

R Woman 241

Chapter 241: Unfeigned

Listening to Chu Jin's words, the middle-aged woman felt a shock in her heart, but she maintained a calm facade, "Master Chu, this is my husband, we've been married for nearly 30 years, could there still be a mistake?"

The man in the photo was indeed not her husband, but her brother.

The reason she said so was simply to test whether Master Chu really had some ability.

Chu Jin smiled faintly, then continued, "If you don't believe me, feel free to leave; there's no need to test me here. After all, everyone's time is precious."

Caught out by Chu Jin's direct mention of her intentions, a look of embarrassment flashed across the middle-aged woman's face, "I'm really sorry, Master, I didn't mean to test you, it's just... "

It's just that there are too many swindlers in this world.

She had already encountered quite a few fraudsters.

At times like this, she couldn't help but be extra cautious, lest she be deceived by a highly skilled charlatan.

"It's alright," Chu Jin shook her head gently, her tone light, "I wonder if you believe me now?"

Although her tone was light, it carried a calming sense, refreshing and relieving tiredness. The middle-aged woman felt the weariness in her body slowly ease.

The dark clouds hanging over her heart were also gradually dissipating.

Despite this young girl only appearing to be in her teens, she gave off a sense of maturity that didn't match her actual age. One's first impression of her was extremely comfortable.

"I believe, I believe," the middle-aged woman nodded hurriedly, "Master Chu, you are the first one to see that the person in the photo is related to me as a sibling. How did you figure it out?"

Chu Jin looked at the middle-aged woman and slowly said, "The study of physiognomy is very mysterious and complex, mainly including features such as the five sense organs, three sections, and twelve palaces. Although you and the gentleman in the photo do not share any similar appearance, those who are adept at reading faces can tell that you are siblings, not a couple."

While speaking, Chu Jin quickly shuffled the Tarot cards.

The deck of Tarot cards in her hands constantly changed into various patterns, as if they had their own life, dancing and twisting at her fingertips. Even the middle-aged woman, who was used to seeing all kinds of grand scenes, couldn't help but admire Chu Jin's card handling skills when she saw it.

A teenage girl, playing a set of ordinary cards so skillfully, must have practiced for many years.

"What would you like to know today?" Chu Jin asked next.

Upon hearing this, the middle-aged woman let out a deep sigh, then continued, "Since Master Chu is so skilled, please calculate why I have come."

It was clear that the middle-aged woman had not fully let down her guard against Chu Jin.

In the end, she was somewhat unwilling to believe that a girl in her teens really had any prophetic powers.

She even questioned how a teenage girl would end up reading fortunes on the street.

At that age, one should be sitting in a classroom, enjoying education, yet she was out here striving early in life.

The thought was somewhat saddening.

In the face of the middle-aged woman's skepticism, Chu Jin did not get angry but remained indifferent, slowly uttering a single word, "Okay."

Then she quickly arranged a spread of cards.

This time, she set up the "Golden Triangle Divination Method."

This spread represented—

- 1: The current situation.
- 2: The trouble or problem encountered.
- 3: The impact of the problem on the present or future.
- 4: Whether the current solution to the problem has been properly resolved.

Chu Jin glanced at the middle-aged woman, then continued, "Now, please clear your mind of any random thoughts, and then draw four cards in turn."

"Draw a card?" The middle-aged woman frowned in confusion, then pointed at the Tarot cards on the table, "Master, are you referring to these?"

Chu Jin nodded slightly, "Yes, that's right."

It was obvious that the middle-aged woman was seeing Tarot cards for the first time; she had thought these cards were merely the young girl's toys, never expecting that they would be her divining tools.

Despite her confusion, the middle-aged woman still carefully drew the first card.

The first card, upright: the Queen.

The Queen is the fourth card of the Major Arcana.

On the card, the dignified and noble queen sits on a red throne, the comfortable cushion and her luxurious attire undoubtedly signaling her wealth and authority.

In her left hand, the queen holds aloft a vibrant Magic Wand. Beneath the queen's Magic Wand, the golden wheat field at her feet and the dense forest in the distance all present a scene brimming with vitality.

Below the queen's red seat, there's also a red heart-shaped mark, carved with the symbol of Venus, signifying the nature of maternal love.

"You come from a family of wealth and official rank, with a harmonious and happy family of four. In your husband's eyes, you are a virtuous wife, in your children's eyes, you are a loving mother, and in the eyes of others, you are a decisive leader, and you are also a person with a great sense of responsibility,"

Listening to Chu Jin's words, a ripple passed through the depths of the middle-aged woman's eyes, then she calmly turned over the second card.

Reversed: Strength.

On the card, the goddess of Strength gazes with a compassionate look, with her seemingly delicate hands trying to close the mouth of a lion, yet the lion lifts its head to look at her. Clearly, the goddess of Strength cannot suppress the lion's, the king of beasts', wild nature. The goddess's eyes are calm and compassionate, as if she sympathizes with the lion's wildness yet also feels distressed.

One card, two meanings, one suffering, one sorrow.

Distress, compassion.

"Unfortunately, life has its hardships and sorrows, as well as joys and angers. Even a harmonious and happy family cannot withstand the blow of sudden misfortunes. Two months ago, your youngest daughter suffered from hysteria after returning from a trip. Initially, it was just minor sleep deprivation, confused consciousness, and nervous exhaustion, but then it slowly turned into unrecognition of relatives and progressively weakened physique. By now, she must be bedridden, right?"

The soothing voice echoed in her ears, with a magical power to calm the heart. The middle-aged woman's once tumultuous emotions were quietly suppressed.

Her fingers trembling, the middle-aged woman slowly drew the third card

Upright: the Grim Reaper!

On the card, the Grim Reaper sits high atop a white horse, looking down upon the holy spirits below, holding aloft a black flag emblazoned with the Rose Cross order totem.

Some say that this totem represents the process of rebirth after death.

Others say that this totem corresponds with Mars, symbolizing the undying vitality of life.

Beneath the horse of the Grim Reaper are figures representing the king, the clergy, the woman, and the child, four characters representing different social classes.

Four individuals, with four different mindsets. Whether resistant, reverent, fearful or ignorant, they all illustrate the same truth.

No matter rich or poor, no matter the gender or age, in the face of death, all is an unstoppable natural phenomenon.

Unavoidable, and there's no need to avoid.

Looking at this card, Chu Jin frowned slightly, "Hmm... Upright, the Grim Reaper."

"The Grim Reaper?" Upon hearing this, the middle-aged woman's face showed alarm, and she quickly looked up at Chu Jin, "Master, are you saying that my daughter is beyond help?"

Even though she didn't understand Tarot cards, she knew what the Grim Reaper meant.

With the arrival of the Grim Reaper, was there still hope for her daughter...?

"It's not necessarily beyond help," Chu Jin gently shook her head, then asked, "Have you sought out many masters in this period to look at your daughter?"

"Yes, Master Chu," the eyes of the middle-aged woman reddened in an instant, and tears surged forth, "but they were all powerless, saying that my daughter was entwined by evil spirits, and that she wouldn't live to see the next month."

Chu Jin handed a tissue to the middle-aged woman, "Don't be sad yet, nothing is set in stone at the moment, maybe there will be a twist in the story? Draw the last card now."

The middle-aged woman took the tissue from Chu Jin, wiped her eyes hastily, and then drew the third card.

Upright: the Two of Swords.

On the card, a woman in a light gray robe sits on a stone bench, her back to the tumultuous, reef-riddled sea. She is blindfolded, with her arms crossed and holding swords immobile in front of her chest, while a crescent moon hangs high in the sky.

The water behind the woman represents emotions, and not only does she turn her back on her emotions, but she is also blindfolded, depicting utter confusion and evasion. It's like plugging one's ears while stealing a bell; in fact, the vast sea behind her and the moon in the sky have already fully revealed the emotions in her heart.

Chapter 242: Reversing Heaven's Will, The Maiden of Destiny

And she chose to blindfold herself, refusing to look, refusing to think, in an attempt to numb herself, desperately trying to make herself forget the past.

"You've traveled here specially for the sake of your daughter. The tribulations she's experiencing are merely the cycles of cause and effect, reaping the consequences of actions sown. The entity entangled with Lady Ling carries such heavy resentment and malevolence," Chu Jin said, shaking her head gently, "I'm afraid Lady Ling will have a tough time escaping this predicament."

In this world, there's no hate without reason, nor love without cause.

The daughter of this middle-aged woman already harbored guilt within her heart, which is why she got lost in illusions.

"Resentment?" The middle-aged woman's face showed a surprised expression, "Master Chu, are you mistaken, or could the entity latching onto my daughter have mistaken her for someone else? My daughter has always been obedient and sensible from a young age, kind-hearted. How could she attract such entities?"

Upon hearing this, Chu Jin glanced at the four cards revealed and continued, "As the saying goes, you can't see what's in a person's heart. I can understand your feelings as a mother right now. After all, every child is innocent and pure in their mother's eyes. I don't know what the entity has experienced with your daughter, but the malevolence on these four cards is incredibly dense. It has a simple goal, to make your daughter pay with her life, and will not rest until it achieves this."

The middle-aged woman's complexion turned pale upon hearing these words, collapsing onto the stool.

Her whole body felt ice-cold.

Her daughter was only 25 years old, and had a boyfriend two years ago. It was already time to discuss marriage.

But just as they set the wedding date, this misfortune occurred.

"Master!" The middle-aged woman fell to her knees with a thump in front of Chu Jin, her voice raising in a crying tone, "Master, I beg of you, you must save my daughter. She's still so young, she's not even married yet, she can't have anything happen to her now. Master, I'm willing to trade my life for my daughter's..."

Poor are the hearts of all parents under heaven.

No matter what their child becomes, in the parents' eyes, she is always that innocent and kindhearted child.

A parent's love is the most magnificent and selfless love in this world.

Parents never seek repayment from their children.

Chu Jin sighed softly, quickly assisting the middle-aged woman to sit on the chair, "Please don't be like this, let's talk properly. Actually, there's still a glimmer of hope for your daughter."

At those words, a spark of hope quickly flickered in the darkness of the middle-aged woman's eyes. She promptly looked up at Chu Jin, "Master, do you have a way to save my daughter?"

"Whether your daughter can be saved depends largely on her, and whether that entity is willing to let go of the past and its resentments. I can only play an auxiliary role," Chu Jin spoke slowly.

"Master Chu," the middle-aged woman swallowed hard, then lowered her voice, "that entity you mentioned, what exactly is it? Is it truly an evil spirit?"

She had always been a non-believer, and if anyone had talked to her about ghosts and spirits before, she would have scoffed.

But not anymore.

In the span of these two short months, too many inexplicable events had occurred around her.

Chu Jin raised her eyebrows slightly, "I don't know exactly what it is right now, but combining the messages from the cards, this entity seems to be related to 'water.' It comes from the depths of the water, carrying an immensely heavy grievance. By the way, haven't you noticed some kind of anomaly at home, like the dry ground suddenly becoming damp..."

As she listened to Chu Jin's words, the middle-aged woman's expression gradually became more somber as she recalled the changes in her home over these two months.

More than once, she had seen a long trail of watermarks in the living room, which didn't look like they had been spilled, but rather resembled elongated tracks left by something wet and heavy dragged across. These watermarks stretched from the living room, up the wooden staircase to the second floor, and disappeared at her daughter's bedroom door.

Additionally, in her daughter's bathroom, she would hear the sound of water droplets in the middle of the night, elusive, as if very far away yet also very close, which was utterly bizarre.

Upon deeper reflection, it was truly horrifying.

The middle-aged woman took a deep breath, trying her best to calm herself, "Master Chu, we mustn't delay. Please hurry and come with me to my house to see my daughter; only you can save her now."

The middle-aged woman had now placed her full trust in Chu Jin.

At the same time, a system notification chimed in her mind, [Ding! You have gained 5% Faith Value!]

"It's too late today, we're out of time. How about this, come back here at two o'clock tomorrow afternoon, and then I'll go with you to see your daughter," Chu Jin said while taking out a piece of yellow talisman paper and a brush from the drawer.

The brush soaked in cinnabar, Chu Jin narrowed her eyes as she gathered her energy and completed the talisman in one stroke.

A calming talisman was thus drawn.

Chu Jin handed the talisman paper to the middle-aged woman, "Take this talisman, burn it to ash, and have Lady Ling drink it. This will allow her to temporarily disengage from the illusions. Then, buy some incense sticks and joss paper, and go burn them near a river facing the southwest direction."

The middle-aged woman accepted the talisman paper from Chu Jin with great solemnity, "Okay, I understand, thank you, Master Chu, then I will come here tomorrow afternoon at two o'clock to pick you up."

Chu Jin nodded, "That is fine."

The English speech tomorrow starts at 10:30 AM and ends at 12:30 PM, after which there are no more classes, and the next day is a Saturday.

"Master Chu, should I pay you a deposit first?" the middle-aged woman continued to ask.

Chu Jin smiled slightly, "There is no need for now, we can settle the payment in full after the task is completed."

"All right," the middle-aged woman nodded slightly, "Then I will take my leave now, goodbye Master Chu."

"Goodbye."

The figure of the middle-aged woman grew more distant, until at a certain intersection, she got into a black Land Rover.

The license plate at the rear was particularly striking, J000000.

It was clearly a vehicle that came from the military district compound.

**

Underworld.

At this moment, the King of Hades is sitting in an ancient, cold, and mysterious ice palace filled with a bone-chilling coldness.

Everything inside the palace is sculpted from ice, emitting a penetrating chill, presenting a somewhat eerie sight.

In front of him, on an ice table, lies the Five Elements Jade Plate.

The shape of the jade plate is rather strange; it appears circular when looked at from the front, arc-shaped from the side, and presents different shapes from different angles.

There are five pointers on the jade plate, each representing metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. Once pointing in five different directions, the pointers are now all converged, indicating the same direction. The King of Hades picked up the jade plate, staring intensely at the pointers, with a complex expression in his eyes.

It was like he faced some insurmountable problem.

Just then, a knock sounded from outside the door.

The King of Hades raised his head and issued an authoritative command, "Come in."

"Father King, you summoned me," Gan Mingxie entered lightly on his feet.

The King of Hades glanced at Gan Mingxie, then put the jade plate back on the ice table with a heavy voice, "Ming'er, this... What do you make of it?"

Gan Mingxie looked at the jade plate, his face instantly changed, "Is this? Defying fate!"

With Gan Mingxie's revelation of the secret, a slight, relieved smile appeared on the frozen corners of the King Hades' mouth, "No! This is not defying fate, this is the phoenix's return from the ashes! Our master shall return, and the unity of the three realms is imminent!"

The mention of the master's return brought a reverent look to the eyes of the King of Hades.

His tone was also full of excitement.

"Unite the three realms?" Gan Mingxie narrowed his eyes slightly, his eagle-like gaze showing shock, "Father King, are you joking?"

Given the current situation, the idea of uniting the three realms seemed like an utter fantasy.

All three realms seek to rule supreme; any disturbance in the status quo would only end in mutual destruction.

The forces of the three parties are balanced, none able to dominate the others.

Only a coalition of two realms could change that.

But which of the two realms would be willing to bow and concede?

"Of course, I am not joking," responded the King Hades with utmost seriousness, with no trace of jest, "Now that the Heavenly appointed girl has appeared, the unification of the three realms is within reach!"

Hearing this, Gan Mingxie straightened up, "The Heavenly appointed girl has appeared? Father King, how did you come to know this?"

"A rare wonder appeared in the sky, the Dancing Dragon and Phoenix, a scene of auspiciousness not seen in hundreds of years and a sign of the ancient empress reincarnation," continued the King of Hades, "Your top priority now is to find the Heavenly appointed girl. Before the other two realms take notice, we must act swiftly and secure her allegiance to our cause."

Chapter 243: Tiger's Watchful Eyes

Gan Mingxie slightly furrowed his brow, voicing the doubt in his heart, "Father King, but with such a vast sea of people, how can we be certain who the fated female is?"

The King of Hades sipped his tea and said with a grave face, "She who can play the ancient Konghou, lift the seal, and summon the Dancing Dragon and Phoenix is the fated female."

To play the ancient Konghou?

Gan Mingxie was startled, the image of that girl playing the Konghou flashed before his eyes.

If it was just as the King of Hades said, wouldn't Chu Jin be the fated female?

With this thought, Gan Mingxie abruptly looked up, "Father King, are you saying that the person who can play the ancient Konghou and conjure the spectacle of the Dancing Dragon and Phoenix is the fated female?"

The King of Hades nodded slightly, "Naturally, it's true," then he narrowed his eyes, looking at Gan Mingxie, "Ming'er, from what you're saying, do you know who is the master of the ancient Konghou?"

"This ancient Konghou previously belonged to Zheng Chuyi, the number one beauty of the Superpower World, but, just last night, this Konghou acknowledged a commoner from the secular world as its master."

Gan Mingxie's voice was calm, but his heart was already shaken to its core.

He never expected that Chu Jin would be the fated female who could unite the Three Realms.

"So you're saying," the King of Hades' eyes narrowed, a cold light flashing within, "it was that commoner who summoned the Dancing Dragon and Phoenix?"

"Yes," Gan Mingxie nodded, "I witnessed with my own eyes that commoner conjuring the spectacle of the Dancing Dragon and Phoenix and the ancient Konghou accepting a master on the spot. Besides her, there was not a second person who could play the Konghou, not even Zheng Chuyi, who possesses the Bloodline of Fire Bathing, could make it tremble the slightest bit!"

"A commoner has such great capability?" Suspicion filled the depths of the King of Hades' eyes. Having followed the Empress for many years, he knew the Empress' bloodline was nobler than ordinary people. Even if it were the Empress' reincarnation, she couldn't possibly be just a simple commoner, "Are you certain it was with your own eyes?"

Gan Mingxie nodded with some certainty, "I am sure," he said, then added, "Father King, how can you be so certain that the person who summoned the Dancing Dragon and Phoenix is the fated female?"

Upon hearing this, the King of Hades set down his teacup, looked towards the east, and in his pitch-black eyes, an unfathomable depth, "When the spectacle occurs, dragons and phoenixes dance, the phoenix reigns over the world, uniting the Three Realms. This is the third legend related to the ancient Konghou and also an age-old prophecy long circulated among the Three Realms."

The King of Hades continued.

"However, those who can play the Konghou are all from the Bloodline of Fire Bathing. A common person has limited Spiritual Power, and now, the Spiritual Energy in the secular world is extremely sparse; it's impossible for someone with the Bloodline of Fire Bathing to exist. Since you said that the ancient

Konghou was previously Zheng Chuyi's possession, perhaps the reason this commoner could play the Konghou is due to the instrument being in close contact with Zheng Chuyi, tainted with her Spiritual Energy by accident, allowing the commoner to play it unwittingly."

Gan Mingxie shook his head with a somewhat heavy expression, "Father King, things might not be as simple as you imagine. If the ancient Konghou allowed that commoner to play it because of Zheng Chuyi, then why in the end could even Zheng Chuyi not play it?"

At the time, Gan Mingxie was present, witnessing the spectacle and also the ancient Konghou accepting a master.

The King of Hades narrowed his eyes and continued, "Since you've seen the person who can play the Konghou, did you discover any aura about her that was unusual compared to ordinary people?"

"No," this was exactly what puzzled Gan Mingxie. Clearly, she could play the Konghou, surpassing the masters of the Superpower World, yet the aura lingering around her was no different from ordinary people's, "She is indeed just an ordinary person."

Hearing this.

The corner of the King of Hades' mouth curled into a disdainful smile, he stated with utter conviction, "Then it's even more impossible. The ancient Konghou, being the Empress' beloved object, has long been imbued with the Empress' auspicious energy and the fate of the nation, so it's quite proud. A common mortal couldn't possibly play it—there must be something else going on here. After all, with so many people eyeing the fated female, it could very well be a disguise technique used by Mo Zhixuan."

The most important point is, whoever gains the fated female can unite the Three Realms.

At this time, all forces are watching eagerly.

They all want to monopolize the fated female.

The moment he sensed the fated female had appeared in the mortal world, other Elders from the two realms could naturally do so as well.

Gan Mingxie looked up at the King of Hades with a somewhat deep voice, "Does that mean, the one who played the Konghou is someone else?"

The King of Hades nodded slightly, "Correct, but during such times, we can't be careless. How about this, you head to the secular world first, investigate that commoner's background. If she truly is the fated female, then her life story must be extraordinarily tortuous."

"Understood, Father King. I will take care of it now." As he finished speaking, Gan Mingxie turned to leave.

"Wait." The King of Hades seemed to remember something and called out Gan Mingxie's retreating figure.

Gan Mingxie turned around, speaking very respectfully, "Father King, do you have other commands?"

The King of Hades raised his hand and stroked his beard, "Pay more attention to the movements of the Superpower World these next few days. Mo Zhixuan is, after all, from the Superpower World, so they will certainly know who the true fated female is."

Gan Mingxie took the Liuxi mirror, "Very well, Father, I understand."

The King of Hades nodded, "Hmm, go on."

**

Crossroads.

The sky was getting darker by the moment, the dim streetlights slowly coming to life. It was already past 7 o'clock in the evening, and the once bustling intersection was now becoming less and less crowded.

Chu Jin was packing up the Tarot cards on the table, preparing to close up shop for the day.

"Are you a fortune teller?"

Just then, a pleasant childish voice rang through the air.

Chu Jin looked up and saw a young girl in a light purple dress approaching her, fair-skinned and beautiful, gazing at her with a smile.

"Yes," Chu Jin nodded slightly, "please take a seat."

The girl sat down casually, her beautiful eyes glimmering with curiosity, "Does this actually work? In the past, didn't old men tell fortunes using copper coins? How come, in just a few years I haven't been back, fortune telling has changed to using cards?"

Speaking of which, I even know an elder who can predict the world's affairs, but he uses turtle shells. It's my first time encountering card divination like this," the girl was clearly talkative and overly familiar, chatting away as she casually drew a Tarot card and began playing with it in her hand.

Chu Jin explained, "These are called Tarot cards, it's a form of divination from the West, but its accuracy is no less than the ancient Eastern methods. So, would you like to give it a try?"

"Of course," the girl nodded her head. She wouldn't easily pass up on encountering such an amusing thing.

Chu Jin smiled faintly, the cards shuffled quickly, "What question would you like to ask?"

The girl winked playfully at Chu Jin, "Can you answer any question I ask, pretty sister?"

This was the first time she had come across such a pretty sister in the secular world.

Her temperament and looks were almost on par with the most beautiful woman in the Superpower World.

She had always had an inexplicable fondness for beautiful people, of course, except for that proud, peacock-like number one beauty.

Chu Jin answered with a light smile, "Of course."

"Hmm," the girl tilted her head and thought for a moment, "Then I'd like to ask two questions. First, where do I come from? Second, will I end up with the person I like?"

The first question was a test. If this pretty sister had any real ability, she would certainly be able to figure it out, and then hopefully if she could end up with him.

Even the Great Witch found it difficult to make anything of her marriage prospects, so she guessed this pretty sister would likely struggle to come up with anything.

But since the sister was so pretty, it didn't matter if she couldn't figure it out.

"Okay." Chu Jin nodded gently.

Then she spread out the Tarot cards and arranged a Universal-type spread.

"Please draw two cards."

"Okay," the girl rubbed her hands together as if she had discovered a new world and then drew the first card.

Upright: Judgement.

On the card, an angel blew a trumpet, spreading the gospel of heaven. With the soul-stirring sound of the trumpet, the still-sleeping souls stepped out of their own inner graves one by one, standing under the wings of the angel with grateful hearts, attentively listening to the angel's gospel.

Souls, graves, coffins, and the iceberg behind were all the background of this card.

Looking at the card, Chu Jin furrowed her brows slightly before slowly speaking, "You come from the Netherworld Capital, the youngest daughter in your family, usually the apple of your father's and older brother's eyes."

Chapter 244: Shen Lingtian Comes to Find

In the Netherworld Capital, also known as the Ghost City, it is located in the southwest part of China, more than nineteen hundred kilometers away from Capital City.

"Wow, miss, you're so amazing," the young girl exclaimed, eyes sparkling, "You're totally right, I am indeed from the Netherworld Capital."

It was supposed to be just for fun, but to her surprise, there really was such a talented fortune-teller in the mundane world.

This level of divination could almost catch up with the Great Witch of her family.

Eagerly, the young girl flipped over the second card and said, "Miss, please help me see if I will end up with the person I like."

Chu Jin glanced at the card.

Upright: Devil.

The Devil card reflected off the sixth card of the Major Arcana, 'The Lovers.' It depicted the transformation from an angel into a devil, where romantic love degenerated into a sinking into lust. At this point, Adam and Eve, addicted to desire, could no longer hear the blessings of angels, only the curses of the Devil.

A heavy yoke was placed around the necks of Adam and Eve, who were firmly chained at the feet of the Devil, imprisoned and unable to escape.

Chu Jin looked at the card and shook her head gently, "Unfortunately, the person you like does not like you back, so in the end, you cannot be together."

"What?" The young girl's originally beaming face instantly lost its color, she looked a bit pale, and her voice was very downcast, "Miss, you mean, no matter what, I can't be with him?"

Chu Jin nodded gently, "Theoretically, that's the case, but you don't need to worry. Happiness is something you fight for yourself. Maybe, everything is not over yet, and there could be a turnaround."

Upon hearing this, the young girl's previously dejected mood instantly turned joyous again, "Okay, I get your point, I will definitely try my best, thank you."

At the same time, a notification sound from the system echoed in her mind, [Ding! 5% Faith Value harvested.]

Chu Jin slightly curved her lips, "You're welcome, this is what I should do."

"Miss, my name is Gan Yuying, I'm very happy to meet you." Gan Yuying reached out her hand to Chu Jin in a friendly manner.

Chu Jin also reached out and gave a light shake, "Hello, I am Chu Jin."

"Miss, can we become friends then?" Gan Yuying looked eagerly at Chu Jin.

Chu Jin smiled slightly, "Of course, we can."

Excited, Gan Yuying took Chu Jin's hand, "That's really great, but I have to go now, I have some things to take care of. Once I'm done, I'll definitely come back here to find you."

"Alright."

After seeing off Gan Yuying, Chu Jin also packed up her stall and prepared to leave.

As she just reached the road, a white Audi stopped at the curb with a swoosh.

Chu Jin looked up in puzzlement, just as the car window rolled down to reveal a handsome face with an air of erudition.

His complexion was a bit pale, and his brows and eyes were unable to hide the fatigue.

"Hello, Miss Chu, long time no see."

It was him.

—Shen Lingtian.

Encountering Shen Lingtian again, Chu Jin still struggled to suppress the resentment in her heart.

But thinking of the trap she had set, her lips still curled into a slight smile, her enticing peach blossom eyes narrowed into crescents, her clear eyes brimming with laughter, "Mr. Shen."

Shen Lingtian adjusted his glasses and said, "Miss Chu, it's inconvenient to park here, please get in the car and then we can talk."

"Alright." Chu Jin opened the door and sat in the back seat.

After she got into the car, Shen Lingtian spoke, "Miss Chu, actually I've come to seek your assistance with a matter."

Since the last time he parted with Chu Jin, Shen Lingtian had encountered some strange things after returning home.

Moreover, the words Chu Jin had said to him at the airport had come true.

There had been a major riot at the airport that day, with many casualties.

He was very grateful that he had heeded Chu Jin's advice that day and changed his mind at the last moment, avoiding heading south—otherwise, he might have met with disaster.

Chu Jin smiled and said, "Mr. Shen, just speak freely, no need to be polite with me."

"It might be hard for Miss Chu to believe this, but I've always been an atheist. However, some recent events have left me unable to sleep or eat, and I'm extremely puzzled..."

Shen Lingtian paused, then continued, "Lately, I've felt like someone has been tracking me, but when I look back, there's no one there, and surveillance hasn't shown anything unusual."

Thinking back on the encounters of these days, Shen Lingtian's face gradually turned white, and his voice took on an unusual tone, "Miss Chu, do you think I've come across something unclear?"

In the past, he never believed in ghosts or spirits, but the experiences of these days, including what he saw at the Wang family villa last time, made him have to believe.

Shen Lingtian's words were all within Chu Jin's expectations. Ever since she had tampered with his car that day, she knew Shen Lingtian would definitely come to find her; she just didn't expect him to come so soon.

She was a fortune-teller, and it was really easy for her to make ordinary people experience some hallucinations using magnetic fields.

"Indeed, I see that Mr. Shen has a darkened forehead and lifeless eyes, it seems you haven't had a good night's sleep for a long time, why don't Mr. Shen find a place, let me tell your fortune first, identify the real cause, and then think of a solution."

Upon hearing these words, Shen Lingtian seemed to grab onto a lifeline, his eyes brightened as he said, "Good, then I'll trouble Miss Chu. You must not have eaten yet, Miss Chu, how about we find a place to eat while we talk?"

Chu Jin gave a slight nod, "That's fine."

The car quickly pulled up in front of a high-end, members-only restaurant.

With gentlemanly grace, Shen Lingtian opened the car door for Chu Jin, making a 'please' gesture, "Miss Chu, we've arrived."

Looking at Shen Lingtian's hypocritical facade, Chu Jin felt an urge to tear him apart; she wished she could flay him alive.

She suppressed the surging hatred and malevolence, her lips curving into a gentle, amiable smile, "Alright."

The two of them entered the restaurant one after the other, and were immediately greeted by a server, "Mr. Shen, this way please, is it for two?"

It was clear that Shen Lingtian was a regular at this restaurant.

But in her previous life, he had never brought her here.

It seems that there were still many secrets hidden with Shen Lingtian.

The restaurant's ambiance was lovely, with Gothic-style décor, luxury, and prestige; the sweet melodies flowing from the violinist's hands brought pleasure to the heart and soul.

They arrived at their booth, and Shen Lingtian pulled out a chair for Chu Jin with great politeness before sitting down across from her.

Chu Jin brushed the hair in front of her chest behind her shoulder, and with an ostensibly casual tone asked, "Is Mr. Shen a regular here?"

Shen Lingtian took off his glasses and laid them on the table, a bitter smile curling up at the corners of his mouth, "My late wife loved the food from this restaurant, so..."

Ha, Shen Lingtian really never forgets to use the dead to craft his image as a man of enduring love at any opportunity.

If he knew that she was Qin Jie, would he still be so calm and composed in saying such words?

This China mainland owes him an Oscar statuette.

Chu Jin gave him an apologetic smile, "I'm sorry to hear that, the deceased have passed on, and the living must go on, Mr. Shen, please accept my condolences."

"Miss Chu has seen me at a bad time," Shen Lingtian put his glasses back on, "Let's order first. What would Miss Chu like to eat? Any dietary restrictions?"

Shen Lingtian took the menu the server handed him, inquiring about Chu Jin's preference.

"I'm not picky, Mr. Shen can just order as he pleases," Chu Jin replied casually.

Shen Lingtian nodded, "Then let's have a vegetable salad, followed by a fruit platter, and two glasses of watermelon juice."

After speaking, he closed the menu and explained to Chu Jin.

"I know you girls all want to stay beautiful and maintain your figures, so you don't eat much for dinner."

Chu Jin smiled, "Mr. Shen is very considerate, but are you all right with eating this way too?"

Shen Lingtian replied gently, "It's all right, I'm happy to have dinner with Miss Chu, even if it means eating bran and swallowing vegetables."

There was a time when she really was such a girl, willing to give everything for the one she loved.

To maintain her figure, she ate only half an apple and a serving of vegetable salad every night.

And to win her trust, Shen Lingtian even joined her in eating such dinners for ten years after their marriage.

Back then, she was truly moved and felt fortunate that Heaven had allowed her to meet such a good man.

Unfortunately, later on, the dream ended, the play was over, and she died.

The same performance, now he wants to stage it in front of her a second time?

Today, she is no longer Qin Jie.

She no longer starves herself to conform to any man's aesthetic preferences.

Chapter 245: Ninety Million!

In this life, she wanted not only to seek vengeance and right her wrongs but also to live freely!

To live only for herself!

Chu Jin took the Tarot cards out of her backpack, "Mr. Shen, let's do a reading while we're waiting for the dishes."

Shen Lingtian nodded, "Alright."

Chu Jin quickly shuffled the cards and arranged a 'Universal type' spread.

"Mr. Shen, please draw a card."

Shen Lingtian carefully drew a card.

The upright position: The Sun.

On the card, a smiling, confident child rode on a horse's back, leaping out from a walled garden. Behind him was a large field of sunflowers, above which shone the radiant sun.

This was a card filled with hope and sunshine.

A mocking light flickered in Chu Jin's downcast eyes. Fate always seemed so unfair; a despicable and treacherous villain like Shen Lingtian had a future that was completely bright, without any twists or turns—in fact, there wouldn't be the slightest ripple on his life's journey, smoothness to the extreme.

Ridiculous, truly ridiculous!

If fate was unjust, then she would defy it! Change it!

She would cut off Shen Lingtian's path with her own hands, obscure his light, tear off his human skin mask, and ensure his downfall and miserable demise.

A chilling, bloodthirsty glint gradually appeared in her previously clear, peach-blossom eyes.

It sent shivers down one's spine and an inexplicable tremble.

Could it be that his situation was very serious? Thinking this, a worried look came over Shen Lingtian's face, and he hastily asked, "Miss Chu, is my situation very troublesome?"

Chu Jin immediately snapped back to reality, her eyes regaining their clarity, and already having made her calculations, said with a somewhat grave expression, "It is indeed a bit of a hassle. On this card, I see a trace of resentment. I'm afraid that the entity following you these past days is not any ordinary specter."

Shen Lingtian's face turned pale, his voice trembling, "Ah? How could this be? Is it serious? Is there any way to resolve it?"

Chu Jin took a sip from her watermelon juice through the straw without directly answering Shen Lingtian's question, but instead asked, "Mr. Shen, this condition of yours has been going on for over half a month now, hasn't it?"

Shen Lingtian nodded, without any intention of concealing, "That's right, ever since I parted ways with you at the Wang family's place last time, this condition has started."

Since then, he had been unable to eat well or sleep peacefully. No matter where he was, he always felt like a pair of eyes were staring at him from behind.

Moreover, whenever he awoke from his midnight dreams, he would always see that figure.

That cold, terrifying figure that made one's heart palpitate.

It was utterly hair-raising, leaving him restless and uneasy.

"That makes sense," Chu Jin nodded, "It seems that entity followed you home from Uncle Wang's place. A person has three fires on their body, and usually, with your masculine energy being so strong, those entities wouldn't be able to approach you in the slightest. However, because someone in your family has recently passed away, reducing the flames on your body, that entity took advantage and, moreover, the thing following you isn't alone—one of them, I can't see clearly, but I can faintly sense the enormous malevolence it carries; it must have had some connection with you in life."

Enormous malevolence? Connected to him in life?

Hearing Chu Jin's words, Shen Lingtian's face paled slightly as beads of sweat almost instantly appeared on his forehead.

His fingers trembling, he picked up a glass of watermelon juice and took a big gulp, trying hard to calm himself, and then he looked at Chu Jin anxiously, "Miss Chu, do you have any way to resolve this?"

At these words, a troubled expression immediately showed on Chu Jin's face, and she spoke hesitantly, "There are ways, of course, but..."

At that moment, the system's voice rang in her mind, [Friendly and harmonious reminder: Please do not attempt to change another person's fate on your own, as it could very likely result in retribution from the Heavenly Dao!]

Heavenly Dao?

What is Heavenly Dao?

There has never been such a thing as Heavenly Dao in this world; there is only injustice.

Chu Jin's eyebrows rose slightly, ignoring the system's warning.

Yet, curiosity stirred within her. When she was with Zi, he always made her become stronger, so she could personally slay her enemies and exact her revenge!

How come now, the system was cautioning her not to change someone else's fate?

Retribution from the Heavenly Dao?

Moreover, when Zi was around, the system had never shown such a prompt. Why is it that now Zi is gone, these prompts suddenly appear?

Is this a bug in the system, or is there more than meets the eye?

Furthermore, Zi never mentioned the backlash from the Heavenly Dao.

In fact, Zi had always been very supportive of my seeking revenge.

What kind of backlash from the Heavenly Dao would occur if I forcibly tried to go against fate?

It seems that Zi has many little secrets...

"Just what?" Shen Lingtian said impatiently, "Miss Chu, rest assured, as long as you can help me get rid of those filthy things, no matter what the cost, I will agree to it."

As he spoke, Shen Lingtian took out a napkin and wiped the fine sweat from his face in a haste.

His expression was frantic; as the saying goes, the face reflects one's heart, and it was evident that Shen Lingtian was truly afraid.

He acted as if he had really seen something terrible.

Chu Jin's eyebrows furrowed slightly. She had only made some minor adjustments in his car, creating illusions that were merely auditory misperceptions.

Was there really a need for him to be this scared?

Chu Jin slightly smiled, "If Mr. Shen says so, I feel relieved."

Then, unhurriedly, she took out a string of Buddha Beads from her backpack, placed them in front of Shen Lingtian, and continued, "These Buddha Beads are made from thousand-year-old purple sandalwood, with a total of 18 beads. Inside each one, an entire Diamond Sutra is carved. Not only that, during the consecration, they were recited with exorcism scriptures 1800 times, and they are reinforced with 888 incantations for binding. Not just for warding off evil spirits, but wearing them continuously could prolong life..."

"Can these Buddha Beads drive away those filthy things?" Shen Lingtian immediately looked up at Chu Jin.

Chu Jin nodded slightly, her crimson lips curving lightly as she spoke indifferently, "Of course, Mr. Shen, as long as you wear them, no dirty thing will come within half a step of you. However, creating these beads has drained many years of my cultivation, so the price may be... a bit expensive."

Her tone was light but carried a soothing charm.

Every move she made was captivating.

And Shen Lingtian, having witnessed her abilities, immediately asked without hesitation, "How much?"

Chu Jin took a sip of watermelon juice, looked up slowly, and uttered three words, "Ninety million."

"Ninety million?" Startled by the number, the fear in Shen Lingtian's eyes disappeared by half in disbelief. "Miss Chu, did you add an extra word by mistake?"

Just this string of beads worth ninety million?

She was making money way too quickly then, wasn't she?

Shen Lingtian was indeed as stingy as ever.

Back then, when she married into the Shen family, she filled the Shen Clan's financial gap with sixty million in assets.

Now she was asking for ninety million; surely, this was going to cause him quite some pain.

Chu Jin raised an eyebrow slightly, a curve spreading across her lips, revealing shallow dimples, "Mr. Shen, which word do you think I said extra?"

Shen Lingtian ate a piece of fruit and glanced surreptitiously at the Buddha Beads before speaking slowly, "Miss Chu's items are naturally excellent, but to say they're worth ninety million..." he paused, then continued, "Miss Chu, how about selling them to me for ninety thousand?"

Even if these Buddha Beads could really ward off evil, ninety thousand was a lot of money!

Compared to ninety million, Shen Lingtian actually preferred to offer nine thousand.

After all, it's just a string of beads.

Ninety thousand could bury this string of beads.

"Ninety thousand?" Chu Jin chuckled lightly, her dimples deepening, "Mr. Shen, are you joking?"

"I..." Shen Lingtian hesitated before standing up, "Excuse me, Miss Chu, I need to use the restroom."

Chu Jin nodded courteously.

After Shen Lingtian left, Chu Jin turned to gaze out of the window at the scenery.

The streetlights had just turned on, and the moon had risen above the trees, but the neon lights had already outshined the moonlight.

The restaurant was located in a bustling district, and outside the window was a busy street with people coming and going, including an old lady selling lotus pods from her basket.

Chapter 246: Warning

Chu Jin looked out the window, her eyes narrowed slightly, with a hint of confusion flashing in her eyes.

If she had not seen it wrong, that woman in a red dress on the side of the road had been wandering under the streetlight for quite some time.

The red dress was very long, covering her feet completely.

She kept her head down; her long hair parted to two sides, concealing her facial features, her complexion was eerily pale. More importantly, under the bright light, she surprisingly cast no shadow.

Even so, people passing by seemed not to notice her at all, including an old granny hawking lotus pods, who didn't even pause as she walked past her.

Looking at it this way, it was somewhat terrifying.

Chu Jin withdrew her gaze, somewhat puzzled, took a sip of watermelon juice and when she glanced out of the window again, the red-dressed woman who had been lingering under the streetlight had disappeared.

As if she had vanished into thin air.

At this moment, Shen Lingtian, who had gone to the restroom, also came back.

Chu Jin picked up a piece of fruit with her hand, placed it in her mouth, and raised her head slightly, "Mr. Shen, I wonder if you've made up your mind? Are you going to take these Buddha Beads or not?"

Shen Lingtian had put his suit back on, hesitated slightly, and said, "Miss Chu, is ninety thousand really not possible?"

"No," Chu Jin shook her head and then took the Buddha Beads into her backpack, "Mr. Shen, if you think your life isn't worth ninety million, then we shouldn't waste any more time. I have other matters to attend to. I'll be leaving now." Saying so, she turned to leave.

Her actions were crisp, without any dithering.

Seeing that she was really leaving, Shen Lingtian became anxious, stood up quickly, and called out to Chu Jin's retreating figure, "Miss Chu, wait a moment."

Chu Jin's lips slowly curved into a smile and then she paused, turned her head at a leisurely pace, her face calm, and looked at Shen Lingtian with raised eyebrows, "Does Mr. Shen have something else to say?"

Shen Lingtian looked at the girl in front of him, remembered his experiences over the past few days and the footsteps that kept echoing in his ears, gritted his teeth, and then said, "Miss Chu, I'll buy the Buddha Beads."

It was just ninety million, right?

Just like Chu Jin said, his life was certainly worth more than ninety million, wasn't it?

Chu Jin's lips slightly curled up, her clear voice resonating in the air, "Mr. Shen is indeed a decisive person. Will it be a check or a transfer?"

Shen Lingtian sighed softly, "A check." He took out his briefcase, quickly wrote a check, signed it, and handed it to Chu Jin.

Chu Jin accepted the check and then handed over the Buddha Beads.

Looking at the Buddha Beads in his hand, Shen Lingtian's heart trembled.

Ninety million spent for such an unremarkable set of Buddha Beads.

Shen Lingtian somewhat uncertainly asked, "Miss Chu, can these Buddha Beads truly help me get rid of those filthy things?"

"Of course," Chu Jin nodded gently, "As long as Mr. Shen wears them day and night, within three days, all the strange phenomena happening around you will vanish. If there's no effect after three days, I can refund the full amount to you."

With that said, Shen Lingtian felt much relieved.

Right then, he slipped the Buddha Beads onto his wrist.

As soon as the beads touched his wrist, he felt a cool sensation seeping through his skin and into every cell of his body.

The clouds that had been pressing on his heart instantly scattered.

He felt extremely relaxed; it seemed this really was a treasure. His ninety million hadn't been spent in vain.

Chu Jin watched Shen Lingtian's movements, the corners of her mouth slightly lifted, her beguiling peach blossom eyes gleaming, like dazzling stars.

Under the light, the girl wore a soft yellow dress, her figure elegant, dimples shallow, her skin as pure and flawless as snow, and her sleek black hair cascaded down her back. With an appearance both innocent and pristine, she was like an unblemished piece of jade. The yellow light spilled over her, making her seem serenely beautiful and transcendent.

Shen Lingtian gazed at the young girl in front of him, almost forgetting to breathe. An angel, she was like an angel, an angel who had strayed into the mortal world.

So pure and flawless.

[Warning! Host must not attempt to change another's fate! Everything is predetermined, do not defy the natural order or attempt to alter fate! Otherwise, you will face the threat of Heavenly Dao's backlash!]The system's voice rang out in her mind once again.

Only this time, it had changed from a friendly reminder to a stern warning.

Chu Jin's brow furrowed slightly, then she greeted Shen Lingtian without changing her expression, "Mr. Shen, it's getting late now, I should head back."

"Miss Chu, let me give you a ride." Shen Lingtian picked up the briefcase on the sofa and followed behind Chu Jin.

He certainly wouldn't miss the opportunity to drive a beauty home.

Chu Jin didn't refuse Shen Lingtian, nodding slightly, "Then I'll trouble Mr. Shen."

"Actually, there's no need for Miss Chu to be so formal with me," Shen Lingtian spoke as they walked, "In fact, I'm only a few years older than Miss Chu. If you don't mind, you can just call me Lingtian."

Only a few years older?

Chu Jin sneered inwardly. She was 18 this year, and he was 30. Was this what he called being only a few years older?

How did she not realize before that Shen Lingtian was actually so hypocritical!

The her from those years was truly foolish to the extreme, to have fallen in love with such a sanctimonious hypocrite.

Although her inner emotions were churning, Chu Jin still maintained an appropriate smile on her face, and nodded, "Alright, Lingtian."

Her clear voice didn't reveal any turbulence.

Shen Lingtian turned around, speaking very tenderly, "Then may I call you Jinjin?"

"Of course." Chu Jin smiled faintly.

Once in the car, Shen Lingtian was still continuously looking for various topics of conversation. His manner of speaking was very elegant and humorous, displaying that unique charisma associated with successful people in full.

If she really were that naive girl, she would have probably been deceived by Shen Lingtian's pretense right now.

The night roads of Capital City were congested. A journey that should have taken only about twenty minutes ended up taking nearly an hour.

By the time they arrived at Huagui Park, it was already past 9 PM.

Getting out of the car, Chu Jin politely thanked Shen Lingtian.

Shen Lingtian took out his phone from his pocket and said, "Jinjin, thank you very much for today. After wearing your Buddha Beads, I feel much more relaxed. I must treat you to a meal in three days. What's your WeChat ID so it will be convenient to keep in touch."

Just as Chu Jin was about to speak, a deep and magnetic male voice came from the quiet night, carrying some pressure, causing one to shudder.

"Jin."

Shen Lingtian turned around, only to see a tall and upright figure slowly emerging from the darkness. Under the dim light, the man's handsome face was almost expressionless, his thin lips tightly closed, his face faintly radiating a hint of anger, his whole body exuded an intimidating aura of a dominant ruler.

Even Shen Lingtian, who was accustomed to seeing all kinds of important people, couldn't help but feel a sense of awe. In front of this mysterious man, his own presence seemed to fall short by quite a bit.

He could barely stop his legs from trembling.

The pressure from the man before him was just too overwhelming.

It made people almost dare not look directly at him.

"Why have you come?" Recognizing the man's face, Chu Jin voiced her surprise.

The man stretched out his hand to wrap it around her shoulders, "Surprised to see me?" He then shifted his gaze to Shen Lingtian, "Who is this?"

Chu Jin pointed to Shen Lingtian, introducing him proactively, "This is a client of mine, Mr. Shen Lingtian."

Shen Lingtian's forehead was already beaded with sweat as he nodded to Mo Zhixuan and then spoke, "Jinjin, since you have a guest, I'll take my leave."

Having said that, he jumped into the driver's seat, started the engine, and left as if fleeing a disaster.

"Try to have less contact with that man from now on." Watching the departing car, Mr. Mo spoke gravely.

Walking towards the house, Chu Jin responded without much concern, "Why is that?"

"Because he is not a good man." Mo Zhixuan followed behind her, and after a moment of silence, he continued, "In his eyes, I saw possessiveness. He... has improper thoughts about you."

Thinking about his girl being coveted by someone else, Mo Zhixuan felt very uncomfortable.

That man's gaze from just now was indeed too irksome.

Chapter 247: Customer

If it hadn't been for my timely appearance, who knows, they might have already exchanged WeChat contacts by now.

Chu Jin's tone was indifferent, "That won't do, he is a major client of mine, but I'll be careful, don't worry, I'm quite skilled."

"Are you really that short of money?" Mo Zhixuan grabbed her wrist, looking at her earnestly.

Chu Jin nodded just as earnestly, "Yes, very much so."

Mo Zhixuan sighed softly, then pulled out a black card from his pocket and handed it to her, speaking slowly, "You are not allowed to see him anymore."

"Why? He's like a patron to me." Chu Jin looked up at him instinctively, and from her angle, she could perfectly see the man's exquisitely chiseled jaw.

In the darkness of the night, the man seemed so nobly aloof.

Grabbing her wrist, the man pulled her into his arms, and his deep and magnetic voice rose above her head, "You've been contracted by me now."

Under the silent night sky, all that could be heard was the sound of their heartbeats.

Chu Jin was stunned for a moment, but quickly recovered and pushed the black card back into his pocket, then wiggled out of his long arms and started towards the house, "You think you can contract me with just this one card?"

Mo Zhixuan followed at her pace, his mouth barely curving into a smile, "Then how many cards do you want?"

Entering the house, Chu Jin immediately noticed the ancient Konghou placed in front of the sofa.

The air was also filled with the scent of food—scent of food?

Was this an illusion? She hadn't hired any domestics, how could there be the aroma of food!

Apparently, he must have come to deliver the Konghou to her.

But he didn't have the keys to her house, so how did he get in?

Chu Jin approached and casually plucked the strings a few times, and instantly, ethereal music spilled from her fingertips.

"Stop playing," Mo Zhixuan said, "Go wash your hands first, the food is ready."

Chu Jin was taken aback, so the smell she had sensed was really the aroma of food, she looked up in surprise, "Food? You made it...?"

Mo Zhixuan gave a light cough and then nodded slightly.

However, before Mr. Mo could respond, a skeptical voice echoed subtly in the air, "Is it edible?"

Chu Jin really couldn't imagine Mr. Mo cooking.

Could this man tell apart oil, salt, soy sauce, vinegar, and sugar?

Not to mention him, even she, someone who has lived two lifetimes, doesn't know how to cook.

She truly doubted whether the food cooked by Mr. Mo was edible.

Mr. Mo did not directly answer her question but said, "You go wash your hands while I'll bring out the dishes from the kitchen."

Chu Jin nodded lightly, "Alright." After speaking, she headed towards the washroom.

By the time she had washed her hands and come to the dining room, all the dishes had already been served on the table.

Four dishes and a soup, cold beef salad, stir-fried vegetables, spicy fish head with chopped chili, stir-fried spicy prawns, and a very common tomato egg soup.

Unexpectedly, all four dishes and the soup looked appetizing, though not quite up to the standard of a five-star hotel chef, it was very good for a beginner like Mr. Mo.

In Chu Jin's imagination, dishes made by Mr. Mo would consist of nothing but charred food.

It seems that Mr. Mo, aside from being very good at business, also had impressive skills in other areas.

Capable both in the living room and the kitchen.

Mr. Mo brought out two bowls of rice from the kitchen and placed them on the table. Seeing her still standing, he reminded her, "What are you waiting for? Sit down and eat."

"Oh, okay." Chu Jin immediately came to her senses, pulled out a chair to sit down, and picked up her chopsticks to grab a piece of fish.

The fish was infused with the flavors of scallion, ginger, garlic, and chopped chili, extremely delicious, spicy and refreshing, making one wish to swallow it whole along with the tongue.

"Is it edible?" Mo Zhixuan looked at Chu Jin somewhat nervously, his eyes full of hopeful expression.

This was also his first time cooking, and although he had been taught by a top-level chef and practiced many times at home, he was still inexplicably nervous at this moment.

He was eager for her approval.

"Mmm, it's edible, really delicious," Chu Jin nodded hurriedly, then reached out to pick up a piece of fish and put it into his bowl, "You try it too."

Seeing her like this, Mr. Mo felt reassured.

Chu Jin was really hungry tonight. During her dinner with Shen Lingtian, she hardly touched the fruit and vegetable salad and only drank half a glass of watermelon juice.

At the moment, she couldn't care less about her image, quickly shoveling rice into her mouth.

In fact, her way of eating wasn't unseemly; it was just different from that of the well-bred socialite daughters.

They dined with poised and elegant manners, while she ate the kind of meal that filled her stomach.

Mo Zhixuan peeled a large shrimp at a leisurely pace and placed it on the empty plate in front of her, "Eat slower, no one's competing with you for food."

Chu Jin quickly swallowed the rice that was stuck in her throat and mumbled vaguely, "Mm-hmm, I know, I know."

Despite what she said, her movements did not slow down at all.

It had to be said, Mr. Mo's cooking skills were truly amazing.

Every dish had its own distinct flavor.

Seeing her eat so happily, even Mr. Mo, who usually preferred light flavors and had a poor appetite, found his own appetite increasing.

Before long, the four dishes and one soup on the table were all gone.

Chu Jin sprawled contentedly on the leather sofa, life was really too comfortable.

"Once you're done eating, go take a shower," Mr. Mo got up to clean up the table, carrying empty plates towards the kitchen, "It's getting late, you have school tomorrow morning."

Chu Jin immediately rose from her seat and headed towards the kitchen, "Let me wash the dishes."

It wouldn't be right to have Mr. Mo cook and then to expect him to take care of the dishes as well.

If she hadn't seen it with her own eyes, she would hardly believe that the man before her was the cold and abstinent Mr. Mo.

The same man who could strategize and turn the tide in the business world— the head of the Mo family.

Just as Chu Jin reached the kitchen doorway, Mr. Mo caught her by the shoulder and shooed her out, saying disdainfully, "I've got this, you'll just make a mess, go take your shower."

Make a mess?

Chu Jin: "... " He made her sound like a complete waste of space.

Helpless, Chu Jin could only head upstairs.

After taking a shower, the lights in the living room were still on.

Mr. Mo must not have left yet, so Chu Jin, while drying her hair, headed downstairs.

As she reached the staircase corner, she ran into Mr. Mo, who was about to head up.

"Have you finished showering?" Mr. Mo looked up at the girl before him.

She stood there in a thin cotton nightgown, her delicate peach-blossom eyes shining like stars, radiant and captivating. Her rosy lips were slightly upturned, revealing shallow dimples, her fair complexion like jade, making her look obedient and adorable.

Mo Zhixuan felt his heartbeat skip several beats as he looked at the girl before him.

In her presence, he felt increasingly unable to control himself.

Something seemed to be stirring within, eager to break out.

Restlessness.

Chu Jin nodded, "Yes, I'm done."

In truth, she wanted to ask why he hadn't gone home yet.

But that seemed impolite, so she said in a very delicate manner, "Wow! It's almost eleven o'clock."

"If you know it's eleven, then why aren't you in bed sleeping?" Mo Zhixuan nudged her shoulder, guiding her upstairs with his hoarse voice resounding above her head, "Do you not want to go to school tomorrow morning?"

"Go off to bed," Mo Zhixuan said as he opened the door to her bedroom for her, adding, "I'll be sleeping in the room next door, just call if you need anything."

Sleeping next door? Did she hear that right?

Chu Jin's mind went blank for a few seconds.

But before she could digest the information, Mo Zhixuan leaned in, casting a large shadow over her, and then, a cool touch landed on her forehead.

It was soft, cool, and thin.

And carried a hint of chilliness.

"Good night," that deep voice sounded above her head.

With that, Mo Zhixuan didn't wait to see Chu Jin's reaction; he just turned and entered the neighboring bedroom.

This was her house, hey!

Why did she suddenly feel like Mr. Mo was the master of the house?

That night, some slept well, while others were restless throughout.

Listening to the faint breathing coming from the next room, Mo Zhixuan walked over to the floor-to-ceiling window and pulled out a pack of cigarettes from his pocket.

Chapter 248: Stingy

'Clack', a blue flame sprang up from the cold machine body, instantly filling the mouth with the fresh taste of tobacco. He slowly exhaled a perfect ring of smoke, and in his deep-sea dark pupils, ink-like colors churned.

The cool night wind kept pouring in through the window, finally quelling the restlessness inside him.

**

In a high-end villa district.

In a luxurious bedroom, a woman clad in a white chiffon dress was sitting in front of a vanity mirror, applying various skincare products to her face.

The reflection showed a woman with delicate features, radiant as flowers and the moon, with a graceful forehead and fine brows. Her fair skin was complemented by a pair of soul-stealing, fox-like eyes that looked both alluring and seductive, making anyone who glanced at them unconsciously want to kneel beneath her pomegranate skirt.

She was undoubtedly a beauty, capable of bringing chaos to cities with her charms.

"Yan! What brings you here?" The door was pushed open, and a surprised male voice filled the air.

Upon hearing this, Lu Yan's lips slowly curved into a smile. She then turned around and pouted, "What, tired of me already?"

Even though Shen Lingtian had seen Lu Yan many times, every encounter left him sinking deeper into her allure.

"What nonsense!" Shen Lingtian walked over and hugged Lu Yan tightly, "I wish I could be with you every day, but that bitch has only just died, and I'm worried about how it would look if others saw you."

Lu Yan's lips curled up slightly, "Shen Lingtian, it seems you're more worried about losing the title of being forever devoted, aren't you?"

"Not at all. I'm genuinely concerned about you. After all, you are one of 'the Two Talents of Capital City,'" Shen Lingtian continued, "Since she died not long ago, we need to be careful. Getting caught by outsiders wielding something over us would not be good."

...

About 40 minutes later, a woman's voice could be heard again, "Ling Tian, didn't you say that the dead woman left behind a groundbreaking masterpiece?"

"Yes," nodded Shen Lingtian.

Lu Yan continued, "When will you give me her original manuscript?"

That was her true purpose for coming. After all, Qin Jie was a true genius. What she left behind was sure to astound everyone.

If it weren't for that magnum opus, Lu Yan would hardly have wished for her to die so soon.

"Darling, don't rush. Give me some days to sort things out, and I will put it into your hands unreservedly. It's just that she has freshly passed, and there are a pile of things to deal with," he reassured.

"Are you telling the truth?" Lu Yan asked.

Shen Lingtian huffed lightly, "Of course, I am. Could I possibly deceive you?"

"What if you do lie to me?"

Shen Lingtian suggested, "Why don't you stay here for the time being? All her belongings are in the study to the west. You can sort them yourself."

"Alright." Achieving her goal, Lu Yan's lips lightly curled up, "Aren't you afraid of someone finding out by having me stay here?"

Shen Lingtian insisted, "'the Two Talents of Capital City' were as close as sisters. It's only natural for you to mourn your late sister by staying here for a while. What do I have to fear?"

The night was still long.

**

The next morning, Chu Jin exceptionally slept in.

By the time she awoke, it was already 6:30 a.m.

Today was the day of the English speech competition, so she had to dress formally. She got out of bed barefoot and took the uniform, which she hadn't worn for centuries, out of the wardrobe.

The top was a white shirt with two dark blue ribbons under the collar for tying a bow, and her name, Chu Jin, was embroidered on the chest.

The bottom was a dark blue skirt with exotic patterns embroidered on the hem.

Chu Jin quickly changed into her clothes, then seriously tied the bow at the collar in front of her mirror.

It wasn't long before a youthful and spirited beautiful girl appeared in the mirror.

When Chu Jin came downstairs, Mo Zhixuan had already set breakfast on the table.

Seeing Chu Jin coming down, Mr. Mo's gaze flickered for a moment before he asked nonchalantly, "Did you brush your teeth and wash your face?"

Chu Jin nodded obediently, "Mhm, I did."

Mr. Mo handed her a glass of milk, then said, "Then have your breakfast quickly, it's almost 7 o'clock. You'll be late for school."

As Mr. Mo watched the girl quietly eating breakfast across from him, he suddenly felt the illusion that he was raising a daughter.

"Oh," Chu Jin took the milk and began to drink it earnestly.

The breakfast was very simple, boiled eggs, porridge with pickles, and steamed buns.

"Eat the egg before you drink milk. It's not good to drink milk on an empty stomach in the morning," Mr. Mo said as he passed her a peeled egg.

"...Okay." Chu Jin took the egg and frowned slightly, then carefully separated the egg white from the yolk in her hand.

The freshly peeled egg was tender white like jade and very smooth and shiny, creating a striking contrast with the girl's slender, fair fingertips; her delicate soft fingers were exceptionally nimble, and the morning sun streamed through the window, evenly casting a shallow golden glow on her, adding tranquility and beauty to the scene.

After quickly separating the egg white and yolk, the girl disdainfully placed the yolk on a plate to the side, while mixing the egg white into the porridge in front of her.

Only then did she start drinking the porridge with satisfaction.

Watching her actions, Mr. Mo raised an eyebrow, his voice a bit deep, "You don't eat the yolk?"

With her mouth full of porridge, Chu Jin could only mumble a vague, "Mhm."

This was a habit leftover from her past life; unexpectedly, the original owner seemed to share this habit, her body instinctively rejecting egg yolks.

It's not that the yolk wasn't tasty, just a natural aversion, that's all.

"Picky eater?" Mo Zhixuan gave her a look and knitted his brow slightly, "Who spoiled you with this bad habit?"

Chu Jin quickly swallowed the food in her mouth and retorted, "I'm not picky at all, I just don't eat egg yolks."

Mo Zhixuan glanced at her, then explained slowly, "The yolk is the most nutritious part of the whole egg, containing six vitamins and being the essence of the egg. It can enhance memory and is good for bone growth, so it shouldn't be wasted. Eat it up quickly. Acting like a child, picking and choosing what to eat!"

Chu Jin had never imagined that someone as aloof as him, who could go ten days without uttering a single word, would have such a nagging side.

Indeed, as they say: the older one gets, the more talkative one becomes, just like a tree grows more roots as it ages!

"Got it, Daddy Mo!" Chu Jin reached out and took the yolk, placing it in front of Mr. Mo's plate with a smile that wasn't quite a smile, "However, since elementary school, our teachers have taught us to respect the old and love the young. Since the yolk is so good, I'll let you, dear elder, have it."

...Daddy Mo?

Was he really that old?

So, was he being disdainfully rejected just like this egg yolk?

Mr. Mo's lips twitched slightly, then he calmly ate the yolk in front of him.

The breakfast soon came to an end.

After eating, Mr. Mo efficiently cleared the dishes to the kitchen, and only then did he walk out at a leisurely pace, picked up the car keys, and said, "Let's go, time for school."

Chu Jin quietly followed behind him.

This was the first sentence Mr. Mo had initiated after breakfast, and his expression was very stern, almost as if he had reverted to his usual somber and cold demeanor.

Had she somehow offended him?

Chu Jin scratched her head in puzzlement, thinking that the minds of older men are indeed hard to guess.

Getting upset over nothing, tsk tsk tsk, so petty.

Chapter 249: There's a good show to watch

Once inside the car, Mr. Mo still kept his lips tightly pressed, showing no intention of speaking.

The atmosphere inside the vehicle soon became awkward.

Fortunately, the villa wasn't far from the school—about a 5 to 6-minute drive—so the car steadily pulled up at the school's main entrance.

Opening the car door, Chu Jin waved goodbye to Mr. Mo, "Goodbye."

With her brows curved and dimples shallow, the person before him exuded youthful exuberance, radiating the vibrant energy of youth from head to toe.

By contrast, he felt as if he had indeed grown old.

Mr. Mo paused for a moment before nodding slightly in response.

Today was the school-wide English speech competition, and there were no classes all day, so the campus atmosphere was much more lively than usual, with the students walking back and forth mostly bearing smiles.

Moreover, everyone was uniformly dressed in school uniforms, which was pleasing and refreshing to the eye at a glance.

Leaning against the car window, Mo Zhixuan watched the slender figure gradually disappear into the crowd, and his gaze deepened a bit more. Even though everyone was dressed alike and there seemed to be no difference at a glance, he still felt that her silhouette was the most beautiful and the most eye-catching in the crowd.

Mr. Mo unconsciously swallowed a couple of times, reached into his pocket, and pulled out a pack of cigarettes, preparing to light one. Realizing he was in the school area and it would set a bad example, he quietly put the cigarette back in his pocket.

Only when he could no longer see her figure did Mr. Mo drive away.

Class Ten.

Because there were no lessons that day, the class was rather noisy; hardly anyone read books, almost all were laughing and gossiping.

Which class's beauty changed boyfriends again, and which episode the newly released series had updated to.

If not for the countdown to the college entrance exam written on the blackboard behind, no one would believe that this was a class about to enter the crucial exam.

There were even a few bold couples who held hands and showed off their affection in front of everyone.

"The teacher's coming, the teacher's coming," someone remarked.

Everyone hurriedly stopped their chatter and small movements, quickly returning to their seats as if struck by lightning, sitting up straight and proper.

The previously boisterous classroom instantly became quiet as a grave.

The only sound that could be heard in the air was the breathing of the students.

Quite a contrast from the scene just moments before.

A moment later, the homeroom teacher Mr. Wu walked in from outside.

"Everyone quiet down," Mr. Wu habitually pinched a piece of chalk and tapped on the desk, then said, "Today our classmate Chu Jin will participate in the triennial school English speech competition. All our classmates will go to listen. The venue is in the school's auditorium. Once you're at the auditorium, stay quiet; no whispering or loud talking, and don't let other classes think Class Ten lacks discipline! We must set a good example for the younger students! Can we do that?"

This was a matter concerning the collective honor, so everyone responded enthusiastically and passionately, "Yes!"

The shouts were deafening, full of fervor; some students even turned red in the face with thick necks.

Perhaps, this was youth!

Chu Jin looked at everything familiar yet strange, her eyes turning slightly red, curving into a radiant crescent.

She still felt lucky, at least getting to relive this beautiful period of youth once more.

The senior year was about parting but also about beginning.

"Very good," Mr. Wu nodded satisfactorily, watching these excellent kids with a relieved smile on his lips, "Our class will sit in sector B of the auditorium. After we get there, sit in your usual class positions, no changing seats. Now, starting with the first group, let's line up and head out. The class president will stay behind to monitor the queue!"

At his word, the students lined up and walked out of the classroom orderly.

The class president was a petite and delicate girl who seemed soft and fragile but was in fact a black belt master of Taekwondo with her strength hidden deep.

So with her stern oversight, no one dared to whisper to each other.

Many classes had already lined up and were heading towards the auditorium in the campus. As they all wore the same uniform and arranged in orderly lines, their faces brimming with youthful vitality, the scene was quite spectacular.

A surge of excitement welled up.

At that moment, the students of Class Ten stood up even straighter, and their gazes became firmer. Behind closed classroom doors, they could be as rowdy as they pleased.

But at a time like this, how could they tarnish the reputation of Class Ten!

They weren't representing themselves, but the entirety of Class Ten!

The honor of the whole class, the collective honor!

Class Ten was the faith they were sworn to protect!

In the ranks of Class Sixteen, a girl with a baby face whispered to the girl behind her, "Manyao, do you know who Class Ten sent to the speech competition today?"

Her voice dripped with schadenfreude.

Seeing her like this, Sun Manyao also asked with some curiosity, "Who? Could it be Li Ziqi?"

Li Ziqi was the darling of Class Ten, and a notable figure at South Bridge No.2 Middle School.

Although she looked rather plain and came from an ordinary background, a family of farmers, her academic performance was outstanding, consistently ranking within the top two in the school, which made her a favorite among the teachers. She was also one of the few students at South Bridge No.2 Middle School who didn't rely on family connections to get in.

To nurture her talents, the school waived various fees for her, and even provided her with free accommodation and meals.

The girl with the baby face glanced at the neat lineup of Class Ten before sneering lightly and saying, "It's not Li Ziqi. I bet you couldn't even dream of who it is!"

"Not Li Ziqi?" Sun Manyao narrowed her eyes slightly. "That's not right. How could Wu Chen not put Li Ziqi in for something as important as the speech?"

Wu Chen was the name of Class Ten's homeroom teacher.

After all, Li Ziqi is an all-round top student!

Although she isn't particularly sociable and her spoken language skills aren't that great, her English is superb. If she took part in this significant speech competition, she could at least clinch a top-five spot.

"An old classmate of mine from Class Ten told me they've arranged for Chu Jin to be in the speech competition," the baby-faced girl said with a tone full of mockery and disdain. "Chu Jin, you know who she is, right? The young Miss from the Chu Family. Tsk, tsk, tsk, I really don't know what Wu Chen was thinking—stuffing her head with shit, I guess! Now Class Ten's going to lose face big time."

What's more, when her old classmate talked about Chu Jin, this good-for-nothing, she did it with such admiration!

As if she were talking about someone incredibly impressive.

She wouldn't be friends with such a loser. She was so angry that she broke off the friendship with that classmate right then and there.

After all, stupidity is contagious.

Her family is considered quite prestigious in Capital City. If word got out that she was acquainted with a loser, it would look terrible for her.

It's better to stay as far away as possible from such pathetic losers.

"The young Miss from the Chu Family?" Sun Manyao's lips curled into a smug arc. "...Of course, I know her. Looks like today's going to be quite a show."

Everybody knows Chu Jin is a complete zero who can't even recognize the 26 letters of the English alphabet!

Having her compete in an English speech competition? Isn't that just asking for a joke?

"Hey, Sui Sui, I heard that the last-place finisher will be expelled, right?" Sun Manyao continued to ask.

"It's more than just being expelled," He Suisui said with a face full of malicious glee. "Today the entire school and faculty are present, and there's even a TV station coming to do a live interview. This loser is going to be humiliated throughout the entirety of China mainland."

"Heh," Sun Manyao chuckled coldly. "It's not just that loser. Today, the entire Class Ten will lose face because of her!"

"You're right," He Suisui looked up again at the lineup in the front of Class Ten, her eyes brimming with scorn, "Look at them, acting like idiots, what's the use of their neat ranks? Holding their shoulders back, chins up so high! They have no idea what pride they think they have! In a while, they'll lose face so badly they won't even have time to cry on China mainland. Wu Chen is really confused too; to let a good-for-nothing mess up such a high-stakes competition is just ridiculous."

Sun Manyao also laughed, feeling extremely pleased with herself. She had long found Chu Jin unbearable, and now she could finally clear the air of her pent-up resentment.

She was determined to watch that waste make a fool of herself in front of everyone!

She was even planning to personally record the shameful proceedings of that waste and then post it online, satisfying her vengeful heart to the fullest!

Chapter 250: Effort

"People get confused as they age," Sun Manyao said with a smile, "but it's only because of that today's play will be even more interesting. By the way, do you know when that piece of trash is going up?"

"I'm not sure," He Suisui shook her head, "but the speech competition will be over by 12:30, so we can just wait and watch the fun, right?"

"That's true." Sun Manyao nodded with a smile, and her mood lifted a lot with that move.

The auditorium was huge, capable of accommodating all the teachers and students of the school.

By this time, the auditorium was already filled with many students, creating an extremely impressive sea of white.

Although no one was speaking loudly on purpose, there was still a buzzing sound in the air.

Chu Jin had just taken her seat when Teacher Wu called her backstage.

As they walked, Teacher Wu comforted her, "You don't need to be nervous; just perform normally. It's okay if you don't place in the competition, no pressure."

Actually, Teacher Wu was well aware that even if Chu Jin were to underperform, she would definitely rank in the top ten.

Chu Jin nodded obediently, "Don't worry, I'm not nervous at all."

Teacher Wu smiled with relief, "That's good to hear."

Many teachers and students were already gathering backstage to rehearse, and when they saw Teacher Wu bring Chu Jin in, they all looked at them curiously.

After all, Chu Jin's name was well known at South Bridge No.2 Middle School.

It seemed they hadn't expected Wu Chen to actually bring Chu Jin along.

A useless person coming to participate in a speech competition, wasn't that just a joke?

But Teacher Wu ignored everyone's stares, sat Chu Jin down on the side with an appropriate smile on his face, and whispered to her, "Don't mind the outside views, just do your best."

The students who looked down on her now would be surprised in a while.

Chu Jin smiled lightly, "Mhm, I know."

She wouldn't bother taking such minor matters to heart.

"Xiaoyue, look, Wu Chen actually brought that trash along," a short-haired girl covered her mouth and whispered to Lin Xiaoyue next to her, "I really don't understand what Wu Chen is thinking; isn't this just asking for ridicule?"

Lin Xiaoyue was known at South Bridge No.2 Middle School for being a cold beauty and was also in the senior year.

Haughty and frosty—those were her trademarks.

Her academic performance was excellent too, especially in English. She had scored full marks several times on the monthly exams, so she was not just known for being icy and elegant, she was also incredibly arrogant.

An arrogance that permeated from the inside out.

Hearing this, she slightly frowned and then asked with an expressionless face, "Which one is Chu Jin?"

Lin Xiaoyue was accustomed to her own arrogance. For someone like Chu Jin, she would be unwilling even to spare an extra glance; after all, who would want to waste their time looking at trash?

However, she had heard quite a bit about Chu Jin's 'remarkable achievements,' but she had never really taken a good look at her. So, with so many people around now, she genuinely didn't know which one was Chu Jin.

"There, that's her," the short-haired girl pointed with her chin, speaking with disdain, "The one sitting next to Wu Chen."

The girl hadn't paid much attention to Chu Jin when she entered, but now, taking a second look, her eyes lit up.

She almost thought she was hallucinating—could the beautifully poised, gorgeously smiling girl with expectant eyes really be Chu Jin?

Although it was still the same face, the whole impression she gave off had changed, especially the orchid-like quality that emanated from her.

How had Chu Jin changed so much after just a month?

The old Chu Jin would walk around with her head hung low, cloaked in a depressive aura, her face dull and listless as if she'd lost her soul.

That defeated and shadowy demeanor meant that even the prettiest of faces would not shine on her.

But now, things were different; the gloomy aura that had been hanging over her seemed to have vanished overnight.

She had undergone a transformation, as if she were a completely different person!

Lin Xiaoyue was also taken aback. Although she had never really looked Chu Jin in the eye, she had passed by her a few times, always keeping a distance, but she knew that the Chu Jin from before was vastly different from the current one!

She had always considered her looks to be among the best in South Bridge No.2 Middle School and had thus felt a sense of superiority, but now, upon seeing Chu Jin, that feeling of superiority instantly disappeared.

Had she not seen it with her own eyes, she would never have believed that such grace could exist in a "trash."

With "trash" possessing such grace, she feared that there would no longer be a place for her at South Bridge No.2 Middle School in the future.

Why on earth had such a beautiful face ended up with "trash"?

It was disgusting!

Moreover, what right did "trash" who didn't even recognize the 26 letters of the alphabet have to share a stage with her for a speech?

Wouldn't that lower her own status?

She was not on the same level as this "trash," and having to share the stage with her was an insult to her own character!

What was more important was her own vanity—for today's speech was in front of the entire school's teachers and students. If everyone saw the looks of this "trash," she might not be able to maintain her position as South Bridge No.2 Middle School's campus belle.

Besides, how could she allow herself to be surpassed in looks by "trash" that others trampled upon?

With these thoughts in mind, Lin Xiaoyue's lips curled into a cold curve, as she nonchalantly stuffed the speech into the short-haired girl's hands and uttered two icy words, "Hold this."

Then she walked over to where Teacher Wu and Chu Jin were standing.

"Hello, Teacher Wu," Lin Xiaoyue said from her high position, slowly beginning, "I'm Lin Xiaoyue from Class 3."

As the school belle of South Bridge No.2 Middle School and an excellent student, Teacher Wu certainly knew her.

"Hello, Student Lin, what can I do for you?" Teacher Wu asked Lin Xiaoyue, his tone very gentle.

He always had a soft spot for students who were both academically outstanding and well-behaved, regardless of which class they were in.

Therefore, Teacher Wu had a very good impression of Lin Xiaoyue.

"Of course, there's a matter!" Lin Xiaoyue said snobbishly, lifting her chin haughtily, and then asked, "Is this your class's contestant, Chu Jin?"

The disdain in her eyes was very obvious as she spoke the last two words.

She seemed like a celestial being high above the clouds, while Chu Jin was like lowly mud to be stepped on.

Seeing her like this, Teacher Wu subconsciously frowned, and the slight positive feeling he had for Lin Xiaoyue dissipated in an instant.

Teacher Wu had not expected Lin Xiaoyue, a student known for her excellent grades, to look down on others so blatantly.

"Yes, this is our class's contestant for today, Chu Jin, Student Chu," Teacher Wu nodded, then asked, "Do you need her for something, Student Lin?"

Lin Xiaoyue's lips curled into a chilling smile, "Teacher Wu, are there no other people in your class? Why send such a 'trash' to make a speech on stage?"

Teacher Wu had never expected Lin Xiaoyue to speak so bluntly, and his face turned stern as he spoke firmly, "Student Lin! Mind your language. Do not launch personal attacks on our Student Chu! Moreover, affairs pertaining to Class 10 are none of your concern."

Since she was not a student from his class, Teacher Lin had to be careful not to speak too harshly, and, after all, Lin Xiaoyue was the darling of Class 3.

Embarrassing the class favorite would be like embarrassing the class teacher, and he didn't want to create any friction with the class teacher of Class 3 over such a trivial matter.

After all, they were colleagues who crossed paths daily.

"Yes, the affairs of Class 10 do not concern me," Lin Xiaoyue asked somewhat angrily, "Teacher Wu, do you know that I am also participating in today's speech competition?"

Teacher Wu frowned, "You participating in the competition, what does it have to do with our class?"

"Teacher Wu," Lin Xiaoyue's lips formed a curve as she raised her chin slightly, and continued, "You're a smart person and a teacher at that. Don't you understand the implication of my words?"

Originating from a prestigious family in Capital City, the Lin family had some standing in the city's elite circles, so Lin Xiaoyue had never really taken a mere teacher seriously.