

King Hall 381

Chapter 381 Lin Family Banquet

Lin Qiaoxia kept her head low, not daring to look at Mu Jinyu. In a low voice she said, "I'm sorry, it was because I'm too useless that I made you come all this way..."

With courage mustered, Lin Qiaoxia finally raised her head to look at Mu Jinyu and said, "Young Master Mu, I feel that I am really not up to the job of being the general manager of the branch office. You should still look for..."

"No, I can't trust anyone else with this. You have to do it," Mu Jinyu flatly refused.

"I..." Although Lin Qiaoxia was moved by Mu Jinyu's trust, she felt even more guilty. After all, she felt that she really did not have the ability to be of help to Mu Jinyu and was unworthy of his trust.

"Don't overthink it," Mu Jinyu softly advised. "Nobody is perfect at anything from the start. Just like Xiyan and the others, who isn't someone who has failed numerous times before becoming capable of handling things on their own? Don't be lost in wild and fanciful thoughts. You do have the capabilities; you are just too timid..."

After being comforted by Mu Jinyu, Lin Qiaoxia's anxiety lessened, although she still felt that she was not suited for the position of general manager of the branch office. But, not wanting to disappoint Mu Jinyu, she gritted her teeth and resolved to continue striving and work harder.

She absolutely must not fail to live up to Mu Jinyu's trust.

...

Lin Family Villa.

In the hall.

Elder Lin, who had recently recovered from a serious illness and experienced a brush with death, felt he could no longer let his underachieving descendants run amok, for if he truly were to leave one day, the Lin Family would also truly fall apart.

Therefore, today he specially summoned his descendants to hold a banquet to not only wish for his health but also to carve out a new path for the Lin Family.

"Come, let's wish Grandpa good health, and may all be well with him, and may all evil spirits stay away!"

A younger member of the Lin Family stood up, lifted his glass, and called out to Elder Lin.

Subsequently, the rest of the younger members also stood up and raised their glasses to toast to Elder Lin.

Lin Qingxue, of course, was no exception.

With an expressionless face, she stood up and joined in the toast, echoing cheerful words, then took a sip of her drink. After everyone sat down, she followed suit.

"Ha ha, very good... very good... everyone is great..."

Elder Lin chuckled heartily, nodding at everyone. His gaze lingered a while longer on the young man who first stood up to wish him well, then slowly shifted to the others.

Lastly, his eyes stayed on Lin Qingxue for an extra second, his expression slightly complicated, but it soon returned to normal, and he looked away from Lin Qingxue.

Once everyone had taken their seats, Elder Lin then spoke in a booming voice, "The reason I have held this feast today, firstly, is to celebrate my natural recovery. Secondly, I have been thinking about the Lin Family's state of being without a leader during my time of distress. I find this very problematic; we must urgently devise a new plan for the Lin Family."

Elder Lin, saying thus, turned his gaze toward the young man, and said, "And to decide on the next Head of the Lin Family."

Boom!

As soon as Elder Lin's words were spoken, everyone at the banquet table became excited.

It was as if cold water had been poured into a pot of hot oil, causing the calm oil to froth and boil.

Lin Qingxue however, wasn't as excited and instead looked a bit despondent.

From Grandpa's words, she hadn't caught much else, but his mention of his natural recovery felt like needles piercing her heart, deeply wounding her once more.

Yes, during this time, under the brainwashing of the Lin Family members, Grandpa no longer believed that his recovery was due to her traveling thousands of miles, through extraordinary difficulties from the Miao Zombie Hundred Thousand Great Mountains to retrieve the Spring of Life, and the massage techniques taught by Mu Jinyu, which had cured him.

He simply believed that his recovery was due to his own efforts and due to the Lin Family members' prayers...

In the end, he wouldn't even let her massage him anymore, thinking it was useless, feeling that she was just making a show of an effort to claim all the credit for herself...

Lin Qingxue didn't really mind, after all, this was her Grandpa and it was understandable for him to be confused and deceived by the others when old.

But she didn't feel it was unfair to herself; rather, she felt it was unfair to Mu Jinyu.

After all, Grandpa's recovery was all thanks to Mu Jinyu's contribution of a portion of the Spring of Life, yet they talked as if it had nothing to do with it...

I wonder if Grandpa's illness will come back now that he won't let me massage him anymore.

This was Lin Qingxue's biggest worry.

While Lin Qingxue's thoughts fluttered.

Elder Lin looked at the excited crowd, raised his hand to press downwards, signaling everyone to quiet down, not to get too worked up, and to listen to him continue.

The crowd gradually became quiet, then looked at Elder Lin with sparkling eyes, waiting for him to continue.

Elder Lin spoke in a resonant voice, "I've thought a lot during this time and feel that our Lin Group has been treading water in the Jinling business community for a long time. Our vast Lin Family has few who can shoulder great responsibilities. But what can we do now to help the Lin Family take a few more steps forward? Even if I'm old, how can I ensure that our descendants live without worries about food and clothing?"

No one spoke; some people even lowered their heads in shame, embarrassed by their previous debauchery.

Observing the expressions of the crowd, Elder Lin continued in a deep tone, "If it were before, we'd probably need a business genius to emerge from our Lin Family to change the current state of the Lin Group. But now..."

He raised his voice slightly, becoming a bit excited as he said, "But now, the Jinyu Group, which has the most promising development perspective and has developed the highly sought-after Beauty Pill, is about to open a branch in Jinling. If our Lin Group can obtain a collaboration with them, then... our Lin Group will soar to the heavens!"

After pausing, Elder Lin looked at the Lin Family's younger generation, whose spirits were lifted, and smiled, "So, if anyone can secure a collaboration with the Jinyu Group, that person will be the next Family Head of the Lin Family, the upcoming chairman of the Lin Group!"

After his words fell, the crowd calmed down again in their excitement.

No one raised their hand to volunteer.

Seeing their reaction, Elder Lin felt puzzled and asked, "Hmm?! Doesn't anyone have anything to say?"

Lin Zhiping, the young man who had been the first to stand up and toast Elder Lin, showed a bitter smile upon hearing this and said, "Grandpa, not to hide it from you, while you were recuperating, we all had contact with the Jinyu Group. But just like with other groups, we simply couldn't negotiate a collaboration with them, not to mention even getting to see their person in charge."

"Is that so?" Upon hearing this, Elder Lin frowned, also sensing that the matter wouldn't be easy.

Then, after thinking for a moment, even though he had already made his declaration, someone still needed to step forward and make a commitment. Otherwise, where would that leave him?

Therefore, Elder Lin looked at Lin Zhiping and declared in a loud voice, "I've already put my word out here, and I'll leave it at that. Whoever can secure a collaboration with the Jinyu Group, the chairmanship of the Lin Group will be his!"

Lin Zhiping was one of the more outstanding individuals among the younger generation of the Lin Family.

Elder Lin was quite fond of him.

He was also nurturing him as a potential successor.

So, after feeling that the task was daunting, he simply said that any cooperation would do, without specifying that it had to be one that would secure the future livelihood of the Lin Family. As long as Lin Zhiping dared to take on this task, even if it was to negotiate an ordinary collaboration, the next chairmanship of the Lin Group would be handed over to Lin Zhiping!

Feeling Elder Lin's gaze, Lin Zhiping gave a bitter smile and then looked away, not daring to make a promise.

Because he had just been to the Jinyu Group a few days earlier and hadn't even seen Lin Qiaoxia's face.

Elder Lin stared at Lin Zhiping for a few moments, noticing his silence, and immediately felt disappointed.

Then, he turned to look at the others.

But the others were just like Lin Zhiping. As Elder Lin's gaze turned their way, each of them lowered their heads, not daring to meet his gaze.

Elder Lin was even more disappointed.

Was there really no one in the vast Lin Family who could take responsibility?

Then, when Elder Lin's gaze inadvertently fell on Lin Qingxue, he instinctively looked away, considering that a young girl like her couldn't be of use, and he wouldn't even spare her an expectant look.

Except...

Lin Qingxue suddenly raised her hand and said in a firm voice,

"Grandpa, let me do it!"

Chapter 382: Everyone's Ridicule

Mu Jinyu's act of volunteering caused a slight astonishment among those present.

Following that, Lin Zhiping and the others slightly lowered their heads and began to snicker secretly.

Did this cousin really think she could accomplish what even they had failed to do?

Did she truly believe that just because she had fortunately retrieved Mysterious Spring Water from the Hundred Thousand Great Mountains and cured Grandfather's serious illness that everything would go her way?

Indeed, Elder Lin had been deceived by everyone into truly believing his recovery was self-healing and had nothing to do with Lin Qingxue, focusing only on how Lin Qingxue had tirelessly run about for him without any other gratitude.

But they were different; they knew the elder's recovery was likely related to the spring water Lin Qingxue brought back because they had sent the plastic bottle filled with the spring water for institutional testing and discovered that the minerals in it were very special.

Therefore, they were very apprehensive afterward, fearful that Elder Lin might mistakenly leave most of the family assets to Lin Qingxue.

In the end, they even managed to convince the somewhat confused elder that his recovery was solely due to his destined survival.

And now, seeing their cousin unlikely to inherit most of the Lin Group's assets yet unwilling to give up and still attempting to attract Elder Lin's attention, they could not help but secretly scoff at her overestimation of her abilities.

The difficulty of negotiating a partnership with Jinyu Group was no less than curing Elder Lin.

After all, Jinyu Group had so far only partnered with a few major families in River City; these opportunities were gained by the Xu Family and Jiang Family bending over backwards for them; otherwise, Jinyu Group might have continued to monopolize the market.

And what right did their little Lin Family have to discuss cooperation with such a corporate giant?

Wouldn't they just end up being left unattended in the lobby for a day and a night?

They couldn't afford to lose that much face!

So when Lin Qingxue volunteered, they could not help but snicker secretly.

When Elder Lin heard Lin Qingxue's offer, he was slightly taken aback but did not get excited, instead scanning the Lin descendants and said in a deep voice, "Is there anyone else willing to go?!"

Lin Zhiping thought for a moment and said, "Grandfather, I have a lot on my plate recently and can't make it; let cousin go instead."

The others echoed his sentiment.

Elder Lin's expression darkened as he said in frustration, "You really are not even on par with a woman!"

Elder Lin harbored a strong preference for males over females, always envisioning his grandchildren rather than his granddaughters or daughters-in-law carrying on the Lin family banner, or he wouldn't have lost his composure and made such a remark...

Lin Qingxue felt very uncomfortable hearing Grandfather's words.

What did he mean by not even being on par with women?

Was she innately inferior to her male cousins?

The great leader once said that women could hold up half the sky, yet Grandfather looked down on people so easily!

Lin Qingxue clenched her teeth in determination to make a mark for herself, to make Grandfather and the others take her seriously and never look down on her again.

Elder Lin, seeing that none of his descendants dared to commit decisively, shook his head in disappointment and then addressed Lin Qingxue, "Qingxue, then this task is yours to take. Can you guarantee its completion?"

If Lin Zhiping had been the one to respond, Elder Lin would not have asked if he could guarantee completion of the task; he would have been very pleased just by his willingness.

Lin Qingxue pursed her lips, hesitated for a moment, and then shook her head, "Qingxue cannot guarantee completion of the task, but will do her best."

Although she was determined to establish a career that would make Grandfather take notice, she understood that negotiating a partnership with Jinyu Group was an extremely tough challenge.

Her reason for agreeing was that none of the other Lin Family descendants were willing to step forward, and she didn't want Grandfather to feel embarrassed, which prompted her to volunteer.

Upon hearing Lin Qingxue's words, a younger member of the Lin Family sneered and muttered, "If you can't guarantee completion of the task, why go at all? Is it to embarrass yourself?"

Some people echoed, "Exactly, if her attitude there is as bad as it is at home and she offends the person in charge of Jinyu Group in Jinling, our Lin Family might suffer too. I think it's better if she doesn't go!"

"..."

Listening to these people whisper, Lin Qingxue pursed her lips and said nothing.

Fortunately, the elder wasn't so biased towards gender discrimination that he would allow them to bully Lin Qingxue. He opened his mouth to scold:

"Shut your mouths! You don't dare to go yourselves, yet you criticize Qingxue. If you're capable, go yourselves!"

Feeling her grandfather's support, Lin Qingxue felt much better.

Upon hearing their grandfather's reprimand, the Lin Family juniors fell silent like cicadas in the cold, not daring to speak.

Seeing this, Elder Lin waved his hand in disappointment and advised, "Alright, enough said. Qingxue, when you go there later, just do your best, but don't offend anyone from Jinyu Group."

"Yes, I understand, Grandfather," Lin Qingxue nodded.

Soon, the banquet was over.

Elder Lin didn't say much to everyone else, simply turned around and slowly walked upstairs.

"Cousin, you should go now. I heard that the person in charge of Jinyu Group is still in the Jinyu Tower and hasn't gone elsewhere."

"Yes, and it's Friday today. If they're off tomorrow, you'll have to wait another two days. Hurry up."

As soon as Elder Lin left, Lin Zhiping and several others wore smiles that were not quite smiles, and teased Lin Qingxue.

"I understand."

Lin Qingxue did not take offense at their thinly-veiled jibes, nodded, and said, "Thanks for the reminder, cousin. I'm heading over now."

With that said, Lin Qingxue didn't linger at the Lin Family Villa. She stood up, grabbed her bag, and headed out.

"Brother Ping, do you think that girl can be successful?"

After Lin Qingxue had left, a junior from the Lin Family suddenly asked worriedly.

"What if she's lucky again, and successfully negotiates a partnership, one after another? Won't the elder start to see her in a new light and eventually hand over Lin Group to her?"

"Don't worry, she definitely won't succeed," Lin Zhiping shook his head with confidence.

The reason he was so sure was that he had also visited Jinyu Group previously wanting to discuss a partnership, but Lin Qiaoxia had him wait in the reception room and then forgot about him, leaving him hanging all day.

Clearly, the person in charge of Jinyu Group had too high an opinion of themselves, not taking the Lin Family seriously at all.

As for Lin Qingxue, could she really change their attitude?

Lin Zhiping simply didn't believe it.

...

Meanwhile, having left the Lin Family, Lin Qingxue quickly adjusted her mood, putting the unpleasant experiences there behind her, and approached Jinyu Group in a positive and upward-looking attitude to discuss a partnership.

Soon, Lin Qingxue arrived at Wuhu Plaza, Jinyu Tower, took the elevator to the eighteenth floor, explained her purpose to the receptionist, and was escorted to the reception room by a young lady at the front desk.

Before long, Lin Qiaoxia came in, wearing an apologetic smile, and said, "Is this Ms. Lin from Lin Group? I'm really sorry. I was too busy last time and forgot about Mr. Lin..."

She was apologizing for the fact that she had made Lin Zhiping wait for an entire day on a prior occasion when he had come to discuss a partnership.

Having just been inspired by Mu Jinyu, she was determined to be more diligent in her own work and to apologize for the oversight.

Chapter 383: Success in Taking It Down!

"Ah? No problem, no problem..."

When Lin Qingxue heard Lin Qiaoxia's apology, she was slightly startled for a moment, but then realized that it must have been because people from the Lin Family had visited Jinyu Group a few days ago and were received by Lin Qiaoxia, who had forgotten about it afterward.

Thus, after realizing this, Lin Qingxue repeatedly waved her hand, saying it was all right.

Well, it was indeed fine for Lin Qingxue; after all, it wasn't her who was left out.

"Hmm, I understand your purpose, but our Jinyu Group, in the end, weren't prepared with the idea of collaborating with anyone..."

When Lin Qiaoxia heard Lin Qingxue's words, she breathed a sigh of relief, then her face once again took on an apologetic expression as she spoke.

Although she had been serving as the general manager for some time, she still wasn't very good at refusing others, and when she spoke, she inevitably seemed a bit embarrassed.

Lin Qingxue was rejected, but she wasn't discouraged, as she had expected this outcome.

However, she didn't want to return just yet, so she continued, "Don't hurry to refuse, please listen to our proposed collaboration plan..."

Lin Qiaoxia couldn't bear to directly refuse the other party and thought that since she didn't have anything urgent to deal with afterward anyway, it wouldn't matter to spend some time listening to Lin Qingxue's proposal for cooperation, thus she nodded and said, "Okay."

Seeing Lin Qiaoxia agree, Lin Qingxue was delighted, and quickly organized her words, then carefully explained the detailed cooperation plan to Lin Qiaoxia.

After listening, Lin Qiaoxia thought that the cooperation plan wasn't bad.

It could be said that the Lin Group would hardly make any profits in this collaboration, and instead might have to invest a good amount of money.

This seemed like a loss, and if it were the Lin Qiaoxia from before, she definitely wouldn't understand why Lin Group would do such a thing, operating a business at a loss.

But having been meticulously trained by Xu Qingya for a while, the current Lin Qiaoxia understood that Lin Group wouldn't actually be losing money in this collaboration.

Although they wouldn't earn much from the cooperation, with Jinyu Group behind them, they could broaden their network, which would allow them to make money elsewhere eventually.

Thinking this, Lin Qiaoxia felt that there still wasn't a necessity to cooperate with Lin Group, as Mu Jinyu had told her, but considering that Mu Jinyu was currently in the company, she decided to go and consult him.

"Ms. Lin, please wait a moment; I will go and ask our chairman." Lin Qiaoxia stood up and said.

"Hmm, alright..." Lin Qingxue saw that Lin Qiaoxia didn't outright refuse her and thought there might still be hope; she breathed a sigh of relief, yet she became even more nervous.

She didn't know whether Jinyu Group's chairman would agree.

Lin Qiaoxia left the reception room and went to the general manager's office, then repeated Lin Qingxue's partnership proposal to Mu Jinyu.

After listening, Mu Jinyu frowned slightly and said, "Lin Group, in Jinling, there doesn't seem to be any prominent family with the last name Lin, right?"

"Hmm, indeed they are not a very big family," Mei Yinxue said from the side.

Mu Jinyu shook his head and said, "Even the Su Family wants to collaborate with me, and I can hardly be bothered with them, let alone this minor family."

"So should I just refuse directly?" Lin Qiaoxia asked.

"Hmm," Mu Jinyu waved his hand and replied.

"Then I'll go and refuse the other party now," Lin Qiaoxia said, and was about to leave the office.

"Ding."

At that moment, the notification tone for a text message on Mu Jinyu's phone rang.

Mu Jinyu took it out and looked; his initially casual expression suddenly became somewhat playful.

The text message was from Lin Qingxue. She informed Mu Jinyu that she was currently at Jinyu Group. The person in charge here hadn't outright refused her, suggesting there might be room for negotiation. She hoped for his blessings that good luck would come her way again, so if the collaboration succeeded, she could quickly pay off the five hundred million she owed him. Please, please...

Mu Jinyu found it amusing. Over the past while, Lin Qingxue had often been in touch with him, sharing many things as if he truly were her lucky star.

And now, she had come straight to his company and even sought him out personally.

However, she didn't know that Jinyu Group was his company. Otherwise, she probably wouldn't dare to speak such words.

"Forget it."

Shaking his head with a laugh, Mu Jinyu stopped Lin Qiaoxia and said, "Wait a moment."

"What's up?" Lin Qiaoxia halted and turned back to look at Mu Jinyu with surprise.

Mu Jinyu spoke lightly, "Let's collaborate with her. Proceed with the plan she suggested, but let's only deal with this girl. If other Lin Family people come wanting to discuss a collaboration, reject them outright and tell them to get as far away as they can."

Mu Jinyu's last remark stemmed from Lin Qingxue's confidences to him during this period. She owed him five hundred million, but following the encouragement of the Lin Family people, Elder Lin denied the debt.

Considering the Lin Family people's attitude toward her, Mu Jinyu knew that old man had a bit of a gender bias. He guessed that if this girl brought back news of a successful collaboration to the Lin Family, it would soon be manipulated by the Lin Family juniors to get Elder Lin involved, switching the responsibility to someone else. That was why he made this specific request.

He certainly wouldn't let anyone else snatch this opportunity.

"Oh, alright." Lin Qiaoxia, although puzzled by Mu Jinyu's sudden change of heart, didn't ask more and acknowledged before leaving the office for the reception room.

As soon as Lin Qiaoxia left.

Mei Yinxue and Su Zijin gave Mu Jinyu curious glances.

Mu Jinyu was still replying to Lin Qingxue's message, a faint smile hanging on his lips, unaware of their unusual stares.

Unable to hold back, Su Zijin finally asked, "Son, that girl... is she...?"

When Mu Jinyu heard Su Zijin's tentatively probing words, he immediately caught on and shook his head, saying, "No, there's nothing between us. She's just an interesting young girl who owes me five hundred million, so I'm giving her a chance to work it off for me."

Mu Jinyu knew what Su Zijin wanted to ask—whether Lin Qingxue was another prospective daughter-in-law—but frankly, Mu Jinyu hadn't thought of Lin Qingxue in that way.

While Mu Jinyu spoke, Mei Yinxue kept a close watch on his expression. Once he finished, she knew for sure that Mu Jinyu wasn't interested in the girl, figuring he probably agreed to the collaboration just to tease her and to lend a hand.

"Oh, I see..." Su Zijin sounded a bit disappointed upon hearing Mu Jinyu's words.

Mu Jinyu was speechless. Did his mom really want him to end up with multiple wives?

Upon returning to the reception room, Lin Qiaoxia relayed Mu Jinyu's response to Lin Qingxue with a smile.

Lin Qingxue, hearing this, widened her eyes, disbelief flickering through them.

Then, she didn't immediately express her gratitude to Lin Qiaoxia or promises of not failing the Lin Group's trust. Instead, she took out her mobile phone and rechecked the message.

"Good luck on your success, then."

That was the message Mu Jinyu had just sent her.

After reading it, Lin Qingxue felt a surge of confidence, but she hadn't truly expected that...

The collaboration actually succeeded?!

A partnership deal that numerous powerful groups in Jinling had viciously competed for and failed to secure, she had actually clinched it!

Chapter 384: Meeting

Lin Qingxue looked at the message, her gaze blank, feeling as if she was in a dream.

"Ms. Lin? Ms. Lin..."

Lin Qiaoxia watched Lin Qingxue's reaction and asked in a strange tone a few times.

Only then did Lin Qingxue come to her senses, not even pausing to first share the good news with Mu Jinyu, she quickly put away her phone and said to Lin Qiaoxia, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I was too excited, I lost my composure..."

"It's okay." Lin Qiaoxia suppressed the odd feeling in her heart and said to Lin Qingxue with a smile.

Afterward, the two exchanged a few more words before Lin Qingxue finally said goodbye and left.

Stepping out of Jinyu Tower, standing amidst the bustling crowd of Wuhu Plaza, Lin Qingxue's expression was still a bit dazed, still hard to believe.

Then, she hurriedly took out her phone to share the good news with Mu Jinyu, telling him she had really succeeded in securing the cooperation with Jinyu Group at the Jinling branch, and her speed of repayment might be even quicker now.

After sending the message, Lin Qingxue stared continuously at her phone screen.

However, Lin Qingxue waited for three to five minutes, and Mu Jinyu still did not reply.

Lin Qingxue was used to it, knowing that Mu Jinyu's lack of response for so long probably meant he was busy, and even if he saw it later, he might not reply to her again.

Feeling slightly disappointed, Lin Qingxue put away her phone, swung her little fist with force, feeling today was yet another day filled with hope.

"This guy really is my benefactor."

In a soft murmur, Lin Qingxue quickly got into a car to return to the Lin Family and inform Elder Lin that she had successfully secured the cooperation with Jinyu Group.

After about ten minutes.

Lin Qingxue arrived back at the Lin Family residence, then relayed the news to Elder Lin.

Elder Lin, who had been sitting in his study reading, displayed an indifferent expression that changed after hearing Lin Qingxue's words. With a "clatter," the book in his hands fell onto the desk.

He turned to look at Lin Qingxue, his expression a mix of excitement and skepticism as he asked, "Are you serious? You really secured the cooperation with Jinyu Group?"

"It's true." Lin Qingxue nodded emphatically, then took out the contract to show Elder Lin.

Elder Lin's hands trembled slightly as he took it, examining it carefully and alternately frowning and smoothing his brows.

After finishing, Elder Lin, who was no fool, nodded slightly and with a look of appreciation in his eyes, said to Lin Qingxue, "The terms of this contract are acceptable. Although we won't make much profit from cooperating with Jinyu Group, and might even have to contribute some, as long as we can establish a connection with Jinyu Group, this loss means nothing. With their support, we can quickly recoup."

"Yes, that's what I was thinking too." Lin Qingxue nodded slightly.

Elder Lin remained silent, his gaze on Lin Qingxue complex.

He thought to himself, if only Qingxue were a boy.

She was so dutiful, having run off thousands of miles to the Hundred Thousand Great Mountains in Miao Zombie to find opportunities after I became ill, although it was futile and she suffered a lot, her filial piety was truly invaluable.

Besides, unlike the younger generations of the Lin Family, she was ambitious and had a head for business. If she were my grandson, I would feel completely at ease entrusting the Lin Family to her.

What a pity...

Thinking thus, Elder Lin shook his head lightly and said, "Hmm, you've done well. Let's go, notify the others to come over, and we'll hold a meeting."

"Yes." Lin Qingxue agreed and stood up to leave the study with her grandfather.

A few minutes later.

In the conference room of the Lin Family, the family members gathered again upon Elder Lin's summons, waiting for Elder Lin to speak.

At this moment, inside the conference room.

Elder Lin and Lin Qingxue had not yet arrived, and people were already unable to refrain from whispering.

"Why did the elder call us back just less than an hour after we just met?"

"Looking at the situation, it must be that Qingxue has had some results from talking about cooperation with Jinyu Group, right?"

"Probably? I guess she was kicked out by Jinyu Group, and the elder felt embarrassed and wants one of us to step in."

"..."

After a few snickers, Elder Lin and Lin Qingxue entered the conference room together.

Seeing this, everyone immediately fell silent.

Elder Lin took the main seat, then patted the spot next to him and said to Lin Qingxue, "Qingxue, sit here."

Seeing this, People of Lin Family all showed a look of disbelief.

Normally, Elder Lin did not treat Lin Qingxue this kindly; it was usually Lin Zhiping and others who sat by his side.

Even a short while ago when he had just recovered from a serious illness, mistakenly believing that it was the Fountain of Youth Water brought back by Lin Qingxue that did the trick, he had not been so amiable towards her.

Thinking of this, everyone's hearts skipped a beat, secretly sensing that things were not good.

Indeed, after Lin Qingxue obediently sat down next to Elder Lin, the elder swept his glaring gaze over those present and said in a deep voice, "I called you all back for a meeting primarily to notify you of one thing; I think you might have guessed it already..."

Lin Zhiping couldn't help but ask, "Grandfather, could it be... that the cooperation with Jinyu Group has been secured?"

Upon hearing Lin Zhiping's inquiry, Elder Lin's solemn demeanor slightly softened, then he nodded and said, "Yes, exactly. Qingxue took the lead and secured the contract for cooperation with Jinyu Group within ten minutes."

Having said that, he took out a folder and passed the contract brought back by Lin Qingxue to another Lin Family junior sitting beside him for his inspection.

This person was also highly regarded by Elder Lin. His position in the Lin Family was comparable to that of Lin Zhiping.

After accepting the contract, his face became grim, and he started inspecting it with a serious expression. After a few glances, he couldn't help but ask in surprise, "Grandfather, what kind of contract is this? Aren't we at a loss cooperating with Jinyu Group like this?"

"What? What kind of contract is it? Brother, let me see it."

The other Lin Family junior sitting next to him immediately asked anxiously.

Seeing that Elder Lin said nothing, his eyes betrayed a hint of amusement. Thinking he had guessed Elder Lin's intention, thinking that Elder Lin was annoyed with Qingxue, this wasteful woman, and wanted to hold a criticism meeting to allow them to properly reprimand Lin Qingxue, he passed the contract to the person next to him for inspection.

Elder Lin glanced at the person and secretly shook his head, thinking, 'Truly, some wood cannot be carved. Now, I want to see how many in the Lin Family can be truly relied upon.'

Soon enough, everyone had taken turns looking at the contract, most of them exclaimed in shock.

Then they said, such a loss-making contract, no wonder their cousin managed to secure it; if they went, they could do the same.

After Lin Zhiping finished reading it, he pondered for a moment and said, "Quiet."

Then nobody dared to say anymore.

Lin Zhiping said, "This contract seems to offer us no benefits, but why haven't you considered that if the contract were fair, why would Jinyu Group cooperate with a group like ours and not seek out the Su Family, the Lv Family, or the Ning Family?"

Upon hearing this, everyone immediately showed some reflection on their faces.

Lin Zhiping said, "Although we may lose money now in cooperating with them, once our cooperation with Jinyu Group stabilizes, won't others who wish to ingratiate themselves with us bring in endless wealth?"

Chapter 385: An Unexpected Change

The people listened to Lin Zhiping and, upon further reflection, felt he made a lot of sense.

After all, Jinyu Group was no ordinary company. Being able to negotiate an exclusive contract with them in Jinling was of tremendous significance. Even if they suffered a loss now, they would be able to make it back in the future.

Instantly, the way people looked at Lin Qingxue shifted from mockery to envy and jealousy.

This girl must be incredibly lucky. Just recently, she had fortuitously saved Elder Lin's life, and now she had even secured a contract that everyone else had failed to obtain. Were they all destined to be outshone by this girl?!

While everyone envied Lin Qingxue, Lin Zhiping reviewed the contract several times and suddenly spoke up, "However, even with such a stringent, concessional contract, it still doesn't seem easy to obtain. Is this contract really from Jinyu Group? Or did you... forge it yourself?"

Lin Zhiping voiced his doubts, suspecting that Lin Qingxue had never obtained a contract from Jinyu Group at all but had forged one just to steal the credit and win their grandfather's favor.

Also, because of the contract's severity, she could use it as an opportunity to embezzle a considerable amount of money from the Lin Family. By the time they prepared to ride the coattails of Jinyu Group, she could then claim that the cooperation with Jinyu Group had fallen through...

Lin Zhiping harbored such suspicions because he himself had entertained similar thoughts before, but he felt Elder Lin was not so senile to be fooled so easily, fearing trouble, so he ultimately suppressed those ideas.

"Exactly, Brother Ping is right; even if this contract isn't very favourable to us, it's still an exclusive deal with Jinyu Group. Even big families like the Su Family probably couldn't get it, so how could Qingxue manage it?"

"Right, Lin Qingxue, just confess now. If you really forged it, it's still not too late to come clean. Otherwise, once you've embezzled the money, things will get much more complicated."

"..."

Upon hearing Lin Zhiping's doubts, everyone suddenly realized he was making sense and joined in pressuring Lin Qingxue with aggressive questions, their words filled with malice.

Lin Qingxue, hearing the doubts, turned pale, pressed her lips together, and said, "How could I possibly forge it? What would I gain by doing that? Do you all really think Grandfather is that senile? That I could fool him with a fake contract?"

Upon saying this, Elder Lin also nodded and added, "Yes, I just checked the official website of Jinyu Group. The contract is authentic. With this, we will have an involvement in all of Jinyu Group's herbal supply and sales in Jinling."

Boom!

The Elder's confirmation landed like a calm drop of water into hot oil, causing an immediate uproar in the meeting room.

"Did she really secure the cooperation with Jinyu Group?"

"My heavens! Does this mean that our Lin Family will flourish from now on?"

"..."

The bunch of Lin Family members, who had been merely getting by, suddenly became visibly excited, feeling extremely overjoyed.

If before they had feared Lin Qingxue gaining a larger share of the family fortune when she saved Elder Lin, and had thus grouped together to questionable ends, now, even though Lin Qingxue had once again accomplished a great feat, at least they would also benefit, and they naturally felt elated as well.

Although there was still envy and jealousy towards Lin Qingxue, joy and excitement prevailed.

Lin Zhiping had not expected the contract to be real, and his expression remained unchanged, but inwardly, he seethed with jealousy towards this annoying girl.

Damn it, why is this girl so lucky, able to save Grandfather and secure an exclusive partnership with Jinyu Group? Why can't I do it?!

"Quiet down!"

At this moment, Elder Lin frowned, displeased with the chaotic scene, and spoke up to make everyone quiet.

Once Elder Lin had spoken, no matter how agitated everyone was, they had to quickly suppress their emotions.

Seeing everyone quiet down, Elder Lin slightly nodded, pleased with their reaction, and then, looking meaningfully at Lin Zhiping, he turned his head towards Lin Qingxue, whose complexion wasn't too

good, and said, "Qingxue, come and tell everyone about the process, so they remember how to handle matters in the future!"

"Yes!"

Lin Qingxue suppressed the annoyance of being groundlessly accused of falsification, took a deep breath to adjust her mood, and then began to recount her experience of securing the contract at Jinyu Group.

When Lin Zhiping heard Lin Qingxue mention that Lin Qiaoxia had apologized as soon as she came in for standing someone up before, he was intrigued, guessed something, but did not interrupt Lin Qingxue's narration.

Because he knew, Grandfather disliked it when someone interrupted others at times like these.

And when Lin Qingxue finished explaining, while others looked contemplative, murmuring about sincerity breaking through stone...

Lin Zhiping finally spoke, "Cousin just said, the moment you sat in the reception room, President Lin came in and first apologized to you for standing someone up the other day?"

"Huh?" Lin Qingxue turned her head to look at Lin Zhiping, calmly responded, "Yes, what about it?"

After receiving an affirmative answer from Lin Qingxue, Lin Zhiping's expression remained unchanged, but his tone turned colder as he said, "To be honest, the person who was stood up by President Lin of Jinyu Group some time ago was me..."

"Oh? Is that so?" Elder Lin's eyes lit up upon hearing Lin Zhiping's words, and he hurriedly asked.

Meanwhile, Lin Qingxue's face turned even paler.

"Yes, Grandfather," Lin Zhiping nodded and said, "You can ask Zhiyuan and Zhisheng, I told them about it at the time."

Speaking of which, as if worried Grandfather wouldn't believe him, Lin Zhiping took out his phone and showed the chat records to Elder Lin.

Elder Lin took the phone, looked through their chat history, where Lin Zhiping had indeed ranted that day about Lin Qiaoxia, saying she was arrogant, didn't consider him important, and looked down on people... among other things.

After viewing it, Elder Lin returned the phone to Lin Zhiping, looked at him meaningfully, and said, "What you're suggesting, Zhiping, is..."

Lin Zhiping glanced at Lin Qingxue, his eyes playful, and whispered, "What I mean is, securing this contract was actually related to me too, because a while ago President Lin left me hanging all day; she felt guilty about it, so initially, she didn't want to partner with our Lin Family. But feeling sorry for me, she hesitated for a while before agreeing to the collaboration."

The people who usually got along well with Lin Zhiping, hearing this, not wanting to be dominated by Lin Qingxue, chimed in, "Right, I think so too. Today's contract negotiation at Jinyu Group, if it were any of us, we could have negotiated it too."

"That's right, the initial hesitation by President Lin to decline the collaboration probably stemmed from wanting to work with Brother Ping, looking up to him, and then fearing to leave a bad impression, she reluctantly agreed, and signed the contract with Qingxue."

"I think so too, today if any of us from the Lin Family had gone, as long as they didn't leave dejectedly right from the start, they would have been able to secure the deal. If it had been Brother Ping going, perhaps from the beginning, President Lin would have wanted to sign the contract, and probably the terms wouldn't have been so stringent, but rather much more favorable to our Lin Family..."

Chapter 386:

Elder Lin, after hearing Lin Zhiping's words and the agreement from the people around him, felt... as if there was some logic to it.

His grandson was so handsome and carried himself with such poise that it was entirely normal for the head of Jinyu Group's Jinling Branch to take an interest in him.

And if President Lin hadn't taken a liking to Zhiping, how could she have started her conversation with Qingxue, that girl, by apologizing?

Upon reflecting for a moment, Elder Lin glanced at the pale-faced Lin Qingxue, who was tightly pursing her lips next to him, and hesitantly spoke, "Then it looks like..."

Lin Qingxue knew what her grandfather wanted to say; she guessed that he, with his preference for boys over girls, was considering going back on his word, nullifying his promise made today and no longer honoring it...

And she would also lose any eligibility to control the Lin Group.

Not being able to control the Lin Group didn't bother Lin Qingxue much, but now, with a debt owed to Mu Jinyu, she had to seize this opportunity with the Lin Group to potentially earn over five hundred million within a few years to repay Mu Jinyu.

Therefore, Lin Qingxue had to fight for it!

Lin Qingxue promptly interjected before her grandfather could finish, "Grandfather, while that may be the case, who knows if it's true or false? Regardless, the collaboration with Jinyu Group was negotiated by me. Don't tell me you're planning to go back on your word?"

With that statement, she forced the announcement Elder Lin had yet to voice back down his throat, unable to express it directly.

His face turned somewhat unsightly.

Because the usually obedient Lin Qingxue dared to interrupt his words and even challenged him, it was a bit too much for Elder Lin, who always had the final say in the Lin Family and whom no one dared to contradict.

And when Lin Zhiping saw Lin Qingxue dare to talk back, he also chimed in, "Who says it's impossible? With my distinguished appearance, is it not normal for President Lin to take a fancy to me?"

As he spoke, he turned to look at the people around him and asked in a stern voice, "If you have a flaw in your aesthetic judgment and think I'm not handsome enough, then ask the brothers and sisters present, am I not handsome enough?"

After Lin Zhiping made his comment, a group of people also echoed in agreement, nodding their heads, saying, "Our cousin is the most handsome, it's totally normal for him to have President Lin of Jinyu Group utterly infatuated."

Lin Qingxue was left speechless by their shamelessness.

Truth be told, she was aware that Lin Zhiping indeed looked quite good, but to say that he had Lin Qiaoxia utterly infatuated...

Lin Qingxue thought the likelihood was really small.

But still, there might be a slim possibility, right?

After all, the branch manager of such a big corporation held a high and mighty position, even if Lin Qiaoxia left them hanging for a day, what need was there for apologies? Yet, curiously enough, the first thing Lin Qiaoxia said when she met her was an apology, and that was truly hard to explain away.

Unless Lin Qiaoxia was just exceedingly courteous and modest.

But that possibility, just like the one of Lin Qiaoxia taking a fancy to Lin Zhiping, was also slim.

Seeing that Lin Qingxue had nothing to say, Lin Zhiping felt smug and sighed, "If I had known that President Lin was so deeply attached to me, always keeping me in her thoughts, I wouldn't have shirked today's task for a little face, letting her continue to pine alone..."

With that, the image of Lin Qiaoxia's beautiful face appeared in Lin Zhiping's mind, and he couldn't help but start daydreaming.

Lin Qiaoxia's figure and face were both exceptional, and he thought she was a suitable match for himself.

And her position was that of the general manager of Jinyu Group's Jinling Branch, although not quite on par with the ladies from the noble families of Jinling's Su Family, Ning Family, or Lv Family, but she still matched him fairly well.

Lin Zhiping thought that if he could secure Lin Qiaoxia for himself, he would be able to enjoy both wealth and beauty, living a life of utter comfort.

The current obstacle, however, was Lin Qingxue, this foolish girl who knew nothing of propriety.

Lin Zhiping shook his head slightly, giving Lin Qingxue a cold glance and said, "So, grandfather, perhaps I should be the one to continue the contact with President Lin of Jinyu Group. If I can secure that, our Lin Family might have hope of developing into a powerful household like the Ning or Su Families..."

Turning the Lin Family into a household like the Su or Ning Families had always been Elder Lin's dream and his vulnerability. Hearing Lin Zhiping's words, Elder Lin immediately widened his eyes.

Seeing this, Lin Zhiping felt pleased and continued to prod, "Grandfather, Qingxue is just a woman after all, sooner or later she will marry and leave. Entrusting her with control of Lin Group could be risky. If she is bewitched and utterly infatuated by someone else and impulsively offers the entire Group as a dowry, wouldn't your hard-built empire become someone else's wedding dress?"

"We can't gamble like this. You're not being inconsistent by not entrusting her with the chairmanship of Lin Group; you're considering the bigger picture!"

Elder Lin's eyes flickered with indecision as he listened to Lin Zhiping's argument.

If it had been just moments before, he would have thought Lin Qingxue incapable of such actions.

But recalling how Lin Qingxue had just talked back to him and pressured him...

He hesitated again.

Girls tend to believe in such nonsense as love. If they are charmed by the sweet nothings of a man, acting on such belief is not impossible.

Wasn't President Lin of Jinyu Group in Jinling also charmed by his grandson, refusing to cooperate with other large families and choosing their Lin Family instead?

Yes, this was an opportunity, a perfect chance for their Lin Family to rise to the ranks of noble families like the Su and Ning Families.

The future of the Lin Family could not be left to chance; Qingxue would have to be put aside, letting Lin Zhiping take the position of chairman of Lin Group to initiate contact with Jinyu Group's management!

The overall situation must take priority!

Thinking this way, Elder Lin finally spoke up, instructing gently, "Zhiping, do not doubt your cousin so readily. It's not likely she will do something that goes against Lin Family's interests... she isn't foolish enough to do that."

Speaking further, he changed his tone and smiled, "However, your points do have merit. Despite President Lin's high status, the fact that she favors you is not impossible, so let's have you continue the contact with President Lin. After all, the contract is already signed, and changing the person in charge is not a big deal. If you make the right bet, then our Lin Family could seize this moment to rise to greatness!"

After finishing his cheerful remarks, Elder Lin turned to look at the expressionless Lin Qingxue and soothed her gently, "Qingxue, don't worry, grandfather won't go back on his word. The achievement of signing the cooperation with Jinyu Group today will not be forgotten by me, and I won't treat you unfairly in the future. Lin Family's wealth will definitely include your share."

Lin Zhiping, seeing his grandfather finally swayed by his coaxing, looked on with a sneer curling at the corner of his mouth.

If Lin Qingxue wanted to compete, then he would make sure she had no chance at all!

"Thank you, grandfather."

Lin Qingxue knew that given her grandfather's preference for males over females, swayed by Lin Zhiping's words like this, no matter what she said, the old man would not entrust Lin Group to her again.

Too disheartened to argue anymore, she gave a low word of thanks.

As she pondered her inability to use Lin Group to earn money to repay Mu Jinyu's debt, Lin Qingxue's eyes dimmed with disappointment, and her heart was filled with despair for the Lin Family.

Chapter 387: Lin Zhiping Visits

Since Lin Qingxue had no objections, Elder Lin nodded in satisfaction and immediately announced the adjournment of the meeting.

After Elder Lin left, Lin Qingxue picked up her bag and also prepared to leave the meeting room.

However, Lin Zhiping stopped her.

"What is it?"

Lin Qingxue stopped in her tracks, looking at her cousin who liked to stir up trouble, and asked in a cold tone.

"Heh," Lin Zhiping chuckled and said, "My dear sister, don't waste your effort. In the end, you will marry out of the Lin Family and become an outsider. The promise Grandfather made yesterday was not for you, but for me!"

"Yes, I know. Is there anything else you wish to instruct, cousin?"

Lin Qingxue listened to Lin Zhiping's mockery, her expression unchanged, she clenched her fists tightly and spoke in a calm voice.

"That's all, just keep to yourself in the future, heh heh..." Seeing that Lin Qingxue had no reaction, Lin Zhiping found it dull and then left the meeting room first.

The rest of the Lin Family's younger generation, though not as openly self-satisfied as Lin Zhiping, mocked Lin Qingxue on the spot, but their looks also carried a mix of pity and ridicule.

They shook their heads slightly, as if mocking Lin Qingxue's overestimation of herself, and they also followed Lin Zhiping out of the meeting room.

After they had all left, Lin Qingxue was in no hurry to leave.

With her eyes reddened, she returned to her original place, then leaned on the wooden table and started to sob softly.

Earlier, in front of everyone, Lin Qingxue had seemed indifferent, but how could she truly be indifferent at heart?

She did not care about the Lin Group or those family properties.

It was just that being repeatedly used and deceived by them was truly distressing.

If Elder Lin had used the Spring of Life given by Mu Jinyu to cure his illness but planned to renege on the debt, Lin Qingxue had no words to say, for she had agreed to it herself.

Thus, she decided to earn money herself to repay Mu Jinyu.

But today's event, originally a promise made by Grandfather in front of everyone, could have been her chance to earn money through the collaboration with Jinyu Group and repay Mu Jinyu. However, because of Lin Zhiping's scheming, she ended up seeming to have ulterior motives.

How could Lin Qingxue not feel immense grievances?

She had always been contributing to the Lin Family...

Yet they kept bullying her.

After crying for a while, Lin Qingxue, with reddened eyes, took out her phone from her pocket and texted Mu Jinyu, telling him that she might be late in repaying him again and asked him not to scold her. She wasn't intentionally deceiving or playing with him...

Mu Jinyu quickly replied to her text, asking what had happened.

Lin Qingxue initially felt that family disgrace should not be aired publicly and did not want to say much.

But under the persistent questioning and intimidation from Mu Jinyu, she eventually spoke up.

Of course, she did not describe the People of Lin Family in ugly terms but tried to portray them in the best light possible.

Jinyu Group.

Seeing the text from Lin Qingxue, Mu Jinyu's lips curled into a cold smirk, saying, "Interesting."

Although Lin Qingxue spoke in various euphemisms, prioritizing the bigger picture, he quickly guessed what had happened in the Lin Family.

He had suspected that this very thing might happen right from the start.

However, Mu Jinyu still had underestimated a bit.

Originally, he thought that the People of the Lin Family were envious after seeing Lin Qingxue making money and paying it back, which is why they started thinking about wresting control from her.

Unexpectedly, as soon as Lin Qingxue returned home and announced this matter, the People of the Lin Family immediately couldn't wait to seize power, and that terrible old man decided to go back on his word.

"How interesting." Mu Jinyu sent Lin Qingxue a comforting text message, then put away his phone and called his secretary to ask Lin Qiaoxia to come over.

Lin Qiaoxia quickly came in and asked, "Young Master Mu, what can I do for you?"

Mu Jinyu instructed, "Do you know who our partner is at the Jinling Branch?"

Lin Qiaoxia, feeling a bit puzzled, as it had just been decided, but wary of asking too much, honestly answered, "It's Ms. Lin Qingxue of the Lin Group."

Mu Jinyu nodded slightly and asked, "Hmm, but if Ms. Lin were to fall ill, and the Lin Family decides to send someone else to take over and work with you, what would you do?"

Lin Qiaoxia, sensing something was off from Mu Jinyu's words, didn't immediately respond. After thinking it over, she cautiously replied, "Then we would wait for Ms. Lin to recover before discussing cooperation again?"

"Mm." Mu Jinyu nodded in satisfaction and said, "Correct, our partner in Jinling is Lin Qingxue, not just any Lin Family, remember that!"

"I have remembered it," Lin Qiaoxia nodded.

Mu Jinyu said, "When the Lin Family sends a new person in charge tomorrow, you know the attitude you should adopt without me having to teach you, right?"

"I understand," upon hearing Mu Jinyu's statement, Lin Qiaoxia realized she didn't need to be polite in rejecting them but could be as harsh as necessary!

"Alright, go handle it," Mu Jinyu waved his hand, signaling that Lin Qiaoxia could leave.

Lin Qiaoxia nodded and then left Mu Jinyu's office.

Su Zijin, sitting nearby, couldn't help but ask, "Son, you didn't just lie to Mom, did you?"

Su Zijin listened to Mu Jinyu's series of instructions and felt increasingly that something wasn't right. If it was just a casual friendship, why go to such lengths?!

Mu Jinyu shook his head and sighed, "Ah, it really doesn't matter. I just simply dislike the Lin Family. It was bad enough that they owed me money, but to think they dare to disgust me with such tactics! Did they really think changing the person in charge after signing a contract would settle everything? I clearly wrote Lin Qingxue's name in the contract, not the Lin Group. I will give them a profound lesson tomorrow."

In the end, he laughed coldly.

Seeing this, Su Zijin didn't ask further, but instead inquired, "Are we going back today then?"

Mu Jinyu shook his head and said, "No, let's have some fun in Jinling first."

Su Zijin glanced at her watch and said, "It's almost 5:00 PM. Let Qiaoxia leave her work for tomorrow; let's go back and have dinner first."

Su Zijin treated girls who were on good terms with Mu Jinyu fairly, regardless of whether they were like Mei Yinxue or had established a relationship with him, she treated all of them equally, like daughters-in-law.

"Mm," Mu Jinyu nodded somewhat reluctantly, then went to call Lin Qiaoxia to tell her not to be busy anymore and to come home for dinner.

Naturally, it was in the new house they had bought in Jinling.

The next day.

A little after eight in the morning.

Lin Zhiping dressed in a fine suit, his hair meticulously groomed, bearing several documents and with a cheerful expression, arrived at Jinyu Group to discuss the upcoming collaboration plan with Lin Qiaoxia and, after that...

where they would go for a meal.

If possible, he also wanted to book a room, hmm...

However, things did not go as planned.

Upon arrival at Jinyu Group, Lin Zhiping did not receive the preferential treatment he had imagined from Jinling's only partner of Jinyu Group, but was instead taken to a reception room and was given cold tea to drink all morning.

Chapter 388: Heartbroken

"Gurgle."

After drinking another cup of tea, Lin Zhiping rubbed his stomach, feeling like he didn't even need lunch anymore.

He was indeed full just from drinking water.

"Huff! This is killing me!"

Lin Zhiping stood up in the empty reception room, pacing agitatedly, feeling terrible.

Even when he had visited Jinyu Group a few days earlier and had been ignored all day, he hadn't felt this bad.

Back then, he considered Jinyu Group a colossus, one the Lin Family couldn't afford to offend, so even if they disregarded him, what could he do about it?

But now, his attitude had changed compared to the previous days; he was here as the only one in Jinling to have formed a partnership with Jinyu Group.

He even planned to have a post-meeting date with Lin Qiaoxia, potentially securing her in one go!

Yet, today's treatment was far worse than his previous visit.

Back then, at least he had managed to see Lin Qiaoxia in the morning.

But now, since entering Jinyu Group, he hadn't even seen Lin Qiaoxia or her secretary.

What's worse, he had drunk so much tea that he needed the restroom—and a few security guards closely followed him, their faces full of suspicion as if they worried he would cause trouble or steal something!

Damn it, is this how you treat your business partners?

After receiving such treatment, Lin Zhiping was naturally fuming.

Initially, he had convinced himself that Lin Qiaoxia was just busy and that she would come to see him as soon as she was free.

But it was already noon, and damn it, if Ms. Lin was busy outside, couldn't someone inform me? Could I go back and return on another day to talk?

What does it mean to keep me hanging like this?

The more Lin Zhiping thought about it, the angrier he got, and eventually, he walked out of the meeting room.

Immediately, a few burly security guards quickly came up and followed right beside him.

Their expressions almost blatantly showed they suspected him of wrongdoing.

Lin Zhiping inhaled deeply and said darkly, "I want to see your President Lin."

One of the guards replied gruffly, "I'm sorry, but President Lin is busy and doesn't have time to see you. If you can't wait, you might as well leave."

Lin Zhiping's eyes darted around as he asked, "Do you provide lunch here?"

"No!"

Lin Zhiping said, "Then I'll go out and buy some takeout. Do you guys want anything?"

"No need, we've just eaten," the guard replied calmly.

Lin Zhiping was almost ready to explode.

Damn it, they had time to eat outside while keeping watch over me, without even asking if I might want something? Just making me drink tea the whole time!

Lin Zhiping's forehead throbbed a few times, then after taking a deep breath, he also felt something was off with Jinyu Group's treatment of the Lin family, so he didn't dare make a scene.

Otherwise, if he were Lin Qiaoxia's boyfriend, and the guards dared treat him this way, he would have fired them all on the spot!

"Then I'll go buy it myself."

Lin Zhiping didn't say much and walked toward the exit.

Several security guards closely followed him for a while and then realized something was wrong.

Because the path he was taking led to the interior of the company, right up to Lin Qiaoxia's office as the general manager.

One of the guards' expressions changed slightly, not knowing whether Lin Zhiping had taken the wrong path or had come deliberately. He immediately stopped, reached out to stop Lin Zhiping, and said, "This isn't the way out..."

Lin Zhiping, having noticed the change in the guard's expression, took a long stride and started running toward the office, quickly reaching the door of Lin Qiaoxia's office.

He knew that if he obediently waited in the reception room for Lin Qiaoxia to receive him, he might wait a week with no hope. He could only resort to this offensive method to see if Lin Qiaoxia was indeed busy inside.

Or perhaps someone was deceiving him, and no one had informed Lin Qiaoxia of his arrival.

After being treated this way, Lin Zhiping still hoped, thinking the latter possibility was plausible.

If it was so, he definitely wanted Lin Qiaoxia to fire them all!

"Bang!"

Lin Zhiping stood at the door, panting, not daring to stop for fear of the guards dragging him away. Under the assistant's shocked expression at the doorway, he kicked open the general manager's office door.

The door was kicked open by Lin Zhiping.

Revealing the scene inside.

Lin Qiaoxia was having lunch and wasn't dealing with anything.

Upon hearing the noise, she looked up toward the door with a slightly surprised expression.

"Huff huff..." Lin Zhiping, gasping for breath, asked as the security guards approached to grab him, "President Lin, if you are here having lunch and not busy, why didn't you come to meet me? If it's about having a meal, I can go out to invite you..."

"President Lin, sorry, it was our negligence. We apologize for disturbing you..."

At that moment, several security guards also caught up and grabbed Lin Zhiping. While he struggled vigorously, they apologized to Lin Qiaoxia and tried to drag Lin Zhiping away.

"It's fine, you guys can go down."

Seeing that Lin Zhiping had come over, Lin Qiaoxia decided not to belittle him any further; it was meaningless. So she said this.

"Yes." The guards acknowledged and glared at Lin Zhiping menacingly, then left.

They knew that Lin Qiaoxia was protected by a skilled female bodyguard, so Lin Zhiping posed no threat to her.

Seeing Lin Qiaoxia let them leave, Lin Zhiping, initially desperate, suddenly felt a surge of intense excitement, and promptly said, "President Lin, I..."

Lin Qiaoxia gestured with her hand and said, "I have things to handle after lunch. Keep it brief. Why are you here today instead of Ms. Lin, who is responsible for our dealings?"

"Uh..." Lin Zhiping had not expected Lin Qiaoxia to open with such a question and immediately felt uneasy, wondering if all his assumptions were wrong.

Not daring to hesitate too long, Lin Zhiping steeled himself and said, "My cousin, she's sick and was afraid of infecting you, so she didn't come over. She sent me to discuss the forthcoming collaboration plans with you. Please have a look..."

Saying this, Lin Zhiping tried to hand over the documents he was holding to Lin Qiaoxia.

Lin Qiaoxia frowned directly, waved her hand without taking the documents from Lin Zhiping, and said impatiently, "Since Ms. Lin is ill, we'll wait until she's recovered. After all, it's her our Jinyu Group agreed to collaborate with, not with your Lin Group..."

"What?!"

Upon hearing this, Lin Zhiping was shocked, and the folder in his hands fell to the ground.

Lin Qiaoxia glanced at him and said flatly, "Don't you understand? Do you think your Lin Family is qualified to collaborate with our Jinyu Group? I agreed to the collaboration only because I had a good first impression of Qingxue. Did you think you could represent her in negotiations with me?"

Lin Qiaoxia's tone left no room for courtesy, shattering Lin Zhiping's heart.

Chapter 389: Lin Zhiping's Thoughts

"How could it be like this..."

Lin Zhiping, holding the partnership proposal he had painstakingly prepared all night, left the Jinyu Tower dejectedly.

He had not anticipated that the truth of the matter would be so harsh.

From the very beginning, President Lin had never favored him, choosing to cooperate with the Lin Group solely because of a newfound friendship with Lin Qingxue...

And they had naively believed that Lin Qiaoxia had taken a liking to him, thus giving the Lin Family an opportunity.

"Could it be that Lin Qiaoxia is a lesbian? Even if that were the case, did she really have to choose Qingxue, that girl? No curves, an average face, why would she prefer her?"

Lin Zhiping could never quite understand.

...

While Lin Zhiping was dealing with a major setback, Mu Jinyu, on the other hand, was having lunch with Lin Qingxue.

"I can't believe you actually came to Jinling. Did you come specifically to comfort me?" Lin Qingxue asked in surprise after they finished eating.

Her disappointment and sorrow from the previous day had vanished.

Mu Jinyu shook her head, "No, I just happened to be in Jinling for business. Seeing you crying so pitifully, I came by to comfort you and have you treat me to a meal."

"Eh, so you just came to scrounge a meal off me?" Lin Qiaoxia felt a bit disappointed, thinking how nice it would have been if Mu Jinyu had just lied smoothly; it would have made her feel much better.

"Go settle the bill," Mu Jinyu instructed softly.

"Oh." Lin Qingxue responded and obediently went to pay the bill.

After all, she owed Mu Jinyu a lot of money and, being a local of Jinling herself, it made sense for her to pay for the meal as they dined together.

After paying the bill.

Mu Jinyu and Lin Qingxue left the restaurant together.

As they walked and talked, Mu Jinyu casually mentioned, "You said yesterday that you needed to delay repaying the money you owe me?"

"Um..." Hearing Mu Jinyu bring up this topic, Lin Qingxue immediately lowered her head, her gaze dropping to her shoetips, she timidly responded, "I'm sorry, I really can't decide on my family's matters..."

Mu Jinyu said indifferently, "Given how your Lin Family treats you, and you can't repay the money you owe me, why don't you start your own company?"

Lin Qingxue said, "I do have my own company, but it's very small and doesn't make much money. I was hoping that with the Jinyu Group willing to cooperate with my Lin Family, and my becoming the chairman of the Lin Group, I would be able to make enough money to repay you, but unfortunately..."

Her tone was full of regret and disappointment.

Mu Jinyu said, "If the Lin Group won't let you handle this anymore, why don't you represent your own small company and reach out to Jinyu Group?"

"Is that possible?" Lin Qingxue turned suddenly to look at Mu Jinyu, a flash of thought sparking in her mind.

"Why not? Do you think your company is too small for Jinyu Group to notice?"

Mu Jinyu looked her in the eye, smiling faintly, "In their eyes, your little company and the Lin Group are no different. The reason you could discuss collaboration with Jinyu Group wasn't because you had the backing of the Lin Group but because of you yourself..."

"So, since you can't represent the Lin Group anymore to continue dealing with Jinyu Group, and you have no say in how they choose to cooperate, why not represent your own company and keep in touch with Jinyu Group? Maybe after your visit, Jinyu Group's involvement in Jinling won't just be with the Lin Group, but they might start collaborating with both your companies..."

As he spoke, he paused for a moment, and Mu Jinyu light-heartedly said, "Or perhaps, what if Jinyu Group gave up collaborating with Lin Group and chose to only work with your small company instead?!"

"This..." Lin Qingxue's eyes sparkled as she listened to Mu Jinyu's words, somewhat intrigued by the idea that it might be a good outcome for her to have a share of it.

However, after thinking it over, Lin Qingxue shook her head timidly and said, "I still feel it's not possible..."

"How would you know it's not possible if you don't try?" Mu Jinyu urged. "When you represented Lin Group yesterday, could you be sure that you'd definitely secure the contract with Jinyu Group smoothly?"

Lin Qingxue shook her head.

Mu Jinyu said, "See, you went because you were carrying the expectations of the Lin Family. Although you were apprehensive, you still had to try. Now, you are bearing the pressure of owing me money. Why don't you dare to go now? Or is it that from the beginning, you never thought about repaying me?"

"No, I will definitely repay you, I'm not planning to default!" Lin Qingxue hurriedly explained upon hearing Mu Jinyu's words, "I'm just afraid that if I do this, they will..."

"They will call you an ingrate?"

Mu Jinyu said softly.

"Yes." Lin Qingxue lowered her head, not daring to meet Mu Jinyu's gaze.

"Then aren't you afraid of being called an ingrate by me?" Mu Jinyu's voice rose slightly.

"I am..." Lin Qingxue's voice trembled, her voice carrying a hint of sobbing.

Suddenly, Mu Jinyu chuckled and said, "Actually, you don't need to be under such pressure, don't worry. They won't call you an ingrate anymore, and I guess they'll even beg you later."

"Huh?" Lin Qingxue looked up at Mu Jinyu, puzzled by his words.

Mu Jinyu stood on the street and gestured towards Lin Zhiping, who was coming out of Jinyu Tower across the street, saying, "Looking at your cousin's face, the situation seems quite tricky. They probably changed the person in charge suddenly, and that must have upset them. So, this is your chance!"

"Ah?" Upon hearing this, Lin Qingxue also turned her astonished gaze following Mu Jinyu's to the disheartened Lin Zhiping.

"Let's go have a look," Mu Jinyu said with a smile.

He didn't mind kicking someone when they were down.

Lin Qingxue didn't want to go, but since Mu Jinyu went, she could only purse her lips and follow him.

Mu Jinyu led Lin Qingxue and leisurely approached Lin Zhiping before finally saying, "Qingxue, I was actually planning to have dinner and then take you to a movie, but since President Lin is looking for you, you should go to him first."

Upon hearing the name "Qingxue," the previously distraught Lin Zhiping suddenly came to his senses, turned his head, and saw Mu Jinyu and Lin Qingxue "passing by."

"Lin Qingxue, what are you doing here?" Lin Zhiping couldn't help but ask. "The follow-up collaboration between Lin Group and Jinyu Group has already been assigned to me. What chaos are you trying to create?!"

Although from Lin Qiaoxia's attitude, Lin Zhiping knew that the entire Lin Family was now demanding Lin Qingxue to represent them and interact with Lin Qiaoxia to benefit from it.

But Lin Zhiping couldn't swallow this slight, so, hearing Mu Jinyu's words and realizing they were unaware of Lin Qiaoxia's strange behavior towards Lin Qingxue, he saw an opportunity to cause trouble!

Finally, when they returned to the Lin Family, he would use the situation to make Lin Qingxue beg him, and then magnanimously hand over the task back to Lin Qingxue.

That way, he wouldn't be scolded by his grandfather, and the foolish girl, Lin Qingxue, would also be grateful to him.

It was indeed killing two birds with one stone!

Chapter 390:

Mu Jinyu, upon hearing Lin Zhiping's words, was about to laugh out of annoyance.

Damn it, he had just been kicked out by Lin Qiaoxia, and yet he had the audacity to say such things.

However, since he was "unacquainted" with Lin Zhiping at the moment, he turned to Lin Qingxue and asked, "Qingxue, who is he?"

"Huh? He's my cousin, Lin Zhiping."

Although Lin Qingxue found it odd that Mu Jinyu had just recognized Lin Zhiping's identity and was now asking her, she nevertheless answered candidly.

"Who are you?!" Lin Zhiping, hearing Mu Jinyu's interjection and after giving him a few glances, didn't recognize him, then turned to Lin Qiaoxia, demanding, "Lin Qingxue, I'm talking to you!"

Mu Jinyu spoke calmly, "Qingxue is here on behalf of her company to cooperate with Jinyu Group. Cousin, shouldn't you be discussing follow-up cooperation with Jinyu Group right now? Why are you out here?"

"How's that possible?" Lin Zhiping's expression shifted drastically upon hearing Mu Jinyu's words, then he said to Lin Qingxue, "How could Jinyu Group possibly cooperate with your plaything of a company?!"

"Why wouldn't they?" Mu Jinyu asked softly, "In their company's eyes, what difference is there between Lin Group and your Qingxue Company?"

Lin Zhiping's voice faltered.

Mu Jinyu then curiously asked, "By the way, Cousin, you didn't say, why did you come out of Jinyu Tower so quickly? Could it be... that you annoyed President Lin so much that she doesn't want to cooperate with the Lin Family anymore?"

These words from Mu Jinyu were like several sharp knives piercing directly into Lin Zhiping's heart, making him feel as if his heart was bleeding, oh so painfully!

Mu Jinyu clicked his tongue and commented, "Then your ability is really lacking. I fear you might get a beating from the old man when you get home. Tsk tsk, Cousin, you take care now."

"Cousin, is what Jinyu saying true?" Lin Qingxue, hearing Mu Jinyu's words and seeing Lin Zhiping's odd reaction, had a thought. Recalling what Mu Jinyu had just told her, she quickly pressed with curiosity.

"How could it be? I... I just..."

Lin Zhiping, looking uncomfortable, tried to find an excuse, to say he wasn't refused by President Lin; he had come out early for some reason, but he couldn't find any suitable excuse on the spot.

Mu Jinyu, however, couldn't be bothered to listen to his tale and pushed Lin Qingxue gently, saying, "Go on then, don't waste time, or else you'll end up like your cousin, driven out by President Lin!"

Lin Zhiping's face darkened like coal at these words.

While Lin Qingxue felt that Mu Jinyu was deliberately teasing Lin Zhiping and that Lin Qiaoxia wasn't actually waiting for her, she still cooperated obediently, calling out, "Then, Young Master Mu, Cousin, I'll go first."

Having said that, she quickly ran towards Jinyu Tower.

Mu Jinyu waved goodbye to her, then started to whistle as he prepared to leave. Seeing Lin Zhiping with a darkened face, clenching his fists, and trembling all over, Mu Jinyu paused in his step.

"Eh, Cousin, have you had lunch yet?" Mu Jinyu asked.

He knew very well that Lin Zhiping must have been filled with tea, as no one in the company would have offered him a grain of rice.

The reason for such a question was merely to taunt him further.

"I... have eaten..." Lin Zhiping managed to force a smile at Mu Jinyu, barely holding himself together.

"You've eaten?" Mu Jinyu said in surprise, "Then why are you still standing here catching the northwest wind? Hehehe..."

Having finished speaking, Mu Jinyu no longer wasted words with Lin Zhiping, laughing lightly as he walked towards Jinyu Tower.

"You... I..."

Lin Zhiping, realizing that Mu Jinyu wasn't expressing concern but rather mocking him, was so angry that he wanted to chase after him and fight. But seeing that Mu Jinyu had already entered Jinyu Tower and not daring to make a scene, he could only sulkily curse a few words before departing.

...

Lin Qingxue quickly came out from Lin Qiaoxia's office, and then ran into Mu Jinyu.

"How did it go? Everything went smoothly?"

Mu Jinyu sat in the lobby outside, sipping on a coffee. Seeing Lin Qingxue looking baffled as she walked out, he asked with a smile.

"Huh?" Lin Qingxue snapped back to reality, nodded slightly, then looked at Mu Jinyu incredulously, and asked, "You are... the big boss of Jinyu Group?"

Actually, when Mu Jinyu had repeatedly assured her that there would be no problem, Lin Qingxue suspected he might be connected to Jinyu Group, but she wasn't sure.

But it was only during the conversation with Lin Qiaoxia that she truly learned Mu Jinyu was indeed the man who had founded the enormous enterprise.

No wonder he didn't seem to care much about the more than five hundred million she owed him, and why yesterday, when she sought his blessing, he actually made Lin Qiaoxia, who had originally been going to reject her, change her mind and agree to her plea for cooperation.

Also no wonder that after she cried to him, her cousin Lin Zhiping came over today and was turned away yet again, while her own small company was able to successfully secure a collaborative opportunity with Jinyu Group.

Thinking of these things, Lin Qingxue felt as if she was in a dream.

"Yes, I mentioned it to you before, but you just didn't believe it," Mu Jinyu said with a light laugh.

"I still find it hard to believe. It's too surreal," Lin Qingxue muttered.

"What's so surreal about it?" Mu Jinyu shook his head slightly and said, "I managed to kill such a huge python, and used some water to cure your grandfather's illness. Aren't those things even more unbelievable?"

"That's true," Lin Qingxue nodded blankly.

Mu Jinyu smiled and said, "Alright, now that you are the spokesperson for my company in Jinling, hurry up and make money. Remember to pay me back."

Lin Qingxue pursed her lips and asked, "You've helped me so much just because... I owe you money?"

"Of course," Mu Jinyu answered without any hesitation.

"I understand," Lin Qingxue said, her expression somewhat downcast.

Mu Jinyu stood up, patted Lin Qingxue's shoulder, and said, "Okay, you should hurry back. I guess those people from the Lin family should be coming to you soon. As for what you're going to do, I'm not going to interfere. Just make sure you earn the money and pay me back quickly."

After saying that, he walked toward an office.

Lin Qingxue turned back and watched Mu Jinyu leave, feeling a bit distressed.

Indeed, she shouldn't have expected too much from the very beginning.

Even Sister Qiaoxia, such a beautiful woman, did not have any intimate relationship with Young Master Mu, so how could someone as plain as herself possibly catch his eye?

Lin Qingxue recalled the moment in the office when she tentatively asked Lin Qiaoxia if she was Mu Jinyu's girlfriend but was outright denied, the shadow that crossed the other's eyes.

Lin Qingxue shook her head slightly, deciding not to dwell on it. It was good enough to work for Mu Jinyu and occasionally see him. She should be content with that.

...

Lin Family Villa.

After Lin Zhiping returned, he was summoned by Elder Lin. With a look of unease, he walked into his grandfather's room.

"Grandfather..."

Lin Zhiping called out to the old man lying in bed.

"Hmm, you're back? How did things go?" Elder Lin sat up and massaged his sore back as he asked.