moment, the entire house was so quiet it felt almost surreal; were someone alone, it probably would've been a bit scary at this late hour.

"Mom, why are you still up so late?"

She sat opposite Feng Fanghua, her eyes swiftly scanning Feng Fanghua's facial expressions before quickly looking down, her hands cradling the warm water Feng Fanghua had poured for her.



"I can't sleep because I have something on my mind. Since we're living together, it's convenient for me to clarify things with you now and prevent any misunderstandings about me not caring for you as a daughter-in-law."

Qin Mu didn't dare to say anything insincere, only nodding and listening.

"When I said what I did at dinner, it wasn't because I felt you could be bullied just because you're not my biological daughter. I just think that if some people can't be offended, then it's better to keep the peace for the time being. Of course, it was wrong of her to hit you."

"I'm grateful that you believe what I say. As for what happened today between Jing Qing and me, even if it were to happen again, I would handle it just like I did today. Mom, I understand that you want to minimize the issue, but Jing Qing and I can't smooth things over. Wen Runuan stole the spotlight from her on the red carpet, and she didn't have a good time at the event for several days, which is why she came back in a fury to settle scores with me because she knew the dress for Wen Runuan was prepared by me."

Qin Mu felt it was best to clear the air with Feng Fanghua and avoid any misunderstanding between them.

"So, the war between you two has already begun."

"Or rather, it started some time ago."

"Well, in that case, I won't say much else!"

"Thank you, Mom!"

"Hey, that girl is stubborn. She knows about your marriage and the child, yet she refuses to let go. She must really despise you."

"I don't hate her; hate can make one lose reason."

Qin Mu responded candidly, meeting Feng Fanghua's gaze with a gracious smile.

"Enough already, go get some sleep, I understand now."

Feng Fanghua thought for a moment and then set down her water cup.

"Alright, you should get some rest too, Mom."

Qin Mu quickly put down her water cup and stood up first.

"You can talk about what we discussed just now with your husband, lest he thinks again that I can't discern people clearly or understand right from wrong."

"Actually, Mu Yichen told me right before bed not to take it to heart, saying that you're worried about me being at a disadvantage."

Qin Mu smiled while speaking, Feng Fanghua looked at her incredulously. Qin Mu nodded and went upstairs, prompting Feng Fanghua to let out a chuckle. Did that boy really say that?

"Constantly calling him Mu Yichen, even though he's several years older than you," Feng Fanghua muttered afterwards, sighing helplessly and also getting up to leave.

Once, Helian Hao asked her why she didn't call Mu Yichen 'husband', or 'babe', or 'darling' or something especially affectionate; her answer was: cheesy.

—

When the first rays of the morning sun appeared, the entire yard was bathed in a warm glow.

In any case, that morning was truly an exceptional feast for the eyes.

Before going to work, Qin Mu still relayed Feng Fanghua's words to Mu Yichen, who chuckled unconsciously: Madame Feng is getting more timid as she grows older, but fortunately, she is not confused.

His earnest appraisal, with dark eyes earnestly gazing at her.

When the clothing factory opened, Jian Yan hurried over and couldn't help but chuckle and ask after hearing about her recent issues: Can you endure it?

"Although there are obstacles, everything is moving in the direction I wish to go, I can endure it!"

The colleagues from the studio stood at the door looking quite proper, waiting for the ribbon-cutting. Qin Mu and Jian Yan walked over quickly, then a luxury car pulled up in front of the brand new clothing factory.

President Mu, dressed in a crisp suit, stood tall before her eyes.

In that moment, Qin Mu's gaze was a blend of focus, vivacity, and warmth. Since everyone's attention was on President Mu, they didn't notice the splendid expression in her eyes. President Mu, however, stared straight at her.

In that moment, the two shared a mutual understanding.

Amidst applause and firecracker sounds, their clothing factory was auspiciously declared open.

After cutting the red ribbon, Mu Yichen turned to look at Qin Mu, who also looked up at him, her smile as bright as the sunshine.

Their looks seemed to convey a myriad of emotions to one another.

## Chapter 220: Approval\_2

For instance, Mu Yichen's gaze seemed to say, congratulations on being one step closer to your dream.

Whereas the twinkling light in Qin Mu's eyes seemed to say that all of this was because of you.

Life is rarely perfect.

They, in the process of adjusting to each other, were at the same time perfecting each other, weren't they?

Perhaps still young and unable to grasp many things in time, yet spending the best years with the one by your side, even if pain makes up the majority, is enough for a lifetime.

She didn't know what childhood sweethearts were; all she knew was that he had been by her side all these years, protecting her, doting on her, claiming her. The concern he had given her over the years was something no one else could offer.

There was a moment when she really wanted to say those words: "Mu Yichen, thank you for making me so determined!"

Thank you for everything you've brought to me.

After the ribbon-cutting ceremony, everyone gathered in the cafeteria behind to eat. The central air conditioning kicked in, and the workers who had been rushing to finish their uniforms over the past few days sat down to dine together.

Qin Mu and her group sat at a longer table nearby. Mu Yichen frowned at his lunch in the plate, then reluctantly sighed looking at the woman's plate next to him and still picked up his chopsticks.

Jian Yan and a few colleagues sat opposite them. Seeing Mu Yichen's expression, Jian Yan chuckled: "President Mu, have you never eaten in the cafeteria before?"

The Mu Family's pharmaceutical factory was not the only one, and he frequently stayed at others, but indeed, he had never eaten using this kind of tray before.

"I think maybe in the future I should try more things,"

Mu Yichen raised an eyebrow and began to eat.

Qin Mu looked at him: "It's okay if you're not used to it, we can eat something good when we get back to the city."

"Will you join me?"

"I'll join you!"

The two of them gazed at each other, their smiles so brilliant.

The single dogs sitting around felt like they had received ten thousand critical hits.

Jian Yan merely smiled lightly, as if he had anticipated this day long ago.

Xiaomei, sitting next to Qin Mu, almost dropped her chopsticks, muttering awkwardly: "Qinqin, could you consider the feelings of all the single dogs present?"

"I'm inspiring you guys! Go for it!"

Qin Mu turned her head with a hundred percent sincere smile to Xiaomei, not forgetting to arch her eyebrows teasingly.

Xiaomei nearly died of embarrassment.

"Master, you too, go for it! Everyone, go for it!"

"They need to go for it; at my age, I'm content with whatever comes my way!"

Jian Yan said with a light smile before eating.

"If Master had a woman by his side, maybe he wouldn't feel so old."

Xiaomei suddenly spoke up bravely.

"That's a good point!"

Qin Mu laughed in agreement.

Jian Yan looked up at her, letting out a helpless sigh.

After finishing their meal and heading back to the city, Qin Mu and Xiaomei drove in her small car, with Mu Yichen driving Jian Yan.

Qin Mu and Xiaomei were actually a bit worried. Xiaomei kept gazing at the car in front: "Sis, do you think they'll end up fighting?"

"They probably won't, right?"

Qin Mu was also uncertain, not knowing what might happen, only aware that Mu Yichen really disliked Jian Yan.

But then she thought, when they first came to Rongcheng, they had performed together at AM, and later Jian Yan had colluded with Mu Yichen to trick her. Weren't the two men's relationship quite deep?

So, surely they wouldn't start fighting?

In the car ahead, indeed, the two men did not fight and hadn't even spoken much before.

Jian Yan, as always, was reserved, sitting in the back seat, flipping through a finance magazine that was left in the car at some point.

At that moment, Mu Yichen was probably the world's most upscale driver.

Perhaps because he was still young, he later glanced in the rearview mirror. That single glance made him feel like Jian Yan was the Sea-calming Divine Needle in the ocean, calmly sitting there. Though he could see through Jian Yan's thoughts, it didn't make Jian Yan feel any unrest or make any mistakes.

"How long do you plan to stay this time?"

Mu Yichen finally broke the silence.

"Permanently!"

Jian Yan slightly lifted his gaze, placing the magazine aside and frowning at the scenery outside the window.

Mu Yichen...

"Help me find a place near Xiaomei and their apartment."

Jian Yan made another request.

Mu Yichen instinctively looked at him again, and as the car stopped at the red light, he turned his head.

"Nice of you to ask for a ride!"

With a light touch of his brows, Jian Yan spoke faintly, letting out an inadvertent chuckle after finishing.