

His Beloved 321

Chapter 321: Compensation Required by President Mu (6) Begging for Mercy_2

Huanhuan happily sipped her juice and looked even more content as she watched her daddy sit down next to mommy, taking a big gulp with effort.

Qin Mu didn't look at him but sharply noticed that the cup he was about to grab belonged to someone else and promptly pushed her own toward him, "Use this one!"

Mu Yichen's hand, which was about to touch the cup, retreated, and turning around, his bright, star-like eyes seemed to be in deep thought as he looked at her. Qin Mu, holding the wine bottle, filled his glass again.

"Thank you!"

He said lightly, lifting his glass first. Just as he was about to drink, he looked around at everyone seated: "I'll toast to everyone first. It's my first time drinking with friends from your studio, and I also want to thank you for taking care of Qin Mu over the years."

As soon as he said this, both male and female colleagues happily raised their glasses, and even Yang Qianxi, who hardly understood French, also lifted hers.

Qin Mu, however, did not move.

But it seemed she didn't need to.

Mu Yichen downed his drink generously and immediately one of the men, thinking he was easy to talk to, filled his glass to the brim again.

Yang Qianxi, sitting on her other side, whispered, "Won't he get drunk if he continues to drink like this?"

Qin Mu thought, yes, won't he get drunk?

Director Mu caused quite a stir when he was drunk.

But then she thought, this is AM; there's nothing to worry about even if he gets drunk.

"No problem!"

So she said lightly and decided not to bother with him for the rest of the evening.

Huanhuan, seeing her dad drinking so well, was a bit worried and looked up at her mom. Qin Mu softly asked her, "Do you want me to pour you another glass of juice?"

Huanhuan's attention was immediately diverted, and she nodded vigorously, as if nothing was more enticing than juice.

Yang Qianxi immediately helped her with another cup of juice and also grabbed a wine glass for Qin Mu.

About a dozen people sat around a rectangular table, loaded with all sorts of food and drinks.

"Miss Qin, I'd like to toast to you as well. Thank you for taking me in despite our past," Yang Qianxi stood up, sincerely lifting her glass toward her.

Qin Mu couldn't help but give a faint smile: "I just happened to need an assistant."

Even though that was what she said, Yang Qianxi knew the specific reasons in her heart.

"Anyway, I must drink this one with you."

Yang Qianxi said and drank from her glass first.

Mu Yichen glanced at Yang Qianxi and then wrapped an arm around his wife's shoulder: "Wouldn't it seem petty not to drink when such a cute girl is toasting?"

Mu Yichen whispered this into her ear, so no one else could hear it.

Qin Mu glanced at him from the corner of her eye and then smiled, lifting her eyebrow, "Okay, I'll drink!"

Seeing her finish a large glass, Yang Qianxi happily poured her another.

Qin Mu felt a bit of pressure seeing her glass filled up so quickly again.

"Now I want to toast to all of you. Actually, one glass isn't enough. I'll drink three, and it's enough if the rest of you just drink one. Thank you for taking me in, whatever the initial reason was, I can feel your kindness toward me now," Yang Qianxi said, and downed another big glass, stunning everyone a bit.

Then another, and another, three glasses later, her face was a bit red, and she giggled foolishly: "Alright, I'm done. It's your turn now!"

With her straightforwardness, nobody was pretentious, but the price of drinking so fast and fiercely was that, when drunk, one would be a complete mess.

So, later, while everyone was still chatting, Yang Qianxi had already slumped over the table, passed out.

Qin Mu turned her head to look at her and sighed helplessly.

Everyone was sharing various stories from their childhood Christmases, and Qin Mu unconsciously cradled her glass in her hand.

Huanhuan later fell asleep and was taken by the staff upstairs to rest, and the two of them just sat there.

Mu Yichen subconsciously watched the woman beside him and noticed a lost look in her eyes. Unconsciously, he lowered his gaze and sipped his drink, clutching the glass.

The party continued, and later Qin Mu realized she could no longer see the items on the table clearly, so she picked up her glass and took a big gulp of alcohol to stay calm.

They hadn't spent this Christmas in their own country, so she was determined to stay until the end.

Actually, she had never felt lonely during Christmas since childhood, as Mu Yichen had always been with her.

She was just a bit nostalgic, missing the warmth of that family.

Even though it was only for a few short years.

That year, her mother had even bought a Christmas tree. Later, that tree stood in a corner of their home until the New Year. She had thought about hanging more lights, decorations, and food during the New Year, but before she could do anything, her mother had died.

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The bitterness in her heart was beyond words, she could only quietly experience it herself.

Later, no one knew who got drunk again.

That night, those who could walk returned to the apartment, while the rest who really couldn't move stayed in the upstairs guest rooms.

Qin Mu had already taken out her card to give to her colleagues, but Mu Yichen made a direct call and had the guest room manager come down to arrange everything.

She put her card back into her pocket, only to notice when she looked at him that the rims of his ears were also a bit red.

After he drank too much he seemed to be like that, so, could it be that the seemingly composed President Mu had also drunk too much?

Finally, when everyone in the private room had left, Mu Yichen then steadied himself against the doorframe and gave her a look, his dark eyes indecipherable.

Qin Mu's heart stirred, and she immediately asked, "Looks like we also have to stay here now?"

He smiled faintly, trying to embrace her but accidentally losing his balance.

Qin Mu was only a step away, and she instinctively reached out to support him immediately: "Careful!"

"Mrs. Mu, your husband is drunk too!"

Qin Mu...

Afterward, she helped him out of the private room; he was too heavy, and she had drunk quite a bit too, so she hardly had any strength.

The two of them had barely taken a few steps before they both collapsed onto the carpet.

Qin Mu still frowned in pain, her elbow hurt badly.

"Mrs. Mu, you owe your man an apology."

He murmured, his breath reeking of alcohol.

Just an apology?

She didn't want to!

"President Mu, Miss Qin!"

The manager who happened to come over to see if they needed anything else saw this scene and immediately used the walkie-talkie on his waist to call two people over.

Qin Mu recognized the woman, and without raising her eyes, she struggled to get up while saying: "Take him to the upstairs guest room."

"Alright!"

Qin Mu remembered how this woman had taken care of her when she first came here and felt relieved to see her. But looking at Mu Yichen, who was lying on the ground like a dead body, she suddenly got angry and kicked his leg.

Ever since the manager had come, he had let go of her and started playing possum, so she let him keep pretending.

"Ah!"

Who knew that just as she kicked him, he quickly sat up, clutching himself and crying out in pain.

Qin Mu...

The manager...

Both women were scared, especially the manager, who was both nervous and embarrassed.

Later, the upstairs attendants came to help and took President Mu upstairs. Qin Mu realized she had forgotten to take her bag and only when she went back for it did she suddenly notice, the table was covered with various empty bottles. How much had they drunk tonight?

After throwing him onto the bed, the staff left. Qin Mu went to thank them and closed the door. When she returned, she sighed at the sight of him lying on the bed, nursing his headache: "Got the guts to keep drinking, huh?"

He grinned but said nothing.

Qin Mu knew he could still hear her.

But thinking of their daughter sleeping in the next room, she decided to leave him be and check on the child first.

The little girl had been well taken care of before their return and was still sleeping soundly.

Huanhuan had become quite independent early on, thanks to their handling, but Qin Mu thought that was pretty good.

However, thinking about Mu Yichen lying alone in that room, having drunk so much he must be feeling terrible, she couldn't bring herself to just leave him like that.

So in the end, she went back.

She didn't know why, but she helped him take off his shoes and washed his feet.

In the dim light, she saw the weariness on his face and his furrowed brow.

She remembered what Xiaomei had said on the phone that he had flown to Paris immediately after she left and then back to China. He probably hadn't slept well those days either.

He must have been very worried about her.

It's just that his way of worrying about others was always unique.

She must have also drunk too much.

"Mu Yichen!"

"Foolish woman!"

He called her in a muffled voice, not even opening his eyes.

The room was so quiet you could hear the breathing of the two people.

If only it could always be this quiet, how good would that be?

One hand struggled to rise, instinctively going to stroke his hair, gently touching it, then his forehead.

She thought to herself, how nice it is when you're asleep!

Suddenly, the idea of pummeling him while he slept flashed through her mind, thinking it would be so satisfying.

But she did not act on it.

He still lay there sleeping, and she told herself she couldn't just sleep with him like that tonight, or tomorrow morning he would create chaos. But then, watching him sleep so deeply, she couldn't resist and leaned over to give him a hard kiss.

"Mu Yichen!"

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She gently patted his face twice and then rolled out of bed to check on her daughter in the next room.

Afterward, the spacious guest room fell into deep silence, as the night grew ever darker.

The whole hotel was infinitely quieter than during the day, with the staff beginning to discreetly change shifts.

The large Christmas tree outside the hotel was adorned with twinkling lights that continued to flicker in the hushed darkness.

The city seemed to gain an extra layer of fairy tale charm from the Christmas trees inside and outside the various stores.

Later on, Qin Mu held Huanhuan closer as they slept sounder, while the man in the other room suffered from a terrible headache in his sleep, clenching his forehead in pain.

Subconsciously, he reached for the other side of the bed, as if accustomed to searching for that body in the middle of the night.

But it wasn't there.

At that moment, he opened his eyes groggily, despite a splitting headache.

He got up in shock, then searched the entire room without finding a trace of her, only to remember they were in a hotel, in their familiar guest room, but where was she?

Had she left him alone here to walk out on her own?

Or had she drunk too much last night and nobody took care of her? Was she still in the private room?

He couldn't recall at once, just sat up in a daze, hands bracing heavily on the bed edge, head down as he tried hard to remember everything that had happened last night.

It was only when he checked his watch, which showed four in the morning, that he managed to stand up again with support.

Barely on his feet, he felt it was a struggle to walk and search for her, and as he finally reached the doorway, he subconsciously touched the pocket of his pants and then...

He looked down to see he was wearing only a pair of shorts.

Mr. Mu suddenly came fully awake, his mind startlingly clear.

Headache?

What the hell was a headache?

All he wanted to know was which damned person had undressed him.

Once he found his phone and slipped into a robe, he left the bedroom while calling Qin Mu, only to realize the ringing was coming from the living room. He immediately turned off the phone and entered the other room.

Sure enough, she and their daughter were both sleeping soundly on the bed.

Mu Yichen suddenly felt relieved; his own thoughts had nearly scared him to death just a moment ago.

Leaning despondently against the door frame, he watched the mother and daughter lying asleep inside for a long time without entering, nor leaving.

He couldn't bear to consider if he had done something to betray her, whether he would ever have the face to see her again in this lifetime, or have the audacity to bicker with her, to fall out with her as frankly as before, or to arrogantly throw tantrums at her over every big and small matter.

"Qin Mu, you little vexing fairy!"

He muttered, chuckling sarcastically.

When Qin Mu woke up, she felt the bed was very crowded.

And there he was!

Qin Mu instantly turned her head back, her long lashes fluttering as she tried hard to think.

She confirmed she was in her daughter's room, assured herself she hadn't thrown herself into his arms, and then breathed a sigh of relief.

"My head hurts a bit, do you have any medicine?"

His husky voice asked her, his arms still encircling her.

Qin Mu held her breath until she clearly heard what he said, ensuring he wasn't fully awake yet.

"I'll go look for it!"

Her eyes widened, sparkling as she stealthily removed his hand from her and sat up.

But before she could leave, she was suddenly caught again and pulled back.

"What kind of mischief did you get up to last night while I was drunk?"

Qin Mu's heart skipped a beat in fright, "No, I didn't do anything. I just brought you up here."

What does it feel like to lie without a conscience?

At this moment, Qin Mu didn't feel the slightest bit guilty; she just wanted to get through the charade.

"You just brought me up here?"

Mu Yichen's brow furrowed slightly, his narrowed eyes seeing through everything.

Qin Mu's heart involuntarily trembled again: Ha ha, Mr. Mu, are you trying to play some psychological game with me? I give up!

She actually laughed, the first heartless laugh in days, even though it was from fright.

Frankly, he had planned on drinking a couple more glasses last night and not being responsible, but her studio colleagues really thought he was giving face, and since he was preoccupied, he wasn't cautious, and accidentally...

When he woke up, it was already four in the morning.

He didn't want to carry her back to the room; he just wanted to sleep next to her and their beloved daughter.

He dared not think if it weren't for Huanhuan, whether she would still be with him so obediently.

If it wasn't for Huanhuan, she might not have become who she was now, she probably wouldn't have returned to the country, even if Qin Haiming truly intended to move her mother's grave out of the Qin Family cemetery.

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If it weren't for Huanhuan, her temperament wouldn't have changed so much, and he wouldn't have been able to catch her by the tail.

Yeah!

It was because of Huanhuan that he got to have her.

"Daddy?"

Suddenly, the little girl who had been asleep by his side opened her eyes and called out softly.

The two adults immediately became alert, and Mu Yichen quickly rolled out of bed, then looked at his daughter with a silly smile: Good morning, baby!

"Daddy, good morning!"

Huanhuan climbed up and sat, looking at her beloved daddy somewhat perplexedly.

"I'm going to find my phone!"

Mu Yichen felt awkward under his daughter's gaze. Even though the girl hadn't asked anything, he escaped after getting off the bed and grabbing his robe.

Qin Mu still lay there, quite at ease.

She lifted her hand to gently touch her daughter's back, her eyes curving into crescents as she laughed to herself, thinking girl, you really did wake up at the right moment.

Upstairs they had clothes for the two of them but not for Huanhuan, so they both changed into new clothes while Huanhuan didn't. However, Huanhuan wasn't fussy at the moment. Qin Mu added a scarf to her clothes, and she immediately fancied herself as a happy little fairy.

The restaurant was a bit lively in the morning, as several colleagues from the studio had stayed overnight. Seeing Director Mu and Qin Mu carrying their child in from outside gave them pause, hardly daring to swallow the food that had reached their mouths.

They had no idea how much of a fool they had made of themselves last night, nor how much they had plied Director Mu with drink, or how many things they had said that they shouldn't have.

Director Mu was, however, very polite. After he arrived, he greeted everyone with formalities: Good morning, everyone!

Everyone smiled and nodded at him, but afterward, no one dared to look at him anymore.

The family of three sat at a table alone, eating their meal. From time to time, Huanhuan would glance over at the nearby table, her eyes seeming to say: They're all familiar people, why aren't we sitting together?

Completely forgetting the morning scene of finding her parents together in bed, the little girl had no idea how intimidating her father could be.

"Young Master, Young Mistress, the Madam has sent me to take the little Miss to her early education class."

A modestly yet neatly dressed servant of the Mu Family came out from a car outside the hotel. They approached them as they were finishing breakfast, getting ready to go to work, and spoke to them.

Qin Mu and Mu Yichen glanced at the car parked nearby. Although the windows were closed and they couldn't see inside, they both had the feeling that Feng Fanghua was there.

The couple's relationship with the old folks these past few days...

Had been less than satisfactory. Mu Yichen, still preoccupied with Qin Mu's affairs, handed Huanhuan over to the auntie: Take good care of her. I'll come to pick her up at the old house at six in the afternoon.

"Yes!"

The auntie agreed and walked away with Huanhuan.

"Bye, Mommy, bye Daddy!"

The little one had just seen her grandmother get out of the car and was so happy to say goodbye to Qin Mu and Mu Yichen before going to find her grandmother.

And sure enough, the car door opened, and Feng Fanghua happily took Huanhuan in and sat together in the back, while the auntie moved to sit in the front passenger seat.

Feng Fanghua was wearing a cheongsam made for her by Qin Mu today, matched with an embroidered shawl. Although she was sitting in the car, one could tell from afar that she was no ordinary lady.

The two of them watched as the car drove away. Qin Mu intended to drive her car to the studio but she didn't expect Mu Yichen's car to be driven over.

"Get in!"

Mu Yichen opened the passenger door and called to her.

Qin Mu glanced at him: No need, right? My car is here too.

"Your car has already been taken by your colleagues. Get in!"

He commanded in a detached tone. Seeing that she didn't move, he directly pulled her into the car.

Qin Mu, resigned to the situation, knew that if she dared to defy him, he would dare to be rough.

So, she obediently sat there in silence.

Only later when she realized they weren't heading to the studio did she turn to look at him again: Where are we going?

"Going home!"

"But I have to work!"

Qin Mu protested, a bit angrily.

"Are you sure you want to go to the studio?"

While driving, Mu Yichen turned to look at her. At that glance, Qin Mu turned pale with the realization.

"Mu Yichen, you..."

"What?"

Qin Mu twisted her head to look out the window, unable to speak those words.

Yet after she turned away in anger, Mu Yichen couldn't help but let out a faint smile.

The car headed towards their apartment.

These past few days, Mr. Mu had not eaten his fill, so in broad daylight, was he thinking of indulging?

The more Qin Mu thought about it, the more nervous she became. Upon reaching the parking lot, she pushed the door open somewhat angrily and heard the sound of his car door opening. Her eyes flickered, contemplating an immediate escape.

But she had only run to the rear of the car when Mu Yichen blocked her path.

His dark eyes bore into the depths of hers, and in an instant, Qin Mu regretted her impulse.

The more she wanted to keep her distance from him at times like this, the more he insisted on being with her in public.

A young couple, embracing each other, walked out of a car towards them, just as Mu Yichen was hoisting Qin Mu onto his shoulder.

Dizzy from being carried, Qin Mu looked up to see the astonished couple stop in their tracks and stare at her, and she quickly buried her face in his back, utterly embarrassed.

She thought to herself, Mu Yichen, when we get home, I will settle the score with you.

"Oh my God!"

The lady, clinging to her husband's arm, could hardly bear the sight before her.

"It seems that woman must have tried to run away from home and got caught by her husband. If you ever dare to do that, I'll catch you just the same," the lady's husband said in a low, lecherous voice.

"You're so annoying!"

The lady looked up at her husband and smacked his shoulder forcefully, then continued walking forward, coyly wrapping his arm.

Qin Mu heard every word and thought she definitely must become a man in her next life. Let Mu Yichen be the woman and see how she publicly humiliates him.

Until they entered the elevator, Qin Mu was still afraid, thinking what if those two wanted to take the elevator with them?

Fortunately, Mu Yichen didn't give anyone that opportunity.

After he shut the elevator doors, they could hear the couple outside cursing something.

"What were those two people saying just now? You're a runaway wife?"

Qin Mu...

Suddenly remembering how sensitive the topic of fleeing home was, she wondered if he had been provoked by what they said?

Qin Mu immediately lifted her gaze to meet his fierce eyes, "They were guessing wildly. Haven't I been with you all along?"

"If you ever dare to entertain that thought, I'll break your legs," he replied.

Qin Mu...

He lifted her chin, forcing her to look straight into his face, his tyrannical eyes and tone making Qin Mu both tense and angry.

"Mu Yichen, you..."

"What about me?"

"Don't go crazy!"

She was almost tormented to death by him, faltering for a long time before finally getting the words out.

"Crazy? In your eyes, am I just losing my temper?"

"Isn't that what it is?"

His hand clenched into a fist and forcefully knocked against the elevator wall near her ear, making Qin Mu flinch.

"Why am I losing my temper? Isn't it because I'm worried about you?" he said, word for word, clearly.

Qin Mu looked at him in shock, hardly able to believe that his temper was born of concern for her.

But shouldn't there be a limit?

Qin Mu stuttered without finishing her thought. As soon as the elevator opened, he immediately lifted her up.

The feeling was so strange, Qin Mu cursed worriedly, "Mu Yichen, you bastard."

"Curse a few more times."

Listen, listen, what sort of things are being said?

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"Even if you are angry because mama scolded me a few times, you can't keep tormenting me like this, can you? I'm almost tortured to death!"

Qin Mu muttered.

"Mrs. Mu, are you using the trick of suffering to gain sympathy?"

Mu Yichen's hoarse voice asked her, looking at her eyes with nothing but helplessness and distress.

"Who said that? I'm clearly using my charms!"

Qin Mu retorted, her long lashes lifting gradually, her sparkling eyes slowly fixed on the man before her, wishing for everything to calm down.

Mu Yichen chuckled, his gaze still sharp as ever, making Qin Mu's heart tighten.

"So charm doesn't work?"

Her voice was so low she could barely hear it herself.

The man holding her let out a wicked laugh: It works.

— —

"So, have you admitted your mistake?"

After taking another drag of his cigarette, he pinched the cigarette between two fingers and squinted at the smoke, then glanced coolly at her.

What mistake should she admit?

Latter, he quickly prepared two bowls of beef noodles in the kitchen, and since she seemed too deep in sleep to wake up, he had to go upstairs to find her—sure enough, she was sleeping like a dead pig.

Mrs. Mu helplessly shook his head, walked over, and gently tapped her cheek with his bony hand: "Hey! Mrs. Mu, it's time to get up for lunch!"

"Mm..."

Qin Mu groaned uncomfortably but showed no signs of waking up. However, her stomach rumbled at that moment. Seeing that he couldn't wake her, Mu Yichen had no choice but search the wardrobe for a reasonably warm pajama, pulled her up, and slipped it over her head.

"Arm!"

He held the sleeve with one hand and guided her hand into it with the other, taking care of her as if she were Huanhuan.

Qin Mu was carried to the dining room, and it wasn't until she smelled the aroma of the beef noodles that she finally opened her eyes groggily.

Mu Yichen was still standing by her side for her to lean on. As soon as Qin Mu saw the beef noodles, her stomach churned unpleasantly. Feeling herself leaning against a warm wall, she turned her head to look, then followed the line of the wall upward.

Oh, it's her dear husband.

Mu Yichen's gaze seemed a bit troubled: "Can we have lunch now?"

Qin Mu mechanically nodded her head.

Mu Yichen sat down next to her; the noodles were a bit sticky by now, but there was no choice but to eat them anyway.

He could have never imagined that of all the meals he had cooked for her, she would eat this one the fastest.

In the afternoon, she had no energy to go to work and slept until it was dark.

Later, when she couldn't wake up, Mu Yichen drove alone to Mu Mansion to bring Huanhuan home.

Feng Fanghua had taken Mu Zihao and the child home to rest a long time ago. Meanwhile, in the kitchen, lunch was being prepared. Feng Fanghua and Mu Zihao were sitting on the carpet by the windowsill, reading and telling stories with Huanhuan. Feng Fanghua was still thinking, hoping that no one would come to pick up the child tonight.

Feng Fanghua now wished that these two people would be so enamored with each other that they'd forget they had a daughter at all.

But what was the reality?

The reality was that just as she was feeling fortunate, she suddenly heard the butler at the door announce: "Young master is here!"

"Hmm! Where's mom?"

"The lady is with the little miss!"

Mu Yichen, holding the car keys, entered the house and his sharp gaze quickly noticed the three people sitting on the carpet by the windowsill the next moment, taking a deep breath.

He wasn't clueless; Feng Fanghua was genuinely good to the child. If only Feng Fanghua could be more tolerant of Qin Mu, he thought, they probably wouldn't have to live apart so soon.

However, he didn't regret living separately because having their small home with just the three of them felt more real to him.

At least, he was willing to do whatever with her and didn't have to suppress his temper.

Qin Mu had no idea what was going on in his mind; it was his own little strategy.

Of course, one crucial reason he moved out was that Feng Fanghua didn't respect his wife enough.

No matter the reason, the moment Qin Mu's mood got affected by Feng Fanghua, Mu Yichen was already angry.

Even though Qin Mu never mentioned a word of it.

Feng Fanghua looked up at her son with equally icy eyes: "Didn't you say six o'clock? It's almost seven and you're just coming to pick her up."

"Got a call on the way!"

Mu Yichen replied indifferently, his gaze staying on the face of his beloved daughter.

"Daddy!"

Upon seeing him, Huanhuan immediately grabbed her book and crawled up to run towards him. Despite the coolness of his trouser leg, she clung to him without letting go.

Mu Yichen gently placed his hand on her forehead, rubbed it a bit, then bent down to scoop her up from the ground into his arms: "Shall we go home now?"

"Yes!"

Little Huanhuan nodded obediently, seemingly eager to return to their new home.

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"Say goodbye to Grandpa and Grandma!"

Mu Zihao reminded in a low voice.

"Grandpa, Grandma, goodbye!"

"Little Huanhuan, goodbye!"

Mu Zihao smiled as he said goodbye to his granddaughter and then looked at his wife across from him. He noticed her gaze shimmering with something crystalline, felt a pang of heartache, and unconsciously caressed her back with his hand.

Feng Fanghua kept her head down without saying a word. As soon as the two of them turned around, she sniffled and almost couldn't hold back her tears.

"That damn kid really... can be infuriating!"

The typically haughty woman felt powerless when it came to matters concerning her son.

"Alright, I think it's good this way. We can still whisper to each other when it's not busy, right?"

Mu Zihao comforted her in a low voice.

After hearing him, Feng Fanghua gave him a cold glance, stubbornly at odds with her son.

"If it wasn't Qin Mu, that girl, tattling on him, then there must be a mole in the house."

Feng Fanghua suddenly muttered, biting her teeth afterward and then looked at Mu Zihao.

Scared, Mu Zihao immediately straightened his back.

"I'm not the one, I swear!"

Mu Zihao hurriedly explained.

"Who's talking about you? I'm talking about someone else!"

Feng Fanghua said and looked around, thinking it must have been the domestic help chattering carelessly, which Mu Yichen overheard, or perhaps there really was someone gossiping to Mu Yichen.

Or perhaps it was Qin Mu who had tattled!

"You don't need to think about it any more or delve into it, alright?"

"Not delve into it? All I did was scold her a bit, to put her in her place, then her husband gets all protective and moves out with her, and I'm not supposed to delve into it?"

"If you had fainted while I was away on a business trip, do you think I wouldn't have reprimanded my son? Even if it had nothing to do with him."

Mu Zihao looked at Feng Fanghua, his eyelashes quivered slightly as he spoke to her in a low voice.

Feng Fanghua looked at him. Even though she felt warm inside hearing what he said, she still felt something was off – why did she always have the nagging feeling that her partner was actually siding with that girl?

Mu Yichen and Huanhuan got home to find Qin Mu still asleep, and Mu Yichen directly placed Huanhuan on the bed.

Qin Mu was already dressed, warm, and Huanhuan's hands were chilly from coming in from outside. The moment she touched Qin Mu, Qin Mu immediately shrank back.

"Hahaha, Mommy, wake up!"

Huanhuan continued to touch Qin Mu while laughing. Hearing her daughter's voice, Qin Mu didn't dare to move again, but just turned around and then looked at the little girl climbing on top of her.

"Mommy, you're so lazy!"

"I'm going to prepare dinner. You getting up?"

He asked in a deep voice as he held his daughter and went out.

"Mm!"

Qin Mu agreed, and after watching the two of them leave, she couldn't help but laugh - it was from the satisfaction of such a simple life.

Qin Mu thought, maybe she should learn how to cook too?

If they were to live like this continuously, she always ate what he cooked; what if he got tired and left? What would she do?

What if a woman who was really good at cooking suddenly appeared to look for him...

The more Qin Mu thought about it, the more worried she became, and amidst her worries and plans, she got out of bed.

Mu Yichen was cooking, while Huanhuan watched TV on the sofa. Hearing her dad's phone ringing on the coffee table, Huanhuan slid off the sofa, picked up the phone without understanding anything displayed, held it to her chest, and ran to the kitchen.

"Daddy, phone call, Daddy, phone call!"

Huanhuan began to mumble as she approached the kitchen. Mu Yichen, in the middle of adding vegetables to the pot, turned his head upon hearing his daughter and naturally also heard his phone ringing. After putting all the vegetables in the pot, he wiped his hands and took the call, while gratefully patting his daughter's little head with a look, Huanhuan seemed to feel praised and satisfied, silent, only turning back to her cartoons as the TV emitted familiar sounds.

Mu Yichen continued to stir-fry while listening to the person on the other end of the line.

"Let's leave it at that for now, we'll talk more after work tomorrow. Also, give Qiao Tezhu a call to see if he has any plans to come back for the New Year. If he does, send someone to hand over the work to him; if not, there's no need to press the issue."

After hanging up, he focused on his cooking.

When Qin Mu came downstairs and sat with her daughter on the sofa watching TV, she heard the doorbell ring as Mu Yichen finished cooking and was preparing for dinner. Instinctively, she went to open the door.

As if she were a dedicated male housekeeper.

But just as he stepped out of the dining room, he heard a man's voice at the door.

"If it's possible, please leave a five-star review."

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"Okay!"

Qin Mu agreed, then closed the door.

Looking at the bag in her hand, which wasn't particularly heavy but was quite bulky, she couldn't help but marvel at how impressive the delivery service was these days.

Tonight she could enjoy eating chips and watching cartoons with Huanhuan. Hmm, Boss Mu could have some too.

As she thought this, she unintentionally lifted her eyes and saw Mu Yichen standing at the dining room entrance, looking at her with a helpless expression.

"It's snacks, we'll eat them while watching TV after dinner!"

Mu Yichen didn't say much more; no matter how much he scolded her, his heart was still utterly indulgent towards her. After giving her another glance, he turned around and went back.

Meanwhile, Huanhuan, who had been watching TV, couldn't help but get excited and almost jumped up, reaching for the bag as soon as she saw her mother carrying a big bag of snacks.

"Nope, you can only have them after dinner."

Qin Mu showed off the snacks right in front of her then bent down seriously and responsibly to explain to her.

Huanhuan immediately pouted her pretty pink lips in disappointment.

However, during dinner, she forgot all about the snacks; children at this age seemed especially prone to forgetting things that just happened.

That was probably for the best; Qin Mu felt that if a person had to remember everything that happened to them, it would indeed be tiring. They might even be worn out by it.

Mu Yichen watched his daughter eating with such gusto and felt reassured, then looked at his wife: "You should eat more, too."

"I might have eaten too much at lunch!"

She said with a laugh, feeling a bit weak.

Mu Yichen's reproachful gaze fell on her, but it made her feel a warm fuzziness inside.

It seemed that his look wasn't so much reproach as deep affection.

"Was Mom happier when you picked up Huanhuan tonight?"

As Qin Mu ate, she couldn't help but ask. She was worried Feng Fanghua was still unhappy; after all, it's not good for an elderly person to be upset all the time. She certainly didn't want to see Feng Fanghua burdened with health issues, even if she wasn't exactly a model daughter-in-law.

"It was okay!"

Mu Yichen pondered for a moment and, recalling the resentful look in Feng Fanghua's eyes as he left, spoke dispassionately.

Qin Mu unintentionally licked her lips, feeling that his response was appeasing.

She then turned to look at her daughter, who was eating and had no interest in their conversation.

Qin Mu had no choice but to change the subject: "How about I sign up for a cooking class?"

"Do you even have time for that?"

He asked quietly.

Qin Mu...

Suddenly remembered her show, it was already the end of the year, but then she thought about the day and looked at the man across with a plaintive gaze: "You even know I'm free, huh?"

Mu Yichen...

After dinner, mother and daughter snuggled on the couch to start watching cartoons, and after Mu Yichen had cleaned up the kitchen, he came out too, standing behind the two of them with arms crossed, watching the TV screen.

He didn't find it interesting in the slightest; he never watched this type of cartoon when he was young. Of course, he remembered how Jiang Zhiyuan was very fond of them. Back then, he and Jing Feng, along with several boys their age, would worry that he might turn out... different, but fortunately, he hadn't.

However, looking down at his wife and daughter, who were having such a good time, he suddenly found meaning in these childish films.

Though he sat on the couch, continuing to check his emails on his phone the entire time.

He was in a single seat, while Qin Mu and Huanhuan were on the larger couch in the center but closer to his side. Seeing him focused on his phone, she immediately extended the bag of chips toward him.

Mu Yichen reflexively looked up at her, then, somewhat reluctantly, reached his hand into the bag, expecting to grab a chip, but...

Qin Mu laughed mischievously: "Haha, just kidding."

Mu Yichen's gaze chilled even further.

After understanding his look, Qin Mu cleared her throat lightly and then continued to pretend to be engrossed in the movie.

Mu Yichen lowered his head again, but after only two seconds, he looked up again at her blushing face.

Huanhuan was still intently watching the movie, so he put down his phone and moved to join his wife and daughter, squeezing in next to Qin Mu.

Just as Qin Mu opened another bag of chips, he quickly reached in before her and snatched a chip to eat. Qin Mu was taken aback for a moment, then turned to see him squeezing in beside her.

"Go back to your phone!"

Qin Mu said, worried she might distract him from his work, her tone half-joking.

"No!"

He replied blandly, then leaned back against the sofa, his arm resting behind her.

Just quietly accompanying her and their daughter as they continued to watch the movie, of course, mainly watching her.

Eventually, Huanhuan lay on Qin Mu's legs and fell asleep. Qin Mu gently stroked her daughter's shoulder and turned off the movie after a while.

Mu Yichen also leaned against her shoulder watching their sleeping daughter, then whispered in her ear, "Let's have another little sister for Huanhuan."

Qin Mu...

For some reason, her heart stirred unintentionally, and even ached a little.

She looked at him subconsciously, her dark, shimmering eyes filled with questions.

"Don't want to?"

He asked her softly, his gaze serious.

Don't want to?

She had long wanted children with him, but the question of daughters and sons...

Qin Mu suddenly remembered Feng Fanghua saying she should have another boy for the Mu Family.

"Do you like daughters?"

She asked quietly.

Fearing she might wake her daughter, and afraid to disturb her own slightly sour heart.

"Yes!"

Qin Mu remembered that the last time she had asked him, he'd said he loved both sons and daughters, as long as they were hers, but this time he was very clear about liking daughters.

Suddenly unsure of what to say to him, she turned her face away woodenly, staring at the coffee table in front, her eyes damp with somber flecks.

Mu Yichen watched her the whole time, seeing the evasion in her eyes, the hesitation in her heart, thinking she once again did not want to have children with him, especially since they had had some minor friction recently.

In fact, Qin Mu was pondering whether she should strive to have a son, as she did not want Feng Fanghua to become even more dissatisfied with her.

"Shall I put the princess to sleep first?"

He asked softly.

"Hmm? No need!"

Qin Mu was startled, completely misinterpreting that the "princess" he was referring to wasn't her.

It took her a moment to realize, "Oh! Okay!" until his gaze upon her made her scalp tingle.

Mu Yichen sighed softly and lifted Huanhuan from her arms.

After handing Huanhuan to him, Qin Mu watched his back as he carried Huanhuan upstairs, unintentionally thinking back to their time in Paris.

Back then, when they were so young...

Sometimes, when he was happy, he would call her his princess, his forever princess.

Never did she expect that the title of princess had been transferred to someone else!

Qin Mu couldn't help but chuckle unconsciously, though tinged with sadness.

Later, when they were both lying in bed, Qin Mu instinctively held her, and Mu Yichen, startled by her sudden closeness, simply lifted his arm and then gently laid it back down.

"What's wrong?"

"Nothing! Just a bit cold, wanted to hold you."

The warm breeze in the room blew gently as he held the woman in his arms, feeling as if she was under a great deal of pressure, then teasingly mentioned, "Didn't you say you had some scores to settle with me the other day?"

Qin Mu paused, "You dare to bring that up?"

Seeing her finally show some spirit, he couldn't help but laugh, "I just sent Secretary Xi to assist with Jian's care."

Qin Mu struggled to lift her head to glare at him, fuming at his words.

He had the nerve to say it so calmly, so matter-of-factly.

Was this not an outright provocation?

Did he think she couldn't fight back against him?

"No one but me is allowed to take care of you so intimately, not even your own father."

"He doesn't need my care. But have you ever considered how Jian Yan and Secretary Xi feel about this? Letting two strangers come into such close physical contact. Do you think that's right? Have you considered Jian Yan's feelings, and Secretary Xi's?"

Qin Mu finally managed to slide her head out from under his palm and looked up at him angrily, her bright and shining eyes gazing fiercely at him, and she slapped him hard.

"Ah, are you trying to kill me? Could you bear it?"

"Do you think I couldn't?"

Mu Yichen caught her wrist as she tried to hit him again, looking at her incredulously, like a big boy.

"Stop hitting, Secretary Xi was very willing to serve him."

As Qin Mu attempted to strike him with her other hand, he caught that one too, her body twisted awkwardly as she faced him, not understanding him even after his explanation.

"Secretary Xi really likes Jian Yan's design style and got the highest annual bonus in the whole office building."

Qin Mu...

So...

Is money truly omnipotent?

If it were her, would she also care for a stranger she somewhat admired, just for the money?

No, perhaps just for the money, she would do it.

After giving birth to Huanhuan and spending a few days in the hospital, she would sometimes leave the ward and find herself idly standing there, watching the caregivers attend to various patients. She wondered if her designs were not recognized, if she had to struggle in her industry, and if circumstances became dire, what would she do for Huanhuan?

The answer was, for Huanhuan, she could care for those immobile patients in their beds, she could do all kinds of menial tasks. Having given birth to Huanhuan, she thought, no matter how downtrodden, she must ensure her daughter was well-fed, clothed warmly, and strive to give her daughter a better life.

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Fortunately, she didn't get that mixed up, she thought, her daughter was blessed.

"So, are we just going to let this go?"

Mu Yichen gently placed her hand on his shoulder and asked.

"No way!"

Qin Mu immediately replied.

It was mainly because she remembered how Jian Yan endured that awkwardness, and always felt she had to stand up for her master.

Of course, if Mr. Mu hadn't brought it up, she would have long forgotten about it.

Mu Yichen felt somewhat tired inside, as he hadn't rested well lately either, but looking at Mrs. Mu's unforgiving demeanor, he still couldn't help feeling jealous: Could she not make a fuss with me on account of Jian Yan?

"I've told you, he's my master!"

Qin Mu, seeing his sour expression, stopped looking at him and explained for the hundredth time.

"Yes! He is your master, but he's also a man, and not only that, he's an outstanding man with good looks. Even though your husband is confident enough in his charm to have you head over heels, I still don't want you to have too much interaction with such a man. Did I make myself clear enough?"

His voice was especially soft when he asked her if he had made himself clear.

Qin Mu was listening seriously, in fact, she had already been careful about how she interacted with Jian Yan. Back then, she deliberately kept calling him master, whereas previously she would call him Jian Yan. Sometimes she teased his stoic nature on purpose by calling him master, just to see more expressions on his face, but now...

Jian Yan even protested, saying she was making him feel old.

Yet, she still didn't change how she addressed him, and she also started ingraining into Jian Yan, deliberately or unintentionally, how deep her relationship with Mu Yichen was.

To be honest, even though she was also very confident in her beauty being enough to stir up a man's desire, she truly couldn't imagine her incredibly picky master liking her. To this day, whether it was Xiaomei or Mu Yichen's jealousy talking to her, she still didn't think Jian Yan had those kinds of feelings for her, feeling that it was more like a fatherly or brotherly affection.

Late into the night, the snow quietly began to fall outside, and the resting populace was totally unaware of its sudden arrival.

The two exhausted individuals slept soundly that night, especially in their warm and cozy bed, wishing they could sleep for an eternity.

In the room specially prepared for the little princess, the pink bed hosted a little one with plump cheeks.

Even the air started to move quietly, unwilling to disturb the stillness of the moment.

It wasn't until the next morning that someone discovered it had snowed outside.

Those who had been in a bad mood were dazzled the moment they stepped out of the building, and all their unhappiness vanished, replaced by joyful expressions.

All the confusion seemed to have been swept away, as they walked happily on the street, as if they had never felt so good before.

When Qin Mu finally woke up and struggled to reach the remote on the bedside table, the curtains slowly opened, and she couldn't help but raise her hand to shield her eyes from the bright light coming from outside.

Mu Yichen turned over, "What time is it?"

Qin Mu reached for her phone, squinting at the time displayed on the screen: 6:41.

Her throat was also a bit dry; the house was indeed very dry in the winter.

Her next thought was that she needed to hurry and buy a humidifier for the little princess.

Mr. Mu got up to cook, and Qin Mu quickly went to Huanhuan's room.

After breakfast, Qin Mu took Huanhuan to the studio, as Mu Yichen had a meeting to attend in the morning—as he had been cooped up at home all of yesterday, today he had to get some work done.

Qin Mu also had to prepare for next month's show, but Huanhuan seemed accustomed to the environment from growing up around it. Sometimes, when someone wanted a break, they would go and play with her for a while. She wasn't lonely, wandering around by herself, and if she saw fabric on the ground, she would pick up her favorite piece and drape it over the Barbie doll in her hand.

Hmm, the Barbie doll she'd been carrying recently was still the one Qin Haiming had given her.

It was seemingly her favorite one.

Actually, it was almost like this every year before a show, with designers busy beyond description, but this year they were operating independently from JY, so things were a bit more stringent.

Especially since Jian Yan wasn't around.

During the lunch break, everyone was a bit tired, lounging around in the reception hall, while only Huanhuan continued to pick up scraps of fabric to play with on the floor.

The once-clean floor had, over the last couple of days, become a bit...

Well, unsightly.

Qin Mu sat down as well and discussed the afternoon's work with everyone. Yang Qianxi was still diligently acting as her little assistant, responsible for taking notes and helping out.

However, she seemed quite adept at it, and she felt that she had never been as serious when designing clothes as she was when being an assistant. Although wearing beautiful clothes and shining seemed simple, and she had thought that designing was just about sketching easily, but sketch after sketch...

"Miss Wen said she would come to see you this afternoon, I'll go clean your office first."

Yang Qianxi had just sat down for a few seconds when suddenly she remembered this and immediately stood up.

"Never mind, take a break for a while."

Qin Mu grabbed her hand, and Yang Qianxi looked at her somewhat embarrassedly: Is that okay?

"An actress like her has seen all sorts of things, what's more, she's not even an outsider anymore."

At 23 years old, Qin Mu could never have imagined she would become friends with an actress.

Originally, they had intended to use each other, but in just a few short months...

They had already become comfortable enough to joke with each other.

"Alright then!"

Yang Qianxi naturally wanted a break as well, so she did not say more.

"Why is it so dirty here?"

Suddenly, a young man dressed in a suit, seeming like a wealthy young man, walked in from outside. He was twirling a Jaguar car key in his hand, frowning and looking around disdainfully at the place.

Qin Mu and the others exchanged glances, and then Yang Qianxi walked over with a notebook in her arms: Hello sir, how may I help you?

"I'm throwing a party at AM in a few days, I heard you design gowns, I've come to bring you some business."

The wealthy young man sized up Yang Qianxi, then frowned unhappily: Where's Qin Mu?

Qin Mu was taken aback when she heard her name mentioned; she didn't recognize this seemingly wealthy young man.

And it was clear he hadn't recognized her either, as he was looking right at them.

Chapter 330: Compensation Required by President Mu (8)_1

Compensation Required by President Mu (8)

"Is it you? I need to speak with you alone."

He suddenly pointed at Qin Mu's face, and although he lacked an imposing aura, he still seemed to have a quite good opinion of himself.

Qin Mu couldn't help but press her lips into a straight line, offering a faint yet polite smile.

This young master appeared to be about her age, but mentally, he seemed more than a decade younger. She didn't refute, only slightly lifting her hand to indicate that he should sit down beside her.

The colleagues immediately went out for dinner, with a handsome guy responsible for holding Huanhuan, and only Yang Qianxi stayed with Qin Mu to entertain him. As the young master sat down, he even dusted off his trousers. Qin Mu quietly noted his small actions, as well as the irritation in his eyes, thinking he must have a bit of a cleanliness obsession.

Qin Mu couldn't help but scrutinize the person beside her; he must be a true young master, lacking the aloofness of a businessman. It's quite normal for a young master to need uniquely designed dresses for a party, right?

But his mention of sending money was a bit exaggerated.

"I have about eighty-something friends here. You can name any price, but the designs must be unique for each person, distinctive enough."

"Which date next month?"

Qin Mu lowered her lashes, thinking that even if she didn't sleep day and night, she couldn't come up with dresses for more than eighty people, unless the designs were not significantly different and it was also at the end of the month.

"The 17th!"

The young master replied curtly, his knitted brows never relaxing.

"Haven't asked the young master's family name yet, are you from Rongcheng?"

"Of course, I'm from Rongcheng, why else would I be throwing a party here?"

Both Qin Mu and Yang Qianxi showed a flicker in their expressions, but then Qin Mu smiled again, "May I know your honored surname then?"

"No need for honorifics, my last name is Yang. Just tell me whether you can take care of this business or not. Be straight to the point."

No need for honorifics, his last name is Yang?

Qin Mu carefully searched through her knowledge of the Yang families in Rongcheng but couldn't recall this particular individual.

"I can't do it!"

Qin Mu lowered her gaze for two seconds, then with earnest when she looked up again, she gave her refusal.

The young master, who claimed his last name was Yang, thought he might have heard wrong: "You can't do it?"

"Yes. To be honest, I have been extremely busy recently. If Mr. Yang has time, I could invite you to attend my fashion show on the evening of the 27th of the twelfth lunar month. Other than that, I really can't help you."

Qin Mu's gaze was sincere, her voice firm, leaving no room for him to doubt.

The young master, surnamed Yang, suddenly laughed out loud, "I've really never met a woman like you before. Aren't you supposed to take on the job? Think about it, this isn't a small amount of money. Even if you just put something together to accommodate me, I wouldn't know the difference."

He spread his hands, his lips curling up as he looked at her, his eyes full of astonishment.

"I could deceive you, but I can't deceive myself, nor can I tarnish my reputation. If there's a chance in the future, I hope to have the opportunity to work with Mr. Yang."

As she spoke, Qin Mu stood up first. Everyone else had gone to eat, and she was hungry as well, although she managed to maintain a serious demeanor. The young master, surnamed Yang, also had no choice but to stand up: "Then, can we be friends?"

"Certainly!"

His sharp gaze dropped, and as he extended his hand, Qin Mu lightly placed her hand in his for a brief handshake, then smilingly said, "Qianxi, please show Mr. Yang out."

"Yes!"

Yang Qianxi immediately led the way: "Please, Mr. Yang."

Although they shared the same surname, Yang Qianxi really didn't dare to claim a connection beyond their social status, and from her perspective, the young master seemed to have ill intentions.

Naturally, if she felt his intentions were not good, Qin Mu was even more able to perceive it.

After he left, Qin Mu slung her bag over her shoulder and headed out. Huanhuan had been taken away by a colleague, and she needed to get there quickly; after all, they didn't understand Huanhuan as she did, and she was worried.

After getting into the car, Mr. Yang glanced outside one more time, laughing mockingly upon seeing Qin Mu and Yang Qianxi coming out from inside, then started the car with the Bluetooth headset on and drove away.

Qin Mu and Yang Qianxi stood on the steps, watching him leave, and shared a helpless smile.

"So, what are your thoughts?"

Since the restaurant was not far away, Qin Mu and Yang Qianxi chatted as they walked there.

"Hmm! He seems like a true young master, but his reluctance to reveal his name makes him quite mysterious. Could he possibly be someone who has just returned from studying abroad?"

Yang Qianxi speculated.

"Hmm! Anything else?"

Qin Mu noticed that Yang Qianxi's insight was quite keen.

"Well, nothing else at the moment."

"The business proposal came too suddenly, and it's too illogical. There must be an ulterior motive."

Qin Mu stretched her arms forward, feeling somewhat exhausted as she analyzed the situation.