

R Woman 851

Chapter 851: I Want to Be a Noble Person

Bao Bao continued to be vigilant, "Uncle, don't think you can deceive people just because you are handsome! Who in the Three Realms doesn't know that my mom's name is Jin? Are you planning to kidnap Bei Bei and me because we're cute and sell us off to some remote valley?"

Even in such a situation, Bao Bao didn't forget his own cuteness.

The other children all hid behind a big tree, watching everything here, too scared to make a sound.

The oldest of them was only five years old, and it was impressive enough that they didn't cry in such a situation, let alone think of going home to find an adult.

Bao Bao's behavior amused the man. He wanted to pat Bao Bao's head, but Bao Bao dodged away.

The man continued, "Bao Bao, don't be scared, I'm really not a bad person. Do you want some candy? Uncle brought you some." The man pulled out a handful of colorful candies from his pocket, the wrappers shimmering dazzlingly in the sunlight, looking very attractive.

Bao Bao seemed to have already smelled the sweet scent of the candy, unable to help but salivate, yet he still didn't reach out to take any.

A true man, how could he bow over just a few pieces of candy?

If it were a whole bag of candies, then he'd trouble himself to consider it.

Bei Bei looked at the handsome uncle in front of her, stepped forward a few steps, and was about to reach out for the candy, but was stopped by Bao Bao, "Bei Bei, don't take it. Have you forgotten the story of Snow White? You're not Snow White, nor will you meet a Prince. What will you do if you never wake up after eating the candy?"

"Uncle is not a bad person!" Bei Bei gave Bao Bao a backward glance, "Brother, don't worry, I won't get hurt." Despite her young age, Bei Bei was quite astute; she had a feeling that this uncle definitely wasn't a bad person.

Moreover, there was something very strange about this handsome uncle; it was as if, she had seen him somewhere before.

Hearing this, the corners of the man's mouth curled into a warm smile as he handed a peeled candy to Bei Bei.

Bei Bei took the candy and sweetly spoke, "Uncle, have we met before?"

The man smiled lightly, then shook his head, "No, this is our first meeting."

Seeing his sister act this way, Bao Bao also let down his guard and went up to the man, shyly saying, "Uncle, I want some candy too."

"You little one," the man reached out and touched Bao Bao's head, "didn't you just say I was a bad person?"

Bao Bao, a bit embarrassed, chuckled, "Dada says it's necessary to be cautious of others—Uncle, it's no crime to be unaware."

The man also handed a piece of candy to Bao Bao, "You're so young, yet you know quite a bit of life's wisdom."

Bao Bao grinned, "Dada says ugly people should read more. Even though I am so cute, I can't slack off. With the male-to-female ratio being so skewed, if I'm uneducated, I won't be able to find a wife in the future."

Lately, Mo Zhixuan had been using this to motivate Bao Bao.

As a result, Bao Bao, still so young, was already worried about finding a wife.

The man was somewhat speechless, "What on earth is your dad teaching you all day long?"

Quickly peeling a candy into his mouth, Bao Bao then stretched his little hand towards the man again, "Uncle, could you give me another one, please?"

The man took out another piece of candy and handed it to Bao Bao.

Bao Bao politely thanked him.

Seeing this, the rest of the kids also gathered around, and the man distributed candy to each child.

After handing out the candies, the man played a game of "eagle catches chicks" with the children.

Laughter filled the air under the big banyan tree.

As the game came to an end, Bao Bao and Bei Bei reluctantly clung to the man's hand, "Uncle, will you come again tomorrow?"

But in just about an hour's time, Bao Bao and Bei Bei had already established a deep friendship with the man.

The minds of children are simple; whoever is kind to them, they will be kind to.

The man smiled faintly, "I'm not sure about this question, maybe I will come, maybe not. Bao Bao and Bei Bei, uncle wants to teach you a profound truth today, 'Good things must come to an end.'"

Bao Bao and Bei Bei nodded with a half-understanding.

Bao Bao and Bei Bei, along with the other children, watched the man walk away for a long time before they shifted their gazes.

It was now lunchtime, and the kids said goodbye to each other before each went their own way, back to their own homes and their own mothers.

"Why aren't you going yet?" Bao Bao turned to look at Lin Yuze beside him.

Lin Yuze's smile showed two small dimples, "Bao Bao, I wanted to walk Bei Bei home."

Bao Bao placed his hands behind his back. "Lin Yuze, how many times have I told you? You should call me Brother Bao." Girls were allowed to call him Brother Bao, but boys could only call him Bao.

As Lin Yuze scratched his head, "But you're a year younger than me."

Bao Bao pouted, "Hmmp," dissatisfied, and took hold of Bei Bei's little hand, "Bei Bei, let's go."

"Yuze, let's go together," Bei Bei took Lin Yuze's hand.

Lin Yuze just smiled gently.

The other little ones followed behind them.

After escorting Bei Bei to the gate of the imperial palace, Lin Yuze stopped, "Sister Bei Bei, you go in first. I have to go home, too. Brother Bao, Xiangru, Yimo, Nian'en, Yangyang, Yueyue, Star, goodbye."

Lin Yuze said goodbye to everyone very politely.

The other children also bid farewell to Lin Yuze very politely.

But as he turned around, Lin Yuze was left all alone.

As Lin Yuze walked towards his home and turned a corner, there stood a woman dressed extravagantly.

"Yuze." The woman looked at Lin Yuze with a smile in her eyes.

Lin Yuze also happily ran over, "Mom."

The extravagantly dressed woman was indeed Lin Yuze's birth mother, Qian Jiafeng.

Qian Jiafeng took her son's hand and asked with a smile, "Yuze, who did you play with today?"

"With Bao Bao and Bei Bei, and their new friend," Lin Yuze honestly replied.

Qian Jiafeng continued to probe, "And who were they? Did Bei Bei introduce them to you?"

Lin Yuze nodded, "Yes, they were Bei Bei's young aunt and uncle, and a girl named Nian'en whom I've never met before."

"Little aunty, little uncle?" Qian Jiafeng frowned slightly. "Bei Bei's little aunty and uncle also play with you?"

"Yeah." Lin Yuze nodded. "Bei Bei's little aunty and uncle are the same age as me, also five years old this year."

Five-year-old little aunty and uncle?

That made Qian Jiafeng somewhat puzzled. Whose children could have such relations? To have Mo Zhixuan and Chu Jin's children address them as little aunty and uncle?

"What are their names?" Qian Jiafeng continued to ask.

Lin Yuze answered, "Their names are Mo Xiangru and Mo Yimo."

Qian Jiafeng's eyes narrowed slightly, a possible answer forming in her mind. She smiled and said, "Yuze, when you're playing with them, remember you must not offend them. You need to become friends with them, especially Bei Bei. Today when you were playing games, did you yield to Bei Bei?"

"I did." Lin Yuze nodded, then said, "Mom, I don't like Bao Bao. Every time I yield to Bei Bei, he comes out and interferes, insisting Bei Bei accepts defeat if she lost the bet. Also, even though I'm the oldest, the other kids always want to listen to Bao Bao. Whatever game Bao Bao suggests, that's what we play. Mom, why do I have to yield to Bao Bao and Bei Bei? I don't like playing with Bao Bao at all. If Bao Bao wasn't there, then the other kids would definitely listen to me. And what's more, Bao Bao is younger than me, yet he insists I call him Brother Bao! The other kids all call him Brother Bao, but I don't want to! Why are the other kids willing to listen to Bao Bao? Just because Bao Bao's dad is Nine Ye?"

Lin Yuze was a child whose mental maturity came rather early, and he had developed his little clever thoughts much earlier compared to his peers.

Only, it wasn't apparent when he was simply playing.

Qian Jiafeng stroked Lin Yuze's head, "Yuze, have you forgotten what mom has told you? Although Bao Bao and Bei Bei play with you every day, you are not a child of their world. Just like the fairy tales say, Bao Bao and Bei Bei are the prince and princess, and you're just an ordinary commoner. This is why you must be accommodating towards Bao Bao and Bei Bei and not offend them or their good friends."

"Why am I the commoner?" Lin Yuze looked up at Qian Jiafeng.

"Because your father isn't Nine Ye." Qian Jiafeng caressed Lin Yuze's head. "Blame it on being born into the wrong circumstances. Some people are born noble, like Bao Bao and Bei Bei. Others are born ordinary, destined to serve the noble ones, like you. Yuze, tell me, do you want to be an ordinary person, or a noble one?"

Lin Yuze's gaze was serious as he looked at Qian Jiafeng, revealing a steadiness beyond his years. He said firmly, "I want to become a noble person. I want those ordinary people to serve me."

Although Lin Yuze was young, he already understood the significance of the words 'servant' and 'slave'.

"Good son." Qian Jiafeng caressed Lin Yuze's head satisfied. She smiled and said, "I'm truly very happy that you have this determination. Remember what mom said: if you want to become a noble person, on equal footing with Bao Bao and Bei Bei, then you need to get along well with them. You are a boy, and Bei Bei is a girl. As long as you can win Bei Bei's heart, in the future, you'll be favored by Nine Ye and his wife. From then on, you'll be a dragon among men, bringing limitless glory to the Lin family."

Bei Bei and Lin Yuze could be considered childhood sweethearts; such feelings needed nurturing from a young age.

Qian Jiafeng's calculations were very astute.

As long as Lin Yuze could charm Bei Bei, a bright future would be awaiting him.

Lin Yuze's brow furrowed slightly. "Mom, why do I have to gain Bei Bei's favor specifically to become a noble? I don't want to gain Bei Bei's favor. The other kids don't need to ingratiate themselves with Bei Bei, so why do you want me to do it?" Lin Yuze was still too young to understand such complex reasoning.

Qian Jiafeng squatted down, steadying Lin Yuze's shoulders. "Because Bei Bei's father is Nine Ye. Not only do you have to ingratiate yourself with Bei Bei, but you must also make Bei Bei fall for you. In the future, Bei Bei is expected to marry you. Only by marrying Bei Bei can you join the ranks of the most eminent people. Aside from Nine Ye and his wife, there is no one more noble in the three realms! That's why you must marry Bei Bei, only then you can bring the greatest honor to the Lin family and illuminate our family's name."

"But I don't like Bei Bei! Bei Bei is just average, not even capable of learning the most basic special ability! She doesn't deserve to be my wife!" Bei Bei was known throughout the Superpower World as a child with only average talent. Lin Yuze could befriend Bei Bei, but marrying her when he grew up was out of the question.

In the Superpower World, even three-year-old children know that ordinary people with no special talent don't deserve to stand alongside them.

"You silly child! Could Bei Bei possibly be an ordinary person? Her father is Nine Ye!" Qian Jiafeng poked Lin Yuze's head. "So many people want to climb up to Bao Bao and Bei Bei's level but can't reach them! And here you are, with the opportunity delivered right to your doorstep, yet you're still picking and choosing! Tell me, by what right do you despise Bei Bei? Is your father the exalted Nine Ye? Is your mother a reincarnated ancient empress?"

Lin Yuze pursed his lips and stayed silent. At his tender age, he had already been filled with too many such thoughts.

"Lin Yuze, are you listening to me?" Qian Jiafeng twisted Lin Yuze's ear.

"I heard you." Lin Yuze's eyes reddened with pain.

Qian Jiafeng sighed and embraced Lin Yuze, her tone filled with sorrow. "Yuze, mommy also doesn't wish it were so. But, you have seen the situation of our family. Your father doesn't like you, your grandparents don't like you; in the vast Lin family, only we two are left to rely on each other. So, my son, you must strive hard and must never lose to those children born to that contemptible person! You are the Lin family's legitimate eldest grandson of the main branch! We must show them that you are the only one who can bring glory to the Lin family's name!"

Qian Jiafeng's words carried so much important information, expressing helplessness and sorrow.

Lin Yuze clenched his fists tightly and nodded, "Mom, I understand." The Lin family hadn't left Lin Yuze with any pleasant memories, which was why he had matured prematurely.

"Good son." Qian Jiafeng held Lin Yuze's face in her hands, tears streaming down her cheeks as she touched foreheads with him.

Qian Jiafeng's face was soaked with tears, but Lin Yuze didn't shed a single one. He pulled a tissue from his pocket and wiped the tears from Qian Jiafeng's face, "Mom, don't cry. You can rest assured, I won't let you down in the future."

"My good son." Qian Jiafeng smiled contentedly, "Yuze, from now on, you need to study your special ability and cultivate your cultivation technique well. Only by doing this can you be worthy of Bei Bei in the future and make her notice you. Yuze, from now on, I'm counting on you."

"Mhm." Lin Yuze nodded firmly.

If marrying Bei Bei would earn him respect from his grandparents and father, he was willing to do it.

Mother and son composed themselves and continued walking until they finally disappeared into the villa area ahead.

Imperial Palace.

Everyone was gathered for a barbecue, the atmosphere was lively and festive.

"Daddy, I want to eat a chicken leg," Bao Bao had been eyeing the grilled chicken legs, having already eaten no fewer than ten, and it was hard to imagine how his small stomach could fit them all.

Chu Jin picked up a skewer of grilled vegetables and placed it in Bao Bao's bowl. "Little friend, you should eat more vegetables, they are good for your eyes."

Bao Bao pouted, dissatisfied, and looked towards Bei Bei.

Bei Bei was in Mo Zhixuan's arms, "Daddy, I want to eat prawns."

Mo Zhixuan said tenderly, "Okay, Daddy will peel them for you."

"Daddy, I want to eat scallops."

"Okay, Daddy will get them for you."

"Daddy, I want to eat a chicken leg."

"Okay, Daddy will get it for you, be careful, it's hot."

The more Bao Bao watched, the sadder he felt. Could it really be that he was a burden Mom and Dad had taken on?

His sister was the treasure in Daddy's palm, and he was just the grass.

Bao Bao bowed his head and silently ate the skewer of "grass" from his plate.

In Bao Bao's eyes, all green things were "grass"; he only loved meat.

The day ended quickly.

In the evening, Mo Zhixuan began telling stories to Bao Bao and Bei Bei.

After listening to Mo Zhixuan's story, Bao Bao had an epiphany and said with a smile, "Daddy, I understand your good intentions now. You can rest assured, as the eldest son of the Mo family and Bei Bei's brother, I definitely won't let you and Mom down." After speaking, Bao Bao even bowed respectfully to Chu Jin and Mo Zhixuan.

Seeing Bao Bao like this, Chu Jin couldn't help but chuckle and reached out to pat Bao Bao's little head, "Yeah, my son is truly great."

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Mo Zhixuan also nodded slightly, "Yes, very good. You haven't let Daddy down, keep it up. Your little sister needs your protection, Daddy and Mommy need your protection, the entire Mo family needs you."

Bao Bao puffed up his little chest, "Mhm, Daddy, don't worry, I will keep it up."

The reason Bao Bao had such an epiphany was because of the stories Mo Zhixuan told.

The stories he just told Bao Bao were all about the older brothers in families. The brother should give in to his sister, the brother is the pillar of the family, the brother is the hope of the family...

A bowl of soul chicken soup had Bao Bao drunk with inspiration.

Bao Bao now not only didn't think that Mo Zhixuan was showing favoritism, but instead felt that Mo Zhixuan was training him.

He's a boy, after all; he should stand tall and strong. Bei Bei is a girl, and girls are meant to be spoiled.

After Bao Bao and Bei Bei returned to the children's room, Chu Jin looked at Mo Zhixuan and slightly raised her eyebrow, "Mo Zhixuan, how come I never realized you were so cunning before? Even tricking your own son!"

Bao Bao was now completely lost.

However, from some perspectives, Mo Zhixuan indeed had his own methods for educating children.

If it were a normal family, this situation would definitely leave a negative impression in the child's heart.

But Mo Zhixuan resolved this issue of 'favoritism' perfectly.

Mo Zhixuan looked unruffled, "To train a successor, one should start from childhood. Bao Bao is a boy, and if he's raised too delicately, how will he be able to carry on my legacy in the future?"

"Yes, yes, you're right," Chu Jin slightly raised her eyebrow.

"What are you doing?" Mo Zhixuan came over, wrapped his arms around Chu Jin's waist, and spoke in a low voice, exhaling puffs of smoke into her ear.

Just then, Bao Bao and Bei Bei walked back in, "Daddy, Mommy."

Mo Zhixuan, startled, quickly stubbed out his cigarette in the ashtray.

"Why are you back again?" Mo Zhixuan frowned slightly.

Bei Bei lifted her cute little head and said milkily, "Daddy, we haven't given you and Mommy our goodnight kisses yet."

It turned out to be for this reason. Mo Zhixuan immediately picked up Bei Bei and kissed her little face, "Goodnight, my Bei Bei."

Bei Bei kissed Mo Zhixuan twice in return, "Goodnight, my Daddy." After the kisses, Bei Bei slipped down from Mo Zhixuan and climbed onto Chu Jin, exchanging goodnights.

Bao Bao spread his arms towards Mo Zhixuan, "Daddy, me too."

Mo Zhixuan bent down to lift Bao Bao, also kissing Bao Bao's face twice, and said tenderly, "Goodnight, my Bao Bao."

"Goodnight," Bao Bao cupped Mo Zhixuan's face with his chubby little hands, "Bao Bao's Daddy."

Bao Bao's Daddy?

Mo Zhixuan frowned slightly; why did he feel something was off about Bao Bao's words?

But before Mo Zhixuan could react, Bao Bao slid down from his arms and opened his arms towards Chu Jin, cooing, "Mommy, hug."

Bao Bao always liked to act spoiled with Chu Jin.

And Chu Jin was the one who always indulged him the most.

Chu Jin stretched out her arms to pick up Bao Bao, pinched his cheek, and said, "Bao Bao, have you been secretly eating meat again? If this keeps up, Mommy won't be able to carry you anymore!" Bao Bao was a little chubby boy now.

"Mommy, Bao Bao loves you very, very much." Bao Bao wrapped his arms around Chu Jin's neck, beginning to act spoiled.

"Mommy loves you, too. Now tell Mommy, when you have a wife in the future, will you love Mommy more or your wife more?" Chu Jin asked with a smile.

Without a second thought, Bao Bao said, "Of course Mommy! I will always love Mommy!"

Watching this intimate mother-son scene, Mo Zhixuan suddenly felt a sourness in his heart; these two had completely ignored him now!

"Mommy, goodnight," Bao Bao kissed Chu Jin's face loudly.

Just as he was about to plant a second kiss, he was lifted away by Mo Zhixuan.

"Daddy, what are you doing? Why are you breaking up me and Mommy!" Bao Bao flailed his arms and legs in displeasure.

Mo Zhixuan's expression softened in that instant, "Bao Bao, you're a little man now, and you should stand tall and strong. How does hanging onto Mommy like this look? Others will laugh at you if they find out. Without my permission, you're not allowed to kiss Mommy."

"Why?" Bao Bao's entire face scrunched up tightly.

"Because Mommy belongs to Daddy," Mo Zhixuan stated possessively.

"Mommy is mine, too!" Bao Bao clenched his little fists.

"Then, are you still a brave little man?" Mo Zhixuan continued to ask.

"Of course I am!" Bao Bao nodded firmly.

"If you are, then from now on you're not allowed to kiss Mommy on a whim! Have you ever seen a little man who clings to his mommy like that? If word gets out, wouldn't it make others laugh? You are the son of Mo Zhixuan, my pride, the pride of the entire Mo family!" Mo Zhixuan said with a serious face.

Bao Bao was so bewildered that he puffed out his chest and said, "That's right, Daddy, I am your pride!"

"That's my good son," Mo Zhixuan said, stretching out his hand to touch Bao Bao's head, "Alright, now take your sister back to bed."

Bao Bao nodded, then took Bei Bei and left.

Chu Jin instructed from behind, "Bao Bao and Bei Bei, don't forget to say goodnight to Grandma."

"We know, Mommy," Bei Bei said with a beaming smile as she looked back.

Chu Jin nodded in approval, "Good to know, go on now, it's already getting late and Grandma will be asleep soon."

After Bao Bao and Bei Bei left, Mo Zhixuan looked at Chu Jin with a proud face, "How about that? I've trained this little brat well, haven't I?"

In terms of being sly, if Mo Zhixuan claimed to be second, definitely no one would dare to claim the first.

This man was truly the epitome of slyness.

"You, you! Always tricking your son!" Chu Jin poked Mo Zhixuan's head while laughing.

Mo Zhixuan caught Chu Jin's hand, speaking in a deep voice, "Bao Bao and Bei Bei are gone, shouldn't we do something meaningful now?"

"What is it with your head, always filled with such thoughts?" Chu Jin poked Mo Zhixuan's head in distaste.

"Of course it's filled with you," Mo Zhixuan didn't say much else, and instead conquered Chu Jin with actions, pinning her beneath him.

The warmth of spring filled the air.

The Duanmu Family.

Duanmu Canghai and Zhou Jin had already gone to rest, and Mo Qingyi, wearing slippers, came down from the upstairs, holding a bag of traditional medicine in her hand.

It was medicine she had gathered according to Chu Jin's prescription, which she had forgotten to brew when she first got back, only remembering to do so before going to bed.

Drinking it a day earlier meant possibly having a child a day sooner, so, Mo Qingyi was willing to sacrifice her sleep to brew the medicine.

After seven years in the military, Mo Qingyi had learned many things, and brewing medicine was just a trivial matter for her.

She went into the kitchen, found the medicine pot, and started brewing.

Before long, the scent of the medicine permeated the entire kitchen.

Mo Qingyi poured all her hopes into this bowl of medicinal soup, thus she was very devout in the process of brewing it.

"Qingyi, are you brewing medicine? Are you not feeling well?" Zhou Jin, in her pajamas, appeared at the kitchen doorway. She had come down for water and by chance smelled the aroma of medicine from the kitchen, so she decided to check it out.

At her words, Mo Qingyi felt a bit embarrassed and said, "Mom, it's me brewing the medicine, but not because I'm feeling unwell..."

For a moment, she didn't know how to explain to Zhou Jin.

Zhou Jin was an exceptionally good mother-in-law. Having been married to Duanmu Zhe for four years with no children, neither Zhou Jin nor Duanmu Canghai had ever uttered a word of complaint.

Mo Qingyi hadn't finished her sentence when Zhou Jin hurriedly interrupted, "Not you? Then who is it, is it Little Zhe? What's wrong with him?"

Knowing Zhou Jin had misunderstood, Mo Qingyi immediately said, "Mom, don't worry. Duanmu is fine, he's very well. It's me who needs to drink the medicine."

"What happened to you? Is there anything wrong? Have you been to the hospital? Why would you need medicine if you're fine?" Zhou Jin anxiously grabbed Mo Qingyi's wrist.

Mo Qingyi smiled and said, "Mom, rest assured, I'm okay. This medicine was prescribed by my sister-in-law. It helps with getting pregnant. You know that Duanmu and I haven't been able to have our own child for these years..."

Upon hearing this, joy spread across Zhou Jin's face, "Qingyi, is that true? Lady Nine prescribed you medicine? You want to have a child now?"

Zhou Jin was well aware of Chu Jin's excellent medical skills, after all, it was Chu Jin who had pulled Duanmu Sheng back from the clutches of Lord Yama.

With Chu Jin prescribing the medicine, it was very likely that the matter would be settled.

Mo Qingyi nodded, "Yes, that's the case."

"That's wonderful, that's wonderful," Zhou Jin nodded, "But I'm sorry for the trouble, Qingyi. The medicine smells so unpleasant; it must be very difficult to drink." Zhou Jin had been trying to think of a way to suggest Lin Xiyuan's medicine to Mo Qingyi, pondering over and over without finding a proper reason. It turned out that Mo Qingyi, thoughtful as she was, had already asked Chu Jin for help.

The medicine given by Chu Jin would definitely be much more reliable than what Lin Xiyuan could provide.

Zhou Jin no longer needed to worry about the Duanmu family's lineage issue.

"It's no problem, Mom. Duanmu will drink it with me," Mo Qingyi said with a slight smile.

Zhou Jin was a bit surprised and asked, "Little Zhe is going to drink it too?"

Mo Qingyi nodded, "Yes, my sister-in-law said that this medicine will only be effective if both the man and woman drink it together."

"I see," Zhou Jin nodded, "Such bitter medicine, if possible, ask Little Zhe to drink more for you. He's a grown man and doesn't mind bitterness."

Compared with Duanmu Zhe, Zhou Jin was more sympathetic towards Mo Qingyi.

After all, Mo Qingyi had married into the family, a girl all alone from her parent's house to her in-laws'. It was only right for her mother-in-law to treat her well.

Mo Qingyi smiled and nodded, then said, "Mom, I am going upstairs for a moment, and I'll be right back down; please watch the medicine for me."

"Go ahead," Zhou Jin waved her hand, "Leave this to me."

"Mhm, I'll be right back." Mo Qingyi turned and ran quickly up the stairs.

Zhou Jin watched her figure and a contented smile appeared at the corners of her mouth.

Zhou Jin lifted the lid off the medicine pot to check it, turned down the flame a bit, and then, as if she remembered something, opened a drawer, took out a packet of medicine, and threw it straight into the trash can.

This was the medicine given to her by Lin Xiyuan.

Now this medicine was of no use and keeping it might make Mo Qingyi suspect something, so it was better to throw it away.

Mo Qingyi came down quickly; she had gone upstairs to get her cell phone.

"Qingyi, the medicine has just boiled, and I've turned the heat down. Did Ninth Lady mention how long it needs to be simmered?" Zhou Jin asked.

Mo Qingyi thought for a moment before replying, "My sister-in-law said after boiling, it only needs to be simmered on low for thirty minutes. Mom, go rest upstairs; I'll watch it here."

Zhou Jin nodded, then said, "Qingyi, please leave the medicine to me. From now on, I'll prepare it for you every evening while I cook dinner, so that it will absorb better after meals."

"That would be great." Mo Qingyi grinned, "Then I'll trouble you, Mom. I've put the rest of the medicines in that cabinet up there."

"Alright," Zhou Jin nodded again, "I'm going up then. You and Little Zhe should also rest early."

"Goodnight, Mom."

"Goodnight."

After Zhou Jin left, about half an hour later, Mo Qingyi turned off the heat, poured the soup medicine out of the pot into two bowls, and then took them upstairs to the bedroom.

Duanmu Zhe, seeing her carrying two bowls of something dark, was puzzled, "Mo Third, what are you doing this late at night?"

Mo Qingyi smiled mysteriously and handed him a bowl of medicine, "Duanmu Xiaosi, let me tell you, this is the good stuff. I specially made it, hurry up and drink it."

Duanmu Zhe slightly furrowed his brow, "What kind of medicine is this? Mo Third, you're not plotting to murder your husband, are you?"

"Would I need medicine to murder you?" Mo Qingyi frowned slightly, blowing on the medicine, "This is a special medicine I asked Chu Jin for. Drinking it will help you get pregnant, just drink it already." With that, Mo Qingyi gulped down the medicine in her bowl.

Upon seeing Mo Qingyi drink with such gusto, Duanmu Zhe said nothing and briskly finished his medicine as well.

"Qingyi," Duanmu Zhe looked at Mo Qingyi seriously, "Haven't I said it before? Things will happen naturally when the time comes. You don't need to put yourself through this; even medicine has its risks."

Mo Qingyi chuckled, "Don't worry, I've already asked Chu Jin. This medicine has no side effects."

"Really no side effects?" Duanmu Zhe squinted his eyes.

"Really," Mo Qingyi sat down next to Duanmu Zhe, "You might not trust me, but you can't distrust Chu Jin. If she says there are none, there definitely are none."

"But still..." Duanmu Zhe was still hesitant; he was mostly afraid that Mo Qingyi's body couldn't withstand it.

"No buts," Mo Qingyi shook Duanmu Zhe's shoulder, "Duanmu Xiaosi, I truly hope we can have our own child forever. Look how well Bao Bao and Bei Bei have grown, and Xiangru and Yimo as well, not to mention the Han family's The Sun, Moon and Stars trio are so popular. I don't want twins or triplets; I just want one child."

Duanmu Zhe grabbed Mo Qingyi's hand, whispering, "Since you want a child so much, then why wait? The night is long, and a single moment of spring is worth a thousand gold."

As he spoke, Duanmu Zhe pressed Mo Qingyi down onto the bed, silencing her screams and cries with his mouth.

To successfully conceive, Mo Qingyi was very enthusiastic in cooperating with Duanmu Zhe.

The next day.

Lin Xiyuan, as usual, got up and went for a run. Heading out, she happened to meet a servant from the Duanmu family.

"Aunt Zhao, taking out the trash." Lin Xiyuan greeted politely.

"Miss Lin, good morning. I see you every morning," Aunt Zhao, the servant, liked Lin Xiyuan very much.

Lin Xiyuan was sweet-talking and never looked down on others. Always courteous to everyone, it was hard not to like her.

Lin Xiyuan smiled slightly, "In a few days, I will be returning to the military, and you won't see me then."

Aunt Zhao smiled and said, "The young master and his wife also seem to be returning to the military soon, but unlike you, they are still in bed at this hour. I don't know if they'll get used to it in the military." Aunt Zhao and Lin Xiyuan were very familiar, so they talked quite a bit.

"Oh, Miss Lin, I won't keep you any longer, I've got to rush back to make breakfast," Auntie Zhao threw away the trash in her hand and hurried towards the Duanmu Family's direction.

Lin Xiyuan's eyes, cast downward, flashed with a hint of desolation. She glanced at Auntie Zhao's retreating figure, then took another look into the trash can.

At that glance, she was completely stunned, her brows slightly furrowed as she walked over to the trash can. Making sure no one was around, she reached out and picked up some discarded trash, her expression turning very ugly.

This 'trash' was clearly the pregnancy medicine she had given to Zhou Jin yesterday.

It was meant to help Mo Qingyi get pregnant.

Yet, unexpectedly, just one night later, it had ended up in the trash can.

What did Zhou Jin mean by this?

She had devoted herself to the Duanmu Family, and yet she was treated this way.

Lin Xiyuan was trembling all over, a cold light flashing in her slightly narrowed eyes.

Could it be that Zhou Jin had discovered something? Otherwise, why would she throw away the medicine?

But what could she have discovered? The real issue wasn't with the medicine!

What on earth was going on?

Lin Xiyuan was at a loss, but soon, the pleasant ringtone of her cellphone broke her train of thought.

Picking up the phone, it was a call from Zhou Yiheng.

Lin Xiyuan quickly answered, her voice soft, "Yi Heng."

After hearing something from the other side, Lin Xiyuan continued, "Yes, I'm free. How about this, I'll be returning to the military in a few days, so since you have time today, why don't you come to see your aunt? Honestly, we owe a lot to your aunt. If it wasn't for her, how could I have given you another chance?"

"Mm, alright, just come by yourself, I will prepare the gifts for you. No need to be so polite, after all, we're going to be family sooner or later," Lin Xiyuan said with a gentle smile.

Since she couldn't fathom Zhou Jin's intentions, she would have to personally visit the Duanmu Family.

It was only natural for a nephew to visit his aunt with his girlfriend, especially since the aunt had a big hand in bringing them together.

At the bakery on the way.

Duanmu Sheng was in the pastry room, instructing the pastry chefs.

She had changed from her past; she used to do everything herself, but now, she just needed to give orders.

"Sister Sheng," her assistant walked in and whispered a few words in Duanmu Sheng's ear.

Duanmu Sheng nodded then followed the assistant out.

Halfway there, Duanmu Sheng stopped, "You go ahead and entertain Mr. Zi Qi. I'll go change my clothes." She was still wearing a white chef's uniform from being in the pastry room.

"Okay," the assistant left respectfully.

Duanmu Sheng walked to the resting room.

A moment later, she came out.

She had changed into a light purple dress, which made her complexion appear very fair.

Actually, Duanmu Sheng had been beautiful since she was young, but bad luck in relationships had wastefully delayed her earlier life.

Now that Nian'en was three years old, although she didn't ask about her father, Duanmu Sheng was considering finding a father for her.

In a child's growth, a father is an indispensable role.

And currently, the most suitable person for this role of father was Zi Qi.

Zi Qi was very fond of Nian'en, and Nian'en also liked Zi Qi.

Therefore, Duanmu Sheng wanted to fight for a chance for herself.

To give Nian'en a complete family.

Duanmu Sheng walked lightly to the guest hall.

It was nap time, so there weren't many customers eating pastries, leaving many seats empty around.

"Sister Sheng Sheng, this is a toy I brought for Nian'en." Seeing Duanmu Sheng coming over, Zi Qi stood up with a smiling face.

Duanmu Sheng smiled as she took the toy and chided, "Zi, you shouldn't keep buying toys for that girl Nian'en. You're spoiling her."

Zi took a sip of tea and responded, "Sister Sheng Sheng, Nian'en is still young, it's her age to play. Actually, there's no need to put so much pressure on her." Zi really liked the child Nian'en, who was very sensible. Unlike her mother Duanmu Sheng, Nian'en was wise beyond her years, with a clear understanding of things and an awareness of her mother's hardships.

Chapter 853: Bao Bao Who Sneaks Cigarettes

On the other hand, Zi also really enjoyed the pastries here, and since he saw Duanmu Sheng as a good friend, over time, they became even more familiar with each other.

"Children won't know how to grow if they don't face pressure. I'm doing this for her own good." Duanmu Sheng wanted to nurture Nian'en to become capable. She didn't want Nian'en to be played like she was by a man, disappointing so many people by her side.

Therefore, Duanmu Sheng had arranged many classes for the three-year-old Nian'en—etiquette, tea ceremony, calligraphy, dance...

She was determined to make Nian'en proficient in the Six Arts of a gentleman.

Hearing this, Zi decided not to say more. After all, different values make debate pointless.

"By the way, where's Nian'en today? I haven't seen her. Is she at class?" Zi took a bite of soft bread and asked.

Wow, the bread is really delicious, fragrant, sweet, and soft...

It feels like life itself has been elevated in quality.

Zi closed her eyes in satisfaction.

Despite the length of time that had passed, Zi still hadn't kicked the habit of being greedy for food.

Live till old, eat till old.

This was Zi's profound motto.

Duanmu Sheng looked at Zi and a faint smile curved her lips.

"Sheng Sheng!" A beautiful female voice came from outside.

Duanmu Sheng looked up and saw Situ Ya walking in from outside the door, and it only then occurred to Duanmu Sheng that Situ Ya had the day off.

"Sheng Sheng, where's my goddaughter? I've specially made some delicious food for you today," Situ Ya said as she placed the lunchbox on the table.

Zi immediately stopped eating the bread, taking a light sniff. A glint of infinite brightness sparkled in his eyes.

Good food.

"Nian'en is with my mom. The old lady likes children. I asked Nian'en to spend more time with her," Duanmu Sheng said with a smile. "Ya Ya, you make delicious food every week to bring to me and Nian'en on your day off, but really, you don't have to go through all this trouble."

Zi closed his eyes and slowly said, "Sweet and sour ribs, fish-flavored shredded pork, salt and pepper squid, cola chicken wings..." So many tasty foods, Zi was already drooling!

Situ Ya glanced at Zi, and with a hint of disdain, she said, "Little Black Charcoal, you're here again? Be honest, do you have any designs on our Sheng Sheng?" Little Black Charcoal was the 'affectionate' nickname Situ Ya gave to Zi.

"Ya Ya, what nonsense are you talking about!" Duanmu Sheng tugged on Situ Ya's sleeve.

"Designs?" Zi widened his eyes at Situ Ya with some confusion. "What designs?" Even if there were any designs, it was on the delicacies here, with no designs on Duanmu Sheng at all.

Zi hadn't yet harbored any thoughts of romance.

Seeing Zi's clear gaze, a shade of sadness flashed across Duanmu Sheng's eyes.

From that look, Duanmu Sheng could tell that Zi had no designs on her at all.

But happiness is fought for by oneself, wouldn't there be a different outcome if one were more proactive?

Some things you only know after trying, so Duanmu Sheng wanted to give it a try.

Situ Ya was experienced in reading people, and she obviously knew that Zi had no thoughts about Duanmu Sheng, but seeing that Duanmu Sheng clearly had feelings for him, she wanted to help bring the two together.

Duanmu Sheng raising a child alone would indeed have a hard time without a man.

"Are you an idiot?" Situ Ya, somewhat dissatisfied, knocked on Zi's head. Was this guy thick-headed? If he had no feelings for Duanmu Sheng, why would he appear here so often?

"Miss Lin, hitting people is rude behavior!" Zi touched his own head somewhat innocently, especially hitting someone as adorable as him—that's just wrong!

"So what if I hit you? Little Black Charcoal, can't handle it?" With that, Situ Ya knocked on Zi's head even harder.

Zi looked up at Situ Ya, "Ladies should use words, not force!"

Situ Ya said with a smiling face, "Sorry, I am a goddess."

Zi: "... " If it weren't for the sake of food, he would have left long ago!

Damn it! The food in the box really smells too good!

Lin Yuya, this woman, is really not like a woman at all!

She's a total man!

No! It's a tigress!

No wonder the book always says women are tigers.

Now I see, looking at Situ Ya.

Zi, although grumbling in her heart, still maintained an honest and naive appearance on her face.

"Little Black Charcoal, you say you come here to Sheng's place every day, do you have any ulterior motives?" Situ Ya looked at Zi, her eyes slightly squinting, with scrutiny twinkling at the bottom.

"I do," Zi nodded earnestly.

"See, I knew it...", a sly glint crossed Situ Ya's slightly narrowed eyes.

A gleam also passed through Duanmu Sheng's eyes, as Situ Ya's actions were so obvious, how could she not know Situ Ya's intentions.

"I'm plotting to eat all the new products here, tiramisu, Boston pie, Paris twilight, green grasslands..." Zi continued, "Sister Sheng, the pastries here are really delicious! I love them! By the way, when will you open a branch near where I live? That way, I wouldn't have to travel so far to buy from here!"

To say Zi lacked emotional intelligence, she actually did have some.

Her words severed all of Duanmu Sheng's thoughts. Before, her interactions with Duanmu Sheng were just like friends, never considering the male-female relationship. But hearing Situ Ya's words today, it seemed that their relationship was no longer just simple friendship.

She didn't want to hold Duanmu Sheng back, so it was better to clear things up.

Duanmu Sheng's expression remained usual, smilingly she said, "I do have thoughts of opening another branch, but I didn't have enough funds at the time. I'll think about it when I'm more financially stable." Duanmu Sheng instantly understood Zi's intention from her speech.

She couldn't help wondering, did the old Zi really not like her?

But if not, why would he go to such lengths to help her?

This left Duanmu Sheng quite puzzled.

Let's try again.

For the sake of Nian'en, she had to try again.

"Take your paws off, who let you touch my lunch box!" Situ Ya slapped away Zi's hand.

Zi withdrew her hand and said with a simple smile, "Beautiful things should be shared with everyone. I've nearly tasted all the delicacies of the Superpower World, but today is the first time I've encountered such fragrant dishes. Where did you get this packed? Tell me the name of the shop and its address; I want to go there for all my meals from now on."

"These dishes were made by Ya herself, Zi, aren't you out of food? Come sit down and eat with us." Duanmu Sheng said, smilingly taking out the dishes from the box.

Instantly, the fragrance became even more intense.

"Little Black Charcoal, today you're in luck," Situ Ya said, hitting the back of Zi's head again.

The hit left Zi dazed.

"If you break me, you'll be responsible!" Zi looked up at Situ Ya.

"What now? You're planning to con me?" Situ Ya's eyebrows lifted slightly.

Perhaps past experiences had conditioned Situ Ya to reflexively hit a man whenever she saw one.

Especially upon seeing Little Black Charcoal, that is, Zi.

Duanmu Sheng played the peacemaker, "Alright, alright, let's eat, the food's getting cold." Watching Situ Ya and Zi, Duanmu Sheng suddenly felt like she was looking after two kids.

**

Duanmu Family.

Zhou Yiheng brought Lin Xiyuan to the Duanmu Family as guests.

Zhou Jin and Duanmu Canghai received them with great enthusiasm.

Lin Xiyuan, seeing Zhou Jin busy herself around, didn't feel like she had discovered anything amiss.

Zhou Jin, towards her, was as good as ever.

So, it must have been overthinking on her part, Lin Xiyuan felt slightly relieved.

"Auntie, Uncle, how come I haven't seen Little Zhe and his wife?" Zhou Yiheng asked curiously.

Zhou Jin smiled and said, "Those two kids went to bed late last night, they haven't woken up yet."

Duanmu Zhe and Mo Qingyi usually endured very tough conditions in the army, so sleeping in at home was quite normal for them, Zhou Jin wasn't concerned.

"Still not up?" Zhou Yiheng said in surprise, "It's past eleven in the noon, and they're still asleep? They love to sleep in, don't they?"

Lin Xiyuan took over the conversation and said, "Yi Heng, why are you making such a fuss? Can't Brother Duanmu and Sister Qingyi have a good relationship?"

Zhou Yiheng nodded, "Alright, alright, whatever you say goes." Zhou Yiheng was now very obedient to Lin Xiyuan. If Lin Xiyuan asked him to go east, he would not dare to go west. Having just reconciled after a fall-out, Zhou Yiheng of course wanted to coax Lin Xiyuan properly.

Seeing the love between these two, Zhou Jin also felt relieved.

It was not until dinner time that Mo Qingyi and Duanmu Zhe came downstairs.

Lin Xiyuan looked at the couple, who appeared as if they were a match made in heaven, and her grip on her chopsticks involuntarily tightened until her knuckles turned slightly white. However, she disguised her emotions very well, and with Zhou Yiheng by her side, almost no one noticed her abnormality.

After all, in everyone's eyes, she and Zhou Yiheng were the pair to match.

Duanmu Zhe and Mo Qingyi's love was stronger than gold.

Fortunately, they didn't have a child yet.

A child would become the greatest hidden worry between them.

Imperial palace.

After several days of excitement, the imperial palace returned to calm.

Chu Jin was currently teaching Bei Bei ancient medicine.

Since Bei Bei was not allowed to practice her special ability, learning additional skills would be useful to her in the future.

"China's ancient medicine emphasizes 'observation, listening, questioning, and pulse-taking.' Bei Bei, tell Mommy, what do these mainly refer to?" Chu Jin was holding a blue-bound ancient book, quizzing Bei Bei.

Bei Bei scratched her head, then said, "Observation refers to examining one's complexion. Listening means hearing the breath. Questioning involves inquiring about symptoms. Pulse-taking is about feeling the pulse. Together, they are known as the Four Diagnostics."

Listening to Bei Bei's answer, Chu Jin nodded with satisfaction, "Bei Bei is so clever. Mommy will reward you with a candy."

"Thank you, Mommy, I also think I'm very smart." Bei Bei immediately unwrapped the candy and popped it into her mouth.

Just then, a loud crying voice came from the practice room.

"Mommy... help..."

Yes, that distinctive cry could only belong to Bao Bao.

"Mommy, it's big brother." Bei Bei grasped Chu Jin's hand anxiously.

"Let's go have a look." Chu Jin bent down to pick up Bei Bei and ran quickly to the practice room.

Bao Bao seldom cried, so something must have happened today.

Upon entering the practice room, Chu Jin frowned slightly at the scene before her.

She saw that Mo Zhixuan was pulling down Bao Bao's pants and striking his bottom with a ruler.

Bao Bao was lying over a stool, his little bottom marked with red stripes after red stripes.

Chu Jin felt a heart-wrenching pain at the sight.

"What is going on here?" Chu Jin raised an eyebrow slightly, "What has Bao Bao done wrong?"

Mo Zhixuan usually didn't hit children. His outrage today must have had its reasons.

"Mommy!" Seeing Chu Jin come over, Bao Bao ran quickly to her side as if he had seen his savior, not even bothering to pull up his pants, "Mommy, Daddy hit me! It hurts!"

Seeing Bao Bao's pitiable state, Chu Jin couldn't care for anything else and hurriedly bent down to pick him up, "Don't cry now. Mommy will punish Daddy for you later. Really, how could he be so heavy-handed? Look at this little bottom, it's all swollen."

Bao Bao wiped away his tears and sobbed, "I also want to spank Daddy's little bottom!" Otherwise, he wouldn't feel relieved!

"Jin, don't mind him. Today I must discipline him properly!" Mo Zhixuan walked over holding the ruler, with a stern look on his face.

"Mommy save me! Daddy is bad! Daddy only allows officials to start fires and won't let the common people light lamps!" Bao Bao clung tightly to Chu Jin, scared.

"What on earth happened?" Chu Jin looked up at Mo Zhixuan, "Look how scared you've made the child!"

"Ask him yourself about the good deed he's done!" Mo Zhixuan replied, his lips tightly pursed and his face serious.

Chu Jin was truly curious about what Bao Bao could have done to upset Mo Zhixuan to this extent.

You should know, Mo Zhixuan is usually quite committed to educating through civil methods, hardly ever resorting to corporal punishment for the children.

This time, he must have been truly angered.

"What did you do to make Daddy so angry?" Chu Jin looked at Bao Bao.

"I... I..." Bao Bao felt guilty and didn't dare to look at Chu Jin.

Chu Jin set Bao Bao down on the ground, her face stern, "Tell the truth, what did you do!"

The atmosphere turned somewhat cold.

Bao Bao and Bei Bei, seeing how serious Mommy and Daddy were, didn't dare to speak.

"Mommy..." Bao Bao grabbed Chu Jin's hand, his tone somewhat ingratiating, "Mommy, you have to promise me, after I tell you, you won't get angry, you won't hit me, and especially not break the gentleman's agreement like Daddy did, a real gentleman should use his mouth, not his hands."

Chu Jin nodded gently, "Okay, I'll do as you say, now tell me."

Seeing this, Bao Bao felt relieved and continued, "I... I took Daddy's cigarettes..."

"What else!" Mo Zhixuan demanded in a harsh tone.

Chu Jin's gaze was tender, "What else?"

Bao Bao swallowed hard, feeling something was off—the tenderness from Mommy was scary.

"Spit it out, once you do, Mommy absolutely won't spank you," Chu Jin said, reaching out to touch Bao Bao's head.

Bao Bao touched his bottom, looking pitiful, "Mommy, my little bottom hurts, can I not say it?"

Chu Jin shook her head, "No, you cannot."

"Mommy..." Bao Bao pulled at Chu Jin's hand, rocking his body, starting to act coquettishly.

"Stand up straight!" Chu Jin suddenly became stern, "Confess to lighten your punishment; resist, and it will be harsher!"

Bao Bao's heart trembled, and he instantly stopped wriggling and trying to butter her up with sweet words.

When Mommy got angry, it was far worse than when Daddy did.

Indeed, what they said on TV was true, the weather in June, a woman's face, they change in an instant.

Mommy's face change was faster than flipping a book!

Scary!

Terrible!

"I took Daddy's cigarettes, then I tried a little bit, and gave other kids a little bit to try too... because Daddy said, right, that good things should be shared with everyone... Mommy, did I do the right thing?" Bao Bao gave Chu Jin a big smile, the saying goes, don't hit a smiling face, Mommy must think he is too cute to want to hit him.

"Was it just a little bit? Be honest with Mommy, how many cigarettes did you secretly take!" Mo Zhixuan said coldly.

He didn't know about this until a parent came to complain.

They said Bao Bao took their children to secretly smoke, even getting a five-year-old addicted to cigarettes.

A mere five-year-old, addicted to cigarettes because of Bao Bao, and the child was a little girl...

How could this not make Mo Zhixuan angry?

Bao Bao, only four years old, knew to secretly take cigarettes to smoke, leading other children to smoke as well—what would happen when he grew older if not to turn the world upside down?

"Not... not much..." Bao Bao lowered his head, "Just one pack..."

One pack of cigarettes contains 12 cartons.

A child secretly taking 12 cartons of cigarettes—this was a very serious problem!

Chu Jin's expression also gradually became serious.

With a "smack," Mo Zhixuan swung the ruler down hard on Bao Bao's bottom.

Bao Bao's lips puckered, about to burst into tears.

Chu Jin spoke up coldly, "Mo Jingxing, no crying!"

Bao Bao forcefully swallowed his cry, sporting an expression of wanting but not daring to cry, truly aggrieved.

"Who told you to secretly take Daddy's cigarettes? And who told you to lead other kids to smoke? Mo Jingxing, I'm asking you, who gave you such boldness!" Chu Jin's face was devoid of any expression.

When it came to educating her child, she wouldn't indulge him excessively—when it was time to discipline, she would discipline.

Chapter 854: why can dad do it, but I can't?

Jade must be carved to shape, just as people must learn to know righteousness.

Bao Bao shivered in fear, his voice still carrying a sob, looking extremely aggrieved as he said, "It was Daddy, it was Daddy who gave me the courage."

Mo Zhixuan's face was a picture of astonishment, What nonsense is this little brat spouting? What does this have to do with him?

"You little rascal, what are you blabbering about!" Mo Zhixuan gave Bao Bao's bottom another severe smack.

Bao Bao covered his bottom with both hands, looking particularly wronged as he said, "Daddy, I remember you taught me before that children shouldn't be too selfish, that they should learn to share. If there's something good, we must share it with other children, so I shared the cigarette with other children."

In Bao Bao's eyes, cigarettes were the best things.

Sharing the best things was not wrong at all.

Mo Zhixuan, with a sentiment of resenting that iron could not become steel, said, "I said good things; are cigarettes good things?"

The tears welled up in Bao Bao's eyes, "Then if cigarettes are not good things, why do you have to smoke them every day?"

Mo Zhixuan: "... " This is truly his son! Successfully dragged into the pit by him.

Even worse, he had no words with which to refute.

Chu Jin gave Mo Zhixuan a glance, her eyes seemingly saying, [Like father, like son.]

A shiver went through Mo Zhixuan's heart; he almost didn't dare to look Chu Jin in the eyes.

Mo Zhixuan indeed had a strong addiction to smoking; during the period Chu Jin was pregnant, he had once managed to quit, but after Bao Bao and Bei Bei turned one, he started smoking again.

Chu Jin looked at Bao Bao, "Mo Jingxing, stand up straight, adjust your attitude. Tell me, do you know your mistake?"

Bao Bao immediately stood up straight, looking at Chu Jin with tear-filled eyes.

"I don't know!" Bao Bao pouted his little mouth, "I'm not wrong! Mommy is biased! Daddy smokes all the time and Mommy doesn't care, and I've only smoked a few times. Yet Mommy helps Daddy to beat me! Mommy is biased! I don't want to love Mommy anymore!"

Bao Bao felt very aggrieved, Mommy was too biased.

Chu Jin took the punishment ruler from Mo Zhixuan and spoke indifferently, "Hold out your hand."

Bao Bao hesitated, then stretched out his small hand in a soft voice, "Mommy, can you be gentle? I am your own son after all!"

"Do you know your mistake?" Chu Jin's expression was still very cold.

"I'm not wrong! Mommy hitting her son doesn't require a reason, it's natural and right! But I'm not wrong! I won't admit to something I didn't do!" Bao Bao was a stubborn child; once he stood his ground, not even ten bulls could pull him back.

Chu Jin swung the ruler and struck Bao Bao's little hand harshly.

A sound that made one's scalp tingle echoed through the air.

And with it, Mo Zhixuan's heart trembled as well.

This was his first time seeing Chu Jin so angry with Bao Bao.

This was also the first time Chu Jin had genuinely punished Bao Bao. Bao Bao and Bei Bei might be mischievous, but they were usually obedient, so this was a rare instance of her being harsh.

Bao Bao shouted loudly, "I'm not wrong! I just didn't do anything wrong! Why can Daddy smoke and I can't? Mommy is biased!"

Chu Jin looked at Bao Bao, then slowly said, "Mo Jingxing, are you saying you won't accept this?"

"Yes! I don't accept it! I'm not wrong!" Mommy is biased; she never minds when Daddy smokes! Bao Bao felt incredibly wronged. Holding back tears, his pitiful look softened Chu Jin's heart as well.

However, at times like this, she couldn't let her maternal instincts take over; she had to make Bao Bao realize his mistake.

"Daddy is an adult, are you? You're only four years old. You say Mommy is biased, then tell me, which family's four-year-old child has learned to smoke?" Chu Jin casually picked up a pack of cigarettes from the table, "Tell Mommy, what does it say on this pack of cigarettes?"

Bao Bao calmed down a bit, "Smoking is harmful to health, underage individuals prohibited from smoking."

"Do you know what 'underage' means?" Chu Jin continued to ask.

"I don't know." Bao Bao shook his head.

"Do you know what 'prohibited from smoking' means?" Chu Jin asked again.

Bao Bao nodded, saying in an aggrieved tone, "I know, it means you can't smoke."

Chu Jin nodded, then went on to explain, "Underage includes little babies like you, all children under eighteen years old. Cigarettes contain nicotine, which is a drug. If a little baby like you takes it in, it can damage your lungs and create a dependence. Daddy and Mommy stop you from smoking for your health. Adults have their world, and children have theirs. Things like cigarettes aren't for someone of your age to touch."

"Oh." Bao Bao nodded, reflecting deeply, seeming to realize he was indeed wrong...

"Do you know what's wrong now?" Chu Jin continued.

"I know..." Bao Bao hung his head and then added, "So if cigarettes contain nicotine, which is a drug, why is it that Daddy is okay after smoking them?"

Chu Jin's eyes softened and in a gentle tone she said, "Because Daddy is an adult, dear. An adult's organs are fully developed, unlike those of a little baby like you."

"But..." Bao Bao scratched his head, "the pack says smoking is harmful to health." Adults are strange; they treasure things that are harmful to their bodies.

Mo Zhixuan walked over, half-kneeled beside Bao Bao, "Bao Bao, you're right, smoking is harmful to health. So, starting today, Daddy will no longer smoke, and you'll monitor Daddy. If Daddy smokes again, you'll punish Daddy, okay?" Sometimes, parents need to set a good example for their children.

Children have a strong capacity for imitation; they subconsciously mimic everything they see.

Mo Zhixuan is a good father and one who knows to correct his mistakes; he will be a good role model for Bao Bao and Bei Bei.

Bao Bao nodded his head, "Okay, Daddy."

"Good boy." Mo Zhixuan patted Bao Bao's head.

"Good Daddy." Bao Bao also patted Mo Zhixuan's head.

Mo Zhixuan: "... Why did he have the illusion that he was the son?

Chu Jin chuckled lightly at the side; this father and son duo were truly a pair of treasures.

"As you realize your mistake, make sure you don't do it again, okay?" Chu Jin continued, "The world of children is different from the world of adults. There are certain things you do at certain ages. You're still young, and there are many things that kids your age shouldn't be doing."

"Mhm," Bao Bao nodded earnestly, "Mommy, I understand. I won't do it again."

"That's good then." Chu Jin nodded, satisfied.

Seeing that Chu Jin was no longer angry, Bei Bei dared to approach, "Brother, does it hurt? Have some candy, it will be sweet and the pain will go away." Bei Bei pushed aside one candy into Bao Bao's mouth.

"Thank you, Sister." Bao Bao politely thanked her.

The affection between this brother and sister was still very strong.

Chu Jin casually took out a bottle of Clear Heart Pill from her space and handed it to Bao Bao, "Give these to the other children tomorrow." The Clear Heart Pills could eliminate the harm of cigarettes and even break the addiction.

Bao Bao reached out to take the porcelain bottle, "Thank you, Mommy."

"Does it still hurt? Let Mom apply some medicine for you," Chu Jin reached out to pick up Bao Bao, a trace of distress flashing through her eyes, "Be good from now on and don't worry Dad and Mom."

Clinging to Chu Jin's neck, Bao Bao cooed, "It hurts, it hurts so much, Mommy. I'm your dear son, could you really bear to do it? Does it hurt me more or Mommy's heart more when you hit me?" Bao Bao was a little devil; he understood everything.

"Mom doesn't feel the pain at all," Chu Jin said with a laugh, "If you make mistakes again, Mom will spank your little butt until it blooms."

"Mommy, how could you bear to hit me when I'm so cute?" Bao Bao continued to act spoiled; the squeaky wheel gets the grease.

Bao Bao truly loved to act spoiled; sometimes, compared to Bei Bei, Bao Bao seemed more like a little girl.

Chu Jin couldn't help but chuckle, "Where are you cute? I didn't notice that."

Bao Bao pretended to sigh deeply, "Ah, you women, always saying one thing and meaning another. Everyone knows I'm cute from head to toe."

At the side, Bei Bei immediately made a gagging gesture, "Brother, if you keep this up, I'm going to throw up."

Chu Jin patted Bao Bao's butt, "Don't move, Mom is going to apply the medicine." The red and swollen area on the little bottom showed that Mo Zhixuan had been quite severe.

To say it didn't hurt would be a lie.

It's just that it couldn't be shown.

Mo Zhixuan took the medicine bottle from Chu Jin's hand, "Let me do it."

"Daddy, be gentle, remember at all times that I am your precious son." Bao Bao reminded him.

Mo Zhixuan said without changing his expression, "You came with a phone recharge."

Bao Bao laughed, "Liar! Daddy's lying! How could a phone recharge ever come with a cute baby like me? If anything, a gift should be someone like Sister!"

"Mean brother, am I not cute?" Bei Bei hit Bao Bao lightly.

Watching the brother and sister, a smile flickered across Chu Jin's brows.

"Mo Zhixuan, let's take a trip to Poland Mountain before Bao Bao and Bei Bei start school," Chu Jin looked up at Mo Zhixuan.

Ever since Bao Bao and Bei Bei were born, she hadn't been to Poland Mountain.

According to the traditions of Superpower World, children couldn't be taken to the mountain before they were three years old. Now that Bao Bao and Bei Bei were four, Chu Jin wanted to take them to see the two elderly people on the mountain.

There was still a month before Bao Bao and Bei Bei started school, so there was enough time.

"Okay," Mo Zhixuan nodded his head, "It's also time to go up and see the elders."

Four years had passed in the blink of an eye.

"Mommy, where is Poland Mountain? Who are we going to see?" Bei Bei asked curiously.

"Poland Mountain is on the west side of Superpower World; there live two grandparents who are Mommy's lifesavers," Chu Jin explained.

However, the children were not focused on the two elders, but on the mountain itself, "Mommy, is it fun on the mountain?"

There were no mountains in Superpower World, and the two little ones had only seen mountains in cartoons, so they were quite excited.

"Of course, the mountain is fun," Chu Jin nodded.

"Is it as fun as the forest where Bear Brother and Bear Two live?" Bao Bao continued to ask.

Chu Jin smiled, "It's much more fun than Bear Brother and Bear Two's forest. It has wildflowers, wild fruits, wild rabbits..."

"I want to go, I want to go!" Bei Bei seemed very excited, then asked, "Mommy, when do we leave?"

Bao Bao was equally excited, "Mommy, let's go now."

"Don't rush, we'll leave tomorrow," Chu Jin replied, "Let Daddy finish his work first today."

Bao Bao was so excited he forgot the pain in his bottom, "Then I won't sleep tonight, I want to wait until tomorrow morning."

Bei Bei said with great joy, "I don't want to sleep either, brother, let's wait together until tomorrow morning."

The two little ones happily set their goal, but by around 8 p.m., both were asleep in bed like little pigs, the kind that not even thunder could wake up.

Chu Jin picked up her phone and took a photo of Bao Bao and Bei Bei, and uploaded it to Weibo.

"The Return of the Past" V: "Two little pigs. [Image.jpg]"

Ever since she had the children, Chu Jin's Weibo has been taken over by Bao Bao and Bei Bei, with no trace of Mo Zhixuan to be found.

At this time, Mo Zhixuan was sitting in his office, dealing with work.

Because he was going to Poland Mountain tomorrow, he had to finish delegating some tasks tonight.

Chu Jin was on his mind, and when the Weibo notification came through, Mo Zhixuan subconsciously picked up his phone, a smile tugging at his lips, which froze when he read the actual post. After scrolling down a few pages, the look on Mo Zhixuan's face grew even worse.

On Chu Jin's Weibo, there was no longer any sign of him.

Ever since Bao Bao and Bei Bei arrived, it seemed to Mo Zhixuan that Chu Jin didn't love him anymore; all she ever did was post photos of their two little cubs.

There was no place for him in the home anymore.

After thinking for a while, Mo Zhixuan commented under that Weibo post.

After leaving his comment, he switched off his phone with gloom and carried on working.

Yet, within minutes, his comment was liked enough to trend.

This generation of netizens was exceptionally brilliant, with a wide variety of replies to the post.

Chu Jin also burst into laughter when she saw Mo Zhixuan's comment.

It read simply—

I'm jealous!

Four candid words that laid bare his bitter feelings.

Some even turned Mo Zhixuan's image into an emoji.

Cold features paired with those few words: Baby's got a mood!

And comments like, "Don't be upset, after all, the two little pigs are your own flesh and blood, it'd be a pity to throw them away now when they are already so big."

"[Emoji/Crying with laughter] I get the feeling like the goddess is raising three kids."

"This dog food is also a blessing for me to eat!"

"I feel for my goddess, actually raising three babies."

"I feel sorry for Boss Mo, but I still want to laugh."

After speeding up the process of finishing his work, Mo Zhixuan returned to the imperial palace.

He thought Chu Jin would be waiting for him bathed and fresh in the bedroom, but to his surprise, the bedroom was empty, not a single person in sight.

There's nothing more desolate in life than this.

Mo Zhixuan silently took a bath, changed into his pajamas, and went to the children's room next door.

Sure enough, the bed in the children's room had more than just the two little pigs asleep—Miss Chu herself was also there.

Mo Zhixuan sighed and silently walked over, picked up Chu Jin horizontally, and headed to the bedroom.

It wasn't that Chu Jin was raising three children.

It was clear he had gained an extra daughter!

After carrying Chu Jin back to the bedroom, Mo Zhixuan went back to the children's room to tuck in the two restless little ones properly.

Before covering them with blankets, Mo Zhixuan also took a photo and uploaded it to Weibo.

"First Encounter" V: "Not a single one saves me worry, it's clear that I've gained a daughter."

This Weibo post was a retort to the netizen who mocked Chu Jin for raising three kids.

Once this Weibo was posted.

[Boss Mo is jealous] immediately topped the trending search list.

Weibo is the realm of the mundane world, not connected to the Three Realms.

Mo Zhixuan was also very careful when posting these photos, and since Bao Bao and Bei Bei turned one, he hadn't shared any more frontal photos of them.

"Such sweet love."

"Boss Mo, you look so cute when you're jealous."

"The goddess is a goddess indeed, even her sleeping pose is so beautiful."

"What did I do wrong? Why did I have to scroll to this Weibo post?"

**

The next day.

After bidding farewell to the elder Mrs. Mo and Zhao Yan, Chu Jin and Mo Zhixuan set off for Poland Mountain with Bao Bao and Bei Bei.

The family, dressed in matching outfits, attracted countless second glances as they walked down the street.

Along the way, Bao Bao and Bei Bei were exceptionally excited, hopping and skipping ahead with Little Grey and Little White flanking them on either side.

Cute pets, cute kids—such a scene was extraordinarily pleasing to the eye.

Chu Jin and Mo Zhixuan walked behind the two little ones, hand in hand, their smiles softening the edges around their eyes and lips.

The breeze was gentle, and the sunlight, not too harsh.

Days like this were truly wonderful.

"Daddy, look, there's an 'airey' in the sky," Bao Bao excitedly pointed to the airplane above.

"It's an airplane," Mo Zhixuan corrected with a straight face.

"Airplane, a-i-r, airplane," Mo Zhixuan patiently explained.

"A-i-r, airey." Bao Bao studied earnestly, but his tongue just couldn't get around that bend.

Chu Jin looked at Bao Bao and spoke softly, "Bao Bao, follow mommy, it's air."

"Airey." Bao Bao looked at Chu Jin, seriously repeating the word, and then, with a puzzled face, he turned to Chu Jin, "Mommy, it's 'airey' right? Airey. Why do you and daddy always say I'm not pronouncing it right?"

To Bao Bao, 'airey' and airplane sounded exactly the same.

The pronunciation was obviously the same, he thought his mom and dad were nitpicking.

This scene reminded Chu Jin of three years ago when Bao Bao was one, and also couldn't tell the difference between 'airey' and airplane.

Who would have thought that now, at four years old, Bao Bao still couldn't distinguish 'airey' from airplane.

Chu Jin shook her head helplessly.

Seeing this.

Bei Bei quickly covered Bao Bao's mouth, "Brother, don't talk for a while. I'll tell you, you're almost making mommy and daddy mad. Let me teach you, a-i-r, airey! Aireyplane!"

Mo Zhixuan: "..."

Chu Jin: "..."

And there was Bei Bei, looking at Chu Jin and Mo Zhixuan with a face that said [Hurry up and praise me].

Mo Zhixuan took a glance at Bao Bao and Bei Bei, and with a bit of resignation, said, "Fine, if you say it's airey, then it's airey."

In a month, Bao Bao and Bei Bei would officially start first grade. By then, let the teacher take care of it.

To get to Poland Mountain, they had to walk along a mountain path, and then cross a river.

Originally, Mo Zhixuan could have used a flying machine, but in order to give Bao Bao and Bei Bei a more pleasant experience, he decided to take the normal route.

It was a good opportunity to enjoy the scenery along the way.

This was the first time Bao Bao and Bei Bei had been on a bamboo raft, and they yelled excitedly, "Wow, this river is so big, even bigger than the sea, I really like it here."

There were no seas in the Superpower World, but Bao Bao and Bei Bei had seen the sea on TV.

Chu Jin laughed and said, "This river is nothing compared to the sea; the sea is over ten times bigger."

Bei Bei immediately looked at Chu Jin with envy, "Mommy, have you seen the sea?"

Chu Jin nodded, "Of course, I've been there."

Bao Bao also ran over to sit on Chu Jin's lap, "Mommy, why didn't you take me and sister when you went to see the sea? Did you go with daddy? Mommy, you're biased!"

Chu Jin stroked Bao Bao's head, "You weren't around at that time." She indeed had gone to the seaside with Mo Zhixuan, that was six or seven years ago, when they were in the ordinary world.

"Where were my brother and I then?" Bei Bei looked up at Chu Jin, batting her big eyes.

Mo Zhixuan spoke mildly, explaining, "Back then, you didn't get kids with phone credit top-ups, so you two weren't around yet."

Bao Bao and Bei Bei looked at Mo Zhixuan, bewildered: "..."

Chu Jin nodded in agreement, "What your dad said is right, kids weren't part of the deal with phone credit top-ups at that time, so neither of you were around yet."

Bao Bao looked at Bei Bei, and Bei Bei looked at Bao Bao, the two little ones staring at each other with wide eyes.

Mommy and daddy had said more than once that they were gifts from phone credit top-ups; surely they couldn't really be, could they?

Looking at the bewildered Bao Bao and Bei Bei.

Chu Jin and Mo Zhixuan chuckled softly to themselves.

The river beneath Poland Mountain was both wide and expansive, with beautiful scenery on its surface, including wild ducks and white swans drifting on the water.

Chapter 855: Disappearance

Mo Zhixuan took out a fishing rod and line from the space and said to Bao Bao and Bei Bei, "Bao Bao and Bei Bei, shall we fish for mommy to eat, okay?"

"Okay." The two little ones immediately ran over from the other end of the bamboo raft.

After Mo Zhixuan prepared the bait, he handed over two short fishing rods to Bao Bao and Bei Bei. The toddlers sat neatly on the edge of the bamboo raft, staring at the floats, completely still.

Little White and Little Grey lay down next to them.

The scene was exceptionally harmonious and beautiful.

However, the scene didn't last long before Bao Bao couldn't sit still any longer. "Daddy, why aren't the fish biting my hook?"

Seeing that Bei Bei and Mo Zhixuan had already caught several fish, Bao Bao anxiously scratched his head and ears.

It's hard to tell who the child takes after, he seems to have no patience whatsoever.

"Brother, don't worry, the fish I catch can be for you to eat," Bei Bei turned back to look at Bao Bao.

Bei Bei was calm and composed, always sitting steadily there like a little adult, and indeed, he had caught quite a few fish.

Bao Bao simply gave up fishing, threw away his rod, and ran to Chu Jin's side, "Mommy, I'll help you grill the fish."

Chu Jin had already set up a simple grill to cook the fish.

Because they had come prepared, they brought plenty of barbecue supplies.

Chu Jin touched Bao Bao's little nose with her hand and said with a smile, "I think you're here to make trouble."

"Not at all!" Bao Bao hugged Chu Jin's arm, "I'm mommy's little cotton-padded jacket; of course, I have to help mommy."

Chu Jin smiled helplessly, "Give mommy a kiss."

Bao Bao tiptoed and left a saliva mark on Chu Jin's face.

The scene of the family of four on the bamboo raft was exceptionally warm and sweet.

At the same time, today was Lin Xiyuan and Zhou Yiheng's engagement ceremony.

Originally, Lin Xiyuan had planned to get engaged later, but, unable to withstand the urging of both parents, the couple decided to set the date for today.

After all, both Lin Xiyuan and Zhou Yiheng were not young, and it was normal for their parents to be anxious.

Early in the morning, the Duanmu family headed to the hotel.

The Zhou family, being quite respectable in the Superpower World, had invited many dignitaries to this engagement feast.

The event was very lively.

Mo Qingyi and Zhou Jin accompanied Lin Xiyuan in the makeup room.

Looking at the beautiful reflection in the mirror, Zhou Jin said with a smile, "Xiyuan is really beautiful today."

Mo Qingyi also smiled and said, "Yes, they say happiness brings a glow, and Xiyuan is truly radiant like a flower today."

Lin Xiyuan smiled blissfully, "Really?"

"Of course it's true. Xiyuan, could Qingyi and I lie to you?" Zhou Jin was very happy today. Zhou Yiheng and Lin Xiyuan were finally reaping the fruits of their love, and she was overjoyed.

Lin Xiyuan turned back to look at the door of the makeup room, "Why haven't Big Brother Duanmu and Yi Heng come over yet?"

Mo Qingyi continued, "Xiyuan, you don't need to worry. Duanmu only left a little while ago, and there is still some time before the auspicious hour."

Since Zhou Yiheng had not yet appeared, Zhou Jin had sent Duanmu Zhe to hurry him along.

A hint of shyness flashed across Lin Xiyuan's face as she said insincerely, "I'm not in a hurry at all."

Zhou Jin and Mo Qingyi saw through it all yet said nothing.

The engagement banquet was set for midday, but with the auspicious hour upon them, there was still no sign of the groom-to-be.

At this point, Lin Xiyuan was already somewhat anxious and restless. She looked at Zhou Jin, "Auntie, what's happening? Why hasn't Yi Heng appeared yet? He couldn't have... regretted it, could he?"

With so many people attending the engagement banquet today, if Zhou Yiheng backed out now, how would she ever face anyone again?

Zhou Jin patted Lin Xiyuan's back, comforting her, "Xiyuan, don't worry needlessly. Yi Heng isn't that kind of person. There must be some matter that's delayed him! Little Zhe has already gone to check, so don't fret."

Mo Qingyi also tried to reassure her, "Yeah, Xiyuan, don't think too much of it. Surely cousin has been held up by something."

Lin Xiyuan tightly gripped Mo Qingyi's wrist, "Sister-in-law, but I'm really worried! Could it be that something has happened to Yi Heng?" Tears streamed from Lin Xiyuan's eyes as she clung to Mo Qingyi's hand, her nails digging deep into Mo Qingyi's flesh.

Mo Qingyi also felt a pang of pain but endured it without speaking. After all, Lin Xiyuan hadn't done it on purpose. Anyone in this situation would be hard-pressed to keep their composure.

This Zhou Yiheng, really!

How could he dare to be late on such an important day! Where would this leave Lin Xiyuan and the Lin family's face?

Lin Xiyuan's parents were also very worried, speaking with displeasure, "What exactly is going on with Yi Heng? To be late for something as important as an engagement! Does he have no sense of time at all? There are so many people waiting outside! How are we supposed to explain this to the guests?"

Lin Hong, angered, slammed his glass down onto the table hard.

The Zhou family parents immediately apologized, "My dear relatives, we are so sorry. Maybe there's a traffic jam on the road. I've consulted an expert, and there are two auspicious hours today. I'll have someone go and rush Yi Heng. Maybe he'll arrive any minute now."

Lin Xiyuan let go of Mo Qingyi and went to support Lin Hong, comforting him, "Dad, don't be angry yet. I understand Yi Heng; he is not one to be late without good reason. He surely has been delayed by something!"

Lin Hong glanced at Lin Xiyuan, sighed, and as a father, what more could he really say after his daughter had put it like that?

No matter what, Zhou Yiheng was the man Lin Xiyuan had chosen herself.

Zhou Jin whispered to Mo Qingyi, "Qingyi, call Little Zhe."

Mo Qingyi nodded and quietly left the makeup room to make a call to Duanmu Zhe from the restroom.

Duanmu Zhe answered quickly, and Mo Qingyi immediately asked, "Duanmu, where are you? Have you found cousin? Everyone here is almost frantic!"

Duanmu Zhe was also very worried, "Qingyi, I haven't found cousin, either. There's no one at home, nobody at the office, and he's not answering his phone. You try to keep things stable over there; I'll keep looking!"

"Okay," Mo Qingyi frowned slightly, "let's keep in touch."

This Zhou Yiheng, really! To pull a disappearing act during his own engagement banquet!

This isn't child's play!

After hanging up, Mo Qingyi returned to the makeup room and quietly pulled Zhou Jin aside to inform her of the situation.

Zhou Jin's complexion turned rather ugly after hearing this!

What in the world was Zhou Yiheng thinking! On such an important day, to be missing!

"Mom, don't panic just yet. Maybe cousin had an emergency and will be back soon," Mo Qingyi tried to console Zhou Jin.

Zhou Jin sighed, "This child has never given us peace of mind since he was young!"

She should never have introduced Zhou Yiheng to Lin Xiyuan.

Inside the makeup room, the Zhou family parents were continuously comforting the Lin family parents and Grandfather Lin.

The Lin family parents' faces were extremely displeased.

Grandfather Lin, however, was comparatively optimistic, smiling, "Young people, they're bound to make mistakes sometimes. Don't worry, don't worry, let's wait for him a little longer." Grandfather Lin was a very kind old man, his only wish being for Lin Xiyuan to be happy.

"Dad, look at what time it is! Is this just a slight delay?" Lin Hong was very angry, "It's already bad enough that he hasn't arrived, but he hasn't even called! That's just outrageous! Xiyuan, I've said it before, men like him are not reliable, but you wouldn't listen!"

Some men, once they betray you, will betray you a second time.

But Lin Xiyuan just wouldn't listen to any of it.

Insistent on getting back with Zhou Yiheng.

"My in-law, please, calm down, calm down," Zhou's father bowed continuously in front of Lin Hong, "This is all Yi Heng's fault, rest assured, after the engagement party is over, we will certainly give him a good lesson. We are truly sorry to you and Xiyuan." Having a good-for-nothing son, in the end, it's the parents who suffer the humiliation.

The parents of the Zhou family were now angrier than anyone else. That good-for-nothing, they don't even know where he has gone! And yet, as his parents, they had no place to vent their frustration.

Lin Xiyuan sighed, "Let it be, uncle and aunt, now is not the time to be angry. I believe that Yi Heng is delayed for some reason. Let's go to the front and steady the guests. Maybe Yi Heng will arrive soon."

Upon hearing this, the Zhou family's parents looked at Lin Xiyuan with immense gratitude. Lin Xiyuan was truly a considerate and sensible child, the Zhou family was fortunate to have such a wonderful daughter-in-law.

"Xiyuan, thank you," Zhou's mother said, holding Lin Xiyuan's hand excitedly.

"Auntie, there's no need for this," Lin Xiyuan replied understandingly, "we are all family here."

The guests in the hall were all whispering among themselves.

All sorts of gossip were circulating.

Everyone was speculating whether Zhou Yiheng had got cold feet and wanted to back out of the marriage.

Otherwise, why would he be missing until now, without showing his face?

But with the appearance of Lin Xiyuan and the Lin family's parents, the situation gradually stabilized.

Duanmu Zhe quietly walked into the banquet hall and tugged on Mo Qingyi's sleeve.

Upon seeing Duanmu Zhe, Mo Qingyi's eyes lit up, "You're here, where's cousin? Hurry, have him go backstage to change his clothes!"

Duanmu Zhe's expression was somewhat grim, "Cousin, he... Yan Yi is... pregnant, cousin is now at the hospital with her."

Yan Yi was the girl who had a one-night stand with Zhou Yiheng two years ago.

But hadn't Zhou Yiheng already severed all ties with her? How could Yan Yi be pregnant again?

Mo Qingyi frowned and said, "Is the child cousin's?"

Duanmu Zhe nodded.

Looking at the stage and then back at Duanmu Zhe, Mo Qingyi said, "Zhou Yiheng really is a scoundrel! I thought he had turned over a new leaf, but it turns out he can't change his true nature! What do we do now? Today is his engagement day with Lin Xiyuan!"

On the engagement stage, Lin Xiyuan's smile remained unchanged, oblivious to the fact that Zhou Yiheng had already changed his heart and even had a child with another woman!

This was simply unforgivable!

At the wedding stage, Lin Xiyuan still looked understanding, charmingly smiling. With a few words, she dispelled the guests' doubts.

At that moment, her phone rang but she didn't immediately answer it. Instead, she whispered politely to Zhou's mother before heading towards the restroom.

Only after entering the restroom and locking the door did Lin Xiyuan slide to answer the call.

Not knowing what was said on the other end, Lin Xiyuan's lips curved into a faint smile, "All right, I'm aware. You've done a good job with this. Now that there is a child, take good care of it."

After finishing these words, Lin Xiyuan hung up the phone, washed her hands, and left the restroom.

When she returned to the hall, the atmosphere had changed, and people's gazes were drawn to the large screen behind the engagement stage.

Instead of displaying a heartwarming video, the large screen showed Zhou Yiheng himself, from his background it seemed he was currently in a hospital.

Seeing this, a hint of mockery flickered through Lin Xiyuan's downcast eyes.

Zhou Yiheng's face on the big screen looked extremely haggard, his lips were so dry they were peeling.

Zhou's mother tightly grasped Zhou's father's hand, a bit uneasily she said, "What is Yi Heng trying to do? This child!"

Zhou's father was also very worried, but he still offered reassurance, "Don't worry, this kid always has lots of tricks up his sleeve, maybe he's just playing some new game."

On the big screen, Zhou Yiheng slowly began to speak, "Xiyuan, I'm sorry, I have failed you! It's my fault, please forgive me, I cannot attend the engagement party today... I... I wish you find a man better than me, I'm not worthy of you!"

"Uncle and Auntie, I am sorry that I have let you down!" Zhou Yiheng slowly bowed.

No one expected that a proper engagement party could turn out this way.

The crowd was abuzz with discussions, and for a moment, all sorts of comments were made, their gazes sharp as knives, shooting towards both families' parents and Lin Xiyuan.

Lin Hong had a heart attack due to anger and fell to the ground,

"Old Lin! Old Lin!" Lin Lan hurriedly searched her bag for heart pills.

Zhou's father and mother were so angry that their eyes turned red, and they ordered the servant beside them, "Go! Go find that ungrateful son and break his legs! Quickly go!" Lin Xiyuan was also chosen by Zhou Yiheng himself! He didn't look for a girlfriend for two years because of Lin Xiyuan, and now, he actually gave up on Lin Xiyuan! And right before everyone's eyes!

So many people were watching!

How could the Lin family and Lin Xiyuan save face?

With a "slap," the bouquet in Lin Xiyuan's hand fell to the ground, and then she covered her mouth and ran away.

If it were any girl, being publicly rejected would be unbearable. After such an incident, how could Lin Xiyuan continue to hold her place in the Three Realms!

"Xiyuan!" Lin Lan and Lin Hong immediately followed Lin Xiyuan.

They knew of Lin Xiyuan's temperament; after such an incident, she definitely couldn't bear it.

Lin Xiyuan ran straight to the top floor of the hotel.

Lin Hong and Lin Lan followed behind, their faces filled with fear.

"Xiyuan, what are you doing? Come back with mom," Lin Lan fought back tears, reaching out her hand toward Lin Xiyuan.

"No, I can't go back with you like this, mom, don't come over..." Lin Xiyuan kept retreating backward, and behind her, just one or two meters away, was the edge of the rooftop. Lin Xiyuan might lose control of her emotions and fall off at any moment.

Lin Lan was so frightened that she immediately stopped in her tracks, "Okay, okay, I won't come over, Xiyuan, don't get excited, stay calm, mom and dad only have you as a daughter, you mustn't do anything foolish."

Lin Xiyuan stepped back to the edge of the rooftop and stopped, "Dad, mom, it's my fault, I have embarrassed you! Sorry! I shouldn't have disobeyed you."

Before they knew it, the bottom of the building was crowded with onlookers.

"Someone's going to jump off the building!"

"If you're going to jump, just do it. I have to go to work! So I don't waste time here!"

Before long, the sound of police sirens filled the air.

While dispersing the crowd, the police also began making rescue preparations on the ground.

After hearing the news of Lin Xiyuan's potential suicide, the Zhou family parents, Zhou Jin, Mo Qingyi, and Duanmu Zhe also rushed over.

"Xiyuan, a thousand faults, ten thousand faults, it's all the fault of me as a father, it's I who did not teach that unfilial son well, it's our Zhou family who has wronged you! Will you please come over?" Zhou's father, with eyes slightly reddened, spoke to Lin Xiyuan.

"Xiyuan, rest assured, we will make that unfilial son apologize to you. You will always be the daughter-in-law recognized by both your uncle and me. Come here, it's dangerous there," Zhou's mother reached out her hand towards Lin Xiyuan.

Lin Xiyuan, her face covered with tears, shook her head, "Uncle and auntie, you have been very kind; it's not your fault, you don't need to apologize. It's just that Zhou Yiheng and I are not destined to be, I'm too naive; I've been fooled once, and now I'm foolishly fooled again, it's all my fault, all my fault..."

Mo Qingyi took a few steps forward and slowly said, "Xiyuan, three-legged toads may be hard to find, but men with two legs are plentiful. After all, it's just a man. In life, who hasn't come across some scumbags? Look at the bright side, you're the only daughter of your uncle and aunt. If something happened to you, what would your uncle and aunt do? Please come over, okay?"

Chapter 856:

Mo Qingyi step by step moved forward, trying to pull Lin Xiyuan back from the brink of death.

Lin Xiyuan was too foolish, actually choosing to end her own life over a man.

This rooftop was very high, totaling 58 stories—if she really fell, the consequences were unimaginable.

Lin Xiyuan watched Mo Qingyi, with her lips tightly pursed and tears streaming down her face.

Duanmu Zhe looked at Mo Qingyi's back, his eyes filled with worry.

"Don't come any closer!" Just as Mo Qingyi was about to reach Lin Xiyuan, Lin Xiyuan suddenly raised her arm, "If you come any closer, I'll jump down!"

Mo Qingyi immediately halted, retreating several steps, "Calm down, I won't come any closer."

Lin Xiyuan looked up at Lin Hong and Lin Lan, her voice hoarse as she spoke, "Mom and Dad, I'm sorry! Pretend you never had a daughter like me." As she finished speaking, Lin Xiyuan spread her arms, leaned back, and fell straight down towards the ground.

An exclamation rang out from the surroundings.

Lin Hong collapsed on the ground, his heart utterly chilled. At this moment, he felt as if he was no different from being dead.

It was then that Duanmu Zhe leaped into the air, his figure disappearing from people's view.

In the blink of an eye, one could see Duanmu Zhe grabbing Lin Xiyuan's hand with one hand, while the other clung tightly to an outcrop on the edge of the rooftop.

His entire body hung in the air above the 58-story building, as if he might fall at any moment.

This caused the crowd below, who had gathered to watch, to let out gasp after gasp.

"Little Zhe!" Zhou Jin also exclaimed.

Lin Xiyuan, looking at the man who was holding her right hand, had her eyes flickering with shining tears.

She had gambled correctly.

He had come to save her.

If she couldn't be with him in life,

then in death, he would surely be with her.

With this thought, a glint of light flashed across Lin Xiyuan's eyes.

At that moment, Duanmu Zhe looked down at Lin Xiyuan, gritting his teeth, "Hold on to me tight, don't let go."

The veins on the hand Duanmu Zhe had on the rooftop's edge were popping out.

The strength in his body was gradually depleting; he might not be able to hold on much longer.

Beads of sweat were also breaking out on his forehead almost instantly.

Just then, a black whip, like a swift serpent, coiled tightly around his hand.

The voice of Mo Qingyi came from above, "Duanmu, hold on to the whip!"

Duanmu Zhe nodded his head and then, with a surge of strength, he managed to use it to bring himself and Lin Xiyuan safely to the ground.

As soon as they landed, Lin Xiyuan held Duanmu Zhe tightly, crying, "Big Brother Duanmu!"

Duanmu Zhe slightly furrowed his brows, wanting to push Lin Xiyuan away, but he was afraid she might not think straight and attempt to jump again.

It was normal for someone who had been pulled back from the edge of death to be a bit emotional, especially since Lin Xiyuan had just experienced heartbreak, so Mo Qingyi didn't think much of it.

Lin Lan ran over and grabbed Lin Xiyuan, "Yiyuan, you scared Mom to death!"

It was then that Duanmu Zhe gently pushed Lin Xiyuan away and walked over to Mo Qingyi.

"Little Zhe, I really can't thank you enough for today!" Lin Hong said excitedly as he grasped Duanmu Zhe's hand.

If it weren't for Duanmu Zhe, Lin Xiyuan might not have been so fortunate today.

"Uncle Lin, there's no need to be polite, please go comfort Xiyuan," Duanmu Zhe said very politely.

Hearing this, Lin Hong immediately went over to Lin Xiyuan.

Lin Xiyuan and Lin Lan embraced each other, the mother and daughter's weeping resounded, creating a truly moving scene.

Right now, Lin Xiyuan's emotions were the most important.

Zhou Jin, who knew she owed Lin Xiyuan an apology, also went over to comfort Lin Xiyuan.

If it hadn't been for her introduction of Lin Xiyuan and Zhou Yiheng, things would not have turned out like this.

No one noticed that beneath Lin Xiyuan's tears, there was clearly a smile hidden.

Today's incident seemed like she lost.

In reality, she won.

After such a shock, Lin Xiyuan was escorted to the hospital by her parents from the Lin family, accompanied by Zhou family parents.

The fact that something like this happened to Lin Xiyuan was entirely Zhou Yiheng's fault, and by reason and emotion, they ought to accompany Lin Xiyuan. Even if Lin Lan and Lin Hong were unresponsive and cold, they had to bear it.

Zhou Jin and Duanmu Canghai went to take care of the aftermath, with Mo Qingyi and Duanmu Zhe staying to help.

"Little Zhe, you did very well today," Duanmu Canghai said to Duanmu Zhe, praising him.

If anything had truly happened to Lin Xiyuan, the three families of Zhou, Lin, and Duanmu would have surely become sworn enemies.

The Duanmu family and the Lin family had decades of friendship, which had almost been destroyed in an instant.

What a relief, what a relief.

"This is all Yi Heng's fault! That child has yet to settle down! Who knows if this marriage will even happen! Can such a matter be taken as a joke? Playing us all for fools!" Zhou Jin's face showed frustration and disappointment.

Duanmu Canghai turned to Duanmu Zhe, "What exactly is going on with Yi Heng? Since he did not wish to be engaged, why did he not make it clear from the start?"

Such an incident was nothing less than a slap in the face of the Lin family.

To call off an engagement in public! No wonder Lin Xiyuan couldn't help but attempt to jump off the building!

Duanmu Zhe sighed, "I'm not very clear on the specifics, but I do know that Yan Yi seems to be pregnant."

Duanmu Canghai said with a hint of annoyance, "This is absurd! Zhou Jin! You never should have helped to reconcile them in the first place!"

Although Lin Xiyuan was unharmed, she had been humiliated. This incident would definitely leave a scar in the hearts of the Lin family, and recalling it in the future would surely bring discomfort, forever affecting the relationship between the two families.

Zhou Jin also deeply regretted, "How could I have anticipated things would turn out like this!" She had not expected Zhou Yiheng to betray Lin Xiyuan again, as she thought he had truly repented before.

Who would have thought...

Seeing his parents like this, Duanmu Zhe spoke softly, "Since the incident has already occurred, even assigning blame cannot reverse what has happened."

"Duanmu is right, mom and dad, there's no point in spoiling your relationship over this. As long as Xiyuan is fine, that's all that matters," Mo Qingyi also chimed in.

Duanmu Canghai and Zhou Jin ceased arguing and sighed in unison.

After taking care of things here, Duanmu and Mo Qingyi, along with Duanmu Canghai and Zhou Jin, went to the hospital to visit Lin Xiyuan.

Lin Xiyuan still looked very weak.

But thankfully, it was just emotional shock combined with a great fright, and overall, her condition was still manageable.

"Xiyuan, are you alright?" Zhou Jin asked anxiously, taking Lin Xiyuan's hand.

Lin Xiyuan was much calmer, "Auntie, I'm fine now, sorry for worrying you."

"As long as you're alright. Promise auntie, you can't do anything so foolish again," Zhou Jin continued.

Lin Xiyuan nodded, "Hmm, I won't, don't worry. I also have to thank Brother Duanmu and Sister Qingyi. If it weren't for them, I'm afraid..."

"No need for formalities," Duanmu Zhe said indifferently, "as long as you're fine. Anyone would have done the same today."

After comforting Lin Xiyuan for a while, Duanmu Zhe left with Mo Qingyi.

Three days later, Lin Xiyuan was discharged from the hospital.

Meanwhile, Zhou Yiheng formally brought Yan Yi to the Zhou family.

Although Zhou family parents were angry, they still accepted Yan Yi. After all, she was carrying Zhou Yiheng's child.

No matter what, that was a part of the Zhou family.

Fortunately, Yan Yi was also pretty in a demure way, which made it easier for Zhou family parents to accept her quickly.

However, since the Zhou family was in the wrong toward the Lin family, Zhou Yiheng and Yan Yi only got a marriage certificate from the civil affairs office and did not hold a formal wedding ceremony.

Lin Xiyuan had been recuperating at home all this while and had not gone back to the military base.

She opened the door of her studio as she used to do, only to see that the small studio was plastered with portraits of the same man.

Sketches, oil paintings...

His brows and eyes, every gesture, are delineated so meticulously.

Only someone who understands that man so well could paint such a portrait.

Lin Xiyuan casually picked up a portrait, pressing it tightly to her chest, and whispered softly two words, "Duanmu."

Indeed, this person was none other than Duanmu Zhe.

Lin Xiyuan closed her eyes; she always found herself haunted by the memory of the day she fell from the building.

In fact, in that instant, she had felt a desire to kill.

She had intended to take Duanmu Zhe with her in death.

If they could not be together in life, then in death, she was determined to be with Duanmu Zhe.

Reborn into this life, she simply couldn't bear the thought of Duanmu Zhe being happy with someone else.

Since fate had given her another chance to get close to Duanmu Zhe, she wouldn't give up, but she hadn't expected that after all her elaborate planning, Duanmu Zhe and the Duanmu Family didn't care at all whether Mo Qingyi could have children, and what's more, Zhou Jin had personally thrown away that package of herbs.

If not for these experiences, Lin Xiyuan wouldn't have harbored thoughts of murder.

Until Duanmu Zhe's words "Hold me tight, don't let go!" rekindled the dying embers of Lin Xiyuan's heart.

In this lifetime, she didn't intend to let go again.

With this thought, Lin Xiyuan put down the portrait in her hand, walked out of the studio, put on a coat, and headed towards the Duanmu Family residence.

Duanmu Canghai was not at home.

At the moment, only Zhou Jin was home in the Duanmu residence.

Zhou Jin was engrossed in a parent-child program, "Mom Is Back," which mainly featured celebrities living with their children.

It was filled with many adorable children.

Zhou Jin was so captivated, a smile filled her eyes, and she didn't even notice Lin Xiyuan's entrance.

"These children are really cute." Lin Xiyuan said with a smile as she sat down on the couch.

Only then did Zhou Jin notice Lin Xiyuan, "Xiyuan, you're here."

Lin Xiyuan nodded, "It's quite boring just sitting at home, so I came to visit Auntie, and what a coincidence that you like this variety show too. My mom also really enjoys it, especially the chubby Xuan." Chubby Xuan was an extremely adorable child.

Zhou Jin replied with a smile, "I like it very much as well. Aunt Li, pour some water for Xiyuan."

Soon, Aunt Li came over with a cup of tea, "Have some tea, Xiyuan." The servants of the Duanmu Family were already very familiar with Lin Xiyuan, hence they referred to her directly as Xiyuan, which also reflected the Duanmu Family's amicable treatment of their servants.

"Thank you, Aunt Li," Lin Xiyuan said with a slight smile.

Zhou Jin continued, "Xiyuan, come and visit me whenever you have nothing to do. It's boring for auntie to be alone at home, too."

Lin Xiyuan nodded, smiling, "It would be nice if you had a child to keep you company. By the way, where's Nian'en? Why don't you have Sheng take care of Nian'en and keep you company?" Her tone casual.

Zhou Jin gave a faint smile, "Nian'en is with Sheng. That child is strong-willed; Nian'en simply won't let me take care of him for even a day."

Lin Xiyuan laughed as well, "Sheng is probably afraid of people gossiping. After all, the fear of people's words is potent. It would be good if you had your own grandchild..." She stopped mid-sentence, realizing she had misspoken, and quickly covered her mouth, looking apologetically towards Zhou Jin.

Zhou Jin laughed softly, indicating it was fine.

Lin Xiyuan went on, "Auntie, there's something I am not sure whether to mention. I keep feeling that it isn't right to keep you in the dark..." Lin Xiyuan spoke hesitantly, piquing Zhou Jin's curiosity.

"Xiyuan, we're like mother and daughter. Whatever it is, you can speak frankly. There's no need to hold back," Zhou Jin said calmly.

She had a feeling that what Lin Xiyuan was about to say was of great importance to her.

Lin Xiyuan sighed, speaking with some hesitation, "Auntie, it's like this... my doctor friend told me that Qingyi's condition is incurable. She will never be able to have children in this lifetime. I originally didn't want to tell you, but I can't stand to see you disappointed, nor can I bear to let you keep waiting for nothing..."

Zhou Jin's heart clenched fiercely at her words, and she found herself barely able to breathe.

Lin Xiyuan was a military doctor, and her doctor friends were prominent figures in the medical community. Since Lin Xiyuan had said so, it meant that Mo Qingyi truly had no chance of getting pregnant...

Zhou Jin's face gradually turned pale, her smile freezing in place in that instant.

All of her expressions were observed by Lin Xiyuan, and a spark of light flashed in Lin Xiyuan's eyes as she continued, "Auntie, you should tell Qingyi to stop taking the medicine I gave her. It's pointless anyway and only causes her undue suffering..."

This older generation valued offspring above all else, and she was convinced that Zhou Jin would take the bait.

After all, as long as Lin Xiyuan was around, Mo Qingyi would never be able to conceive—let alone bear a child for Duanmu Zhe.

Upon hearing this, Zhou Jin sighed, looking at Lin Xiyuan with a trembling voice, "Xiyuan, is everything you said true? Qingyi... she really can't get pregnant?" No matter what, Zhou Jin found it difficult to accept this reality.

How could this be happening.

How could something like this happen to them?

Lin Xiyuan also sighed, a look of regret in her voice, "It's true, Auntie, although I also don't want to believe it, but, this matter is indeed real... You see, Sister Qingyi and Brother Duanmu are such good people, how could such a thing happen to them? Sigh..."

"But, but Lady Nine said that as long as Qingyi takes her medicine on time, she could get pregnant as she wishes," Zhou Jin chimed in.

She believed in Chu Jin's medical skills, and since Chu Jin had said so, there should be no mistake.

Why is Lin Xiyuan saying this now?

She also trusted Lin Xiyuan.

Lin Xiyuan's eyes flickered as she grasped Zhou Jin's hand, asking, "Are you saying that Lady Nine also prescribed medicine for Qingyi? And said that Qingyi could conceive? It was expected that Chu Jin would be involved in this matter, but Lin Xiyuan hadn't expected her to get involved so quickly.

"Yes," Zhou Jin nodded, "Qingyi herself told me. Lady Nine's medical skills are so brilliant, she should not make a mistake."

Lin Xiyuan continued, "Perhaps Lady Nine's diagnosis is correct, maybe Qingyi really does have a chance to get pregnant, but... my friend used the most advanced technology, which should not mistake, besides, Lady Nine after all is Qingyi's family, a family will naturally help their own. Auntie, I regard you as a mother, so I'm speaking to you from my heart, the words of Lady Nine, you cannot disbelieve, but also cannot wholly believe."

This statement was rather interesting.

On one hand, it brought Lin Xiyuan closer to Zhou Jin, and on the other, it reminded Zhou Jin to be wary of Chu Jin.

It seemed like an ordinary statement, but upon closer inspection, it was filled with multiple layers of meaning.

"What do you mean by that?" Zhou Jin looked at Lin Xiyuan.

Lin Xiyuan calmly said, "Auntie, you are a good person and a good mother-in-law, but often, it's the good people who get bullied. No matter how kind Sister Qingyi is to you, she is still someone who married into the family, and one can never see into another's heart. And Lady Nine, no matter how fair and incorruptible she is, her heart will always lean towards her own family. Brother Duanmu is already thirty-five this year, he doesn't have many years left to delay. If he doesn't have a child soon, it might be difficult to have one later."

Lin Xiyuan's words were earnest and seemed to be making plans for the Duanmu Family.

However, without anyone realizing, she had drawn a line between Mo Qingyi and Chu Jin and herself, intentionally phrasing her speech such that it left Zhou Jin some space for imagination.

Zhou Jin didn't say anything. Having dealt with the Mo family for so many years, she knew that both Mo Qingyi and Chu Jin were good people.

But what Lin Xiyuan said wasn't any less true.

Duanmu Zhe was indeed not young anymore; he didn't have many more thirty-fifth years to waste.

If there was no movement in Mo Qingyi's belly, then Duanmu Zhe would miss the golden years of becoming a father.

Zhou Jin sighed, then continued, "Yuan Yuan, I understand what you're saying. It's fine for you to tell me this, but never mention it in front of Qingyi and Little Zhe, to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings. Harmony in the family brings prosperity to all."

Lin Xiyuan understood the implication behind Zhou Jin's words and replied, "Auntie, I didn't say anything bad, I'm also considering the Duanmu Family's welfare. Moreover, Brother Duanmu is my life-saving benefactor; I simply cannot bear to let such a good man like Brother Duanmu end his lineage!"

The phrase "end his lineage" was strikingly poignant.

Zhou Jin's face too was filled with sorrow; as a mother, how could she enjoy watching such things happen?

She certainly didn't want to see, after her hundred years had passed, the Duanmu family, without heirs, fall and disappear from the three realms.

"Auntie, if you don't mind, I can have a child for Brother Duanmu, to leave a descendant for the Duanmu family." As she said this, Lin Xiyuan knelt down before Zhou Jin, her eyes full of determination.

Zhou Jin stood up in shock, "Yuan Yuan, what are you doing! Get up quickly. As of today, pretend you never said this! I will pretend I never heard it!" Wasn't Lin Xiyuan being absurd?

"Auntie, I'm serious." Lin Xiyuan looked up at Zhou Jin, "Auntie, if not for Brother Duanmu, I would have been long dead. He saved me, and I have no other intention. He saved my life, I want to repay him with another life. Auntie, please fulfill my wish to repay my debt of gratitude."

With these words, Lin Xiyuan gently kowtowed on the ground.

Her words were beautifully crafted, logically flowing from previous events, leaving no room for anyone to find fault.

Her intention was merely to bear Duanmu Zhe a child, to repay the kindness she owed him, without involving other motives, everything seemed natural and in order.

Therefore, Lin Xiyuan had been planning this for a long time.

From meeting Zhou Yiheng, the engagement, the fall from the building, including Zhou Yiheng's affair with another woman, all had been orchestrated by Lin Xiyuan herself.

Only if she was with Zhou Yiheng, could she naturally visit the Duanmu family as a guest without drawing scrutiny on herself.

Lin Xiyuan had always been clever.

Especially after she was reborn, her schemes became even more sophisticated.

Initially, she wanted to use Mo Qingyi's inability to bear children as a way to break her marriage with Duanmu Zhe and then step in to take advantage of the situation, but she never expected that Duanmu

Zhe simply didn't care about the issue. Even if Mo Qingyi was infertile, Duanmu Zhe still loved her deeply.

Now, if only Zhou Jin would agree to her request, everything else would be easy to handle.

As long as she and Duanmu Zhe had a child, she would have an ongoing connection with Duanmu Zhe.

Chapter 857: Bai Niangzi and Xu Xian

Zhou Jin grabbed Lin Xiyuan's arm, "Xiyuan, never speak of such things again! Not only do I disapprove, even Little Zhe would never agree to it! This is simply preposterous! How could someone as educated as you even utter such words?"

Zhou Jin couldn't accept this matter at all.

If she really agreed to Lin Xiyuan, that would also be unfair to Mo Qingyi; she couldn't do such a thing.

Lin Xiyuan continued.

"Auntie, I promise, I will not destroy Brother Duanmu's and Sister Qingyi's marriage. I just want to bear a child for Brother Duanmu. Auntie, you are a mother too. Can you bear to watch Brother Duanmu without an heir? Rest assured, after the child is born, I will hand them to Sister Qingyi to raise, and from then on, Sister Qingyi will be the child's birth mother. I will never appear before Sister Qingyi again. I will find someone I love and live a good life!"

"No way, Xiyuan, stop talking. I won't agree to this, just go now, your uncle will be back soon." Given the current situation, Zhou Jin could only urge Lin Xiyuan to leave quickly.

"Auntie, please let me repay my debt. Otherwise, I will have restless nights. Brother Duanmu saved my life; it's only right that I repay him with a child." Lin Xiyuan was still kneeling on the ground, tugging at Zhou Jin's clothes, her eyes showing nothing but the desire to repay the kindness.

"Xiyuan, I appreciate your sentiment, but I truly cannot agree to this. If Qingyi really can't bear a son or a daughter for the Duanmu family, I will accept it. Even if we have to adopt a child from the orphanage,

we cannot agree to this. What you're proposing is not repaying a favor, it's creating animosity." How could Lin Xiyuan, a good girl, bear a child out of wedlock? Even if she doesn't regret it now, she will in the future.

Zhou Jin would absolutely not do such a thing.

Her values wouldn't allow her to do it, either.

"Auntie, an adopted child could never compare to one's own flesh and blood, and the Duanmu family's vast estate is the result of you and uncle's hard work. Can you really watch as outsiders take it away? Auntie, I know you are refusing for my sake. Please be at ease, if I've decided to do this, I will not regret it, and I won't let anyone else find out. Please agree for my sake." Lin Xiyuan pleaded desperately.

"I can't agree, I truly can't," Zhou Jin waved her hand, "Xiyuan, you are still young, and I can understand your impulsiveness. The incident last time, if it wasn't Little Zhe, any person would have done the same. If it had been someone else who saved you that day, would you also want to bear his child?"

Upon hearing this, Lin Xiyuan immediately rebutted.

"But the fact is, it was Brother Duanmu who saved me. If he hadn't, I would be dead by now. You saw the situation that day, no one else but Brother Duanmu was willing to help. Auntie, please fulfill my desire to repay his kindness. A thousand years ago, Bai Suzhen bore a child for Xu Xian to repay him for saving her life. Just think of me as that White Snake, here to repay Brother Duanmu's kindness. Once I have borne the child, I will leave and never disturb Brother Duanmu and Sister Qingyi's lives."

Zhou Jin frowned slightly, "Bai Suzhen repaid Xu Xian by bearing his child because Xu Xian was unmarried. But Little Zhe is a married man. Your behavior is akin to interfering in someone's marriage, to put it bluntly, you are being a third party, Xiyuan. You are a good girl. Why would you debase yourself like this?"

Zhou Jin's words were rather harsh. It was only because Lin Xiyuan's spirit was strong—that any other person would not have been able to tolerate such language.

Third party.

That was not a good term.

"Auntie, I just want to repay a favor; I'm not trying to intrude on Brother Duanmu's and Sister Qingyi's marriage. Auntie, I hope you can understand me. You and uncle have been so kind to me, and Brother Duanmu risked his life to save mine; I cannot just watch as the Duanmu family line ends." Lin Xiyuan spoke with righteousness.

Lin Xiyuan repeatedly mentioned the word "lineage" with the intent to provoke Zhou Jin into yielding.

Why wouldn't she agree when a fine girl like her was willing to bear a son for Duanmu without asking for anything in return?

Moreover, she had never revealed her love for Duanmu Zhe in front of Zhou Jin.

With no emotional entanglement, Zhou Jin shouldn't have so many reservations.

"Xiyuan, please leave. There's no need to say more, I truly cannot agree to this!" Zhou Jin's stance was very resolute.

Her way of addressing Lin Xiyuan had changed as well.

Lin Xiyuan still refused to give up.

Since things had come to this point, she wouldn't back down so easily.

She really wanted to have a child with Duanmu Zhe.

A child that belonged only to them.

Lin Xiyuan continued.

"Auntie, I understand your concerns, please believe me, I will not tell a single soul about this. Heaven knows, earth knows, you know, I know. There are so many methods of conception now. If you're worried about Brother Duanmu's and Sister Qingyi's feelings, we can keep it from them, as long as you cooperate with me."

There were many ways to get pregnant nowadays; it wasn't necessary to conceive naturally.

Lin Xiyuan only wanted a child that belonged to Duanmu Zhe, the method was unimportant.

Zhou Jin sighed, "Stop talking, I won't agree to this, Xiyuan. Let's just pretend I have never been here today and go back." With that, Zhou Jin walked toward the inner room, ignoring Zhou Jin.

No matter what Lin Xiyuan said, Zhou Jin would not agree to it.

It was simply too absurd.

If she really agreed, she would not only be betraying Mo Qingyi, but also her own conscience.

Lin Xiyuan watched Zhou Jin's retreating figure, biting her lip with a sense of unwillingness.

A moment later, she stood up from the ground, narrowed her eyes, and left the place.

Even if Zhou Jin did not agree today, she would find a way to make Zhou Jin agree.

Time can solve everything.

On the second floor, Zhou Jin stood on the balcony, deeply sighing as she watched the fading figure of Lin Xiyuan.

No matter what, Lin Xiyuan's intentions were good.

Nowadays, there really aren't many girls willing to sacrifice themselves for gratitude.

However, Zhou Jin could not accept the way Xiyuan wanted to express her gratitude.

Poland Mountain.

Bao Bao and Bei Bei had successfully arrived at Poland Mountain.

Life on the mountain was quite novel. Bao Bao and Bei Bei were either chasing the rooster around the yard or hiding in the corner making clay figures. These days, Bao Bao and Bei Bei even learned how to climb trees.

Bao Bao and Bei Bei were like two simpletons from the city visiting the countryside, not understanding anything and curious about everything they encountered.

Bao Bao and Bei Bei also had very sweet mouths, calling everyone grandpa and grandma, which made Uncle Wu and Aunt Lin extremely happy.

"Grandma, what are you doing?" Bao Bao asked curiously as he approached Aunt Lin.

Aunt Lin was sifting through millet to remove the broken leaves and sand.

A sieve was an ancient household item, almost unseen in the city now, and both Bao Bao and Bei Bei were seeing such a strange object for the first time.

Aunt Lin smiled and said, "I'm sifting millet. Don't you both like millet fritters? After I sift the millet, I'll grind it into flour, and then I can make millet fritters."

Now, Bao Bao and Bei Bei were Aunt Lin and Uncle Wu's new favorites.

Days on the mountain were leisurely, and it had been a long time since the old couple had enjoyed such familial happiness.

Every day, Aunt Lin thought of different tasty dishes to make for Bao Bao and Bei Bei.

"What do you use to grind it?" Bao Bao continued to ask.

"A stone mill," Aunt Lin said cheerfully.

"What's a stone mill?" Bao Bao asked, scratching his head in confusion.

"Look, that's it." Aunt Lin raised her hand and pointed to the stone mill in the corner.

The stone mill obviously had many years on it, its handle worn smooth and shiny from use.

"Oh, this thing. I've seen it on TV," Bao Bao walked over, curiously eyeing the stone mill. He was quite short, his head just reaching the handle of the mill, "Grandma, how do you use this?"

Aunt Lin walked over with a smile and gave the handle of the stone mill a push, "Here, let me show you. You just push it like this."

Bao Bao immediately stood on his tiptoes and pushed, making the stone mill rotate.

Bei Bei squatted to one side, engrossed in observing the ground, with a stalk of straw in hand.

Chu Jin approached and softly asked, "Bei Bei, what are you doing?" The icy clarity that once filled her eyes had disappeared, replaced by a warm glow. She was obviously the mother of two four-year-olds, but on Chu Jin, not a single trace of the years could be seen.

"Mommy, shhh." Bei Bei put her index finger to her lips, motioning for silence, "Mommy, please speak quietly. I'm watching the little ants move," she whispered, "don't scare them away."

Only then did Chu Jin notice a group of little ants transporting food on the freshly tilled soil.

"Bei Bei, stop watching these little ants. How about coming inside with mommy and having some mung bean soup? It's cooling and detoxifying," Chu Jin whispered.

Bei Bei shook her head, "No, Mommy, I need to supervise these little ants personally. Look at this one; it keeps bullying that one. This little ant is the hardest working—it carries the most food. I have to keep an eye on them so they don't bully other ants or get lazy."

Bei Bei was a very caring child and, likewise, very patient.

Chu Jin smiled and gently touched Bei Bei's little head, "Then mommy will go inside first."

"Okay," Bei Bei nodded, "Mommy, you go ahead."

In the mountains, the weather can change in an instant. One moment it was sunny, and the next, the sky was covered with dark clouds, with thunder rumbling.

The air during rain was exceptionally fresh.

Everyone had returned to the house, with only Bei Bei continuing to squat under an umbrella in the heavy rain.

While Chu Jin was teaching Bao Bao how to draw, Mo Zhixuan saw Bei Bei squatting in the rain all by herself and, thinking she had been wronged, hurriedly ran over and soothingly said, "What's wrong, Bei Bei? Did that naughty Bao Bao bully you? Daddy won't like him anymore, come back with Daddy."

Whenever Bei Bei was upset, Mo Zhixuan's first thought was that Bao Bao was to blame.

"Brother didn't bully me," Bei Bei looked up at Mo Zhixuan, her voice childishly sweet, "Daddy, I'm holding the umbrella for the little ants. Otherwise, the rain will wash them away."

The heavy rain had come on quickly, and the little ants hadn't completely made it back to their nest.

"Okay," Mo Zhixuan nodded slightly, a faint smile playing on his lips, "then Daddy will stay with you."

"Daddy, you're so nice." Bei Bei tiptoed and gently kissed Mo Zhixuan's cheek.

That gentle kiss melted Mo Zhixuan's heart.

Ever since he had a daughter, Mo Zhixuan felt like his own mental age had gotten younger, too. Years ago, he would have never imagined that one day, he would be standing in the rain with a young little girl, holding an umbrella for ants.

Chu Jin was helping Bao Bao with his drawing.

Bao Bao might have been young, but the way he held the pencil was quite correct. He took the pencil confidently, positioned it mid-air, squinting his eyes and accurately capturing the essence of each scene, like a gifted young artist.

Bao Bao was drawing a father and daughter holding an umbrella for the ants amid a downpour.

Though a simple sketch, it had character. With just a few strokes, he had captured the spirit of the father and daughter in the rain.

It was filled with warmth.

The title of the drawing was, "The Happy Little Ants."

He put down the pencil.

XX Year, August 16th, drawn by Bao Bao at Poland Mountain.

"Mommy, does my drawing look good?" Bao Bao looked at Chu Jin with an air of pride, his expression clearly saying, "Praise me! Praise me!"

"It looks very good," Chu Jin nodded gently.

Bao Bao jumped off the stool, "I'm going to show grandma and grandpa." With that, he scampered off to the kitchen, bouncing along the way.

Aunt Lin and Uncle Wu were making yellow rice cakes.

Seeing Bao Bao's drawing, they lavished him with praise, so much so that his tail might have been ready to curl up to the sky.

After a while, Mo Zhixuan walked in with Bei Bei holding his hand.

Over there, Aunt Lin and Uncle Wu also came out of the kitchen with Bao Bao.

"Bei Bei, do you want to eat the fried yellow rice cake Grandma has made?" Aunt Lin approached Bei Bei with a plate of just-fried yellow rice cakes.

"I want to eat, I want to eat." Bei Bei nodded repeatedly, "I love the fried yellow rice cake made by Grandma the most!" Bei Bei was so happy that she almost jumped up.

The yellow rice cakes fresh out of the pan were golden and crispy, sweet and soft, incredibly tasty, and even Chu Jin ended up eating several more pieces.

Life in the mountains was truly wonderful.

There was no disturbance from strings and woodwinds, no burden of paperwork.

Serene and leisurely.

After lunch, the wind had stopped, the rain had stopped too, and the sun quietly peeked out from the clouds to reveal a dazzling rainbow above the lush foliage.

"There's a rainbow, it's a rainbow!" Bao Bao and Bei Bei excitedly pointed to the sky.

In the bustling city, it was almost rare to see a rainbow.

Bao Bao and Bei Bei usually only saw such beautiful rainbows on TV, so they were extremely thrilled.

"Mommy, quickly take a picture of me and sister." Bao Bao hugged Bei Bei and struck a victory hand pose.

The two little ones wore identical clothes, and their faces looked so similar too. If they didn't speak, it really was difficult to tell who was Bao Bao and who was Bei Bei.

Chu Jin picked up her phone and took a joint photo of Bao Bao and Bei Bei.

"Bao Bao and Bei Bei, do you want Grandpa to take you mushroom picking in the mountain?" Uncle Wu approached Bao Bao and Bei Bei, smiling amiably.

After heavy rain, many new edible mushrooms would appear in the forest.

"Yes, yes, I want to go," said Bei Bei, quite excited.

"Then I'm going too. I will protect my sister," said Bao Bao, holding Bei Bei's hand, a serious look on his face.

Uncle Wu gave each of Bao Bao and Bei Bei a little basket and also put a small straw hat on them.

The two followed behind Uncle Wu, looking proper, as they walked into the forest.

Chu Jin and Mo Zhixuan followed behind them.

A thick mist had risen in the mountains after the rain, and with Bao Bao and Bei Bei being playful, it would have been difficult for Uncle Wu to handle any situation by himself.

It was their first time mushroom picking, and Bao Bao was exceptionally excited, humming along the way, "The little girl picking mushrooms, with a large bamboo basket on her back, wandering the forests and hills barefoot in the early morning..."

After hearing the song, Bei Bei scratched her head and said, "Brother, it's me who should be singing that song. You are a boy."

"Right, I am singing it for you," said Bao Bao, looking at Bei Bei. "Sister, don't you know how to sing this song? Shall I teach you?"

Compared to Bei Bei, Bao Bao seemed much more 'talented and versatile.'

Bao Bao could sing, play the guzheng, and harmonica... He had even followed Bei Bei and learned classical dance... and even danced better than Bei Bei did.

No one had deliberately taught him; he just watched a few times and learned.

The song of the two little ones echoed through the forest.

Although the pronunciation wasn't so precise, it made people feel joyful and very happy to listen to.

Indeed, there were a lot of mushrooms after the rain, and in a short while, they had filled several baskets full.

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Thus, the dinner that evening featured an additional delicious dish, mushroom soup.

During these days in the mountains, Bao Bao and Bei Bei also learned many skills, greatly improving their hands-on ability.

If they could do something themselves, Chu Jin definitely would not offer a helping hand.

**

At the base of the mountain.

Before Lin Xiyuan could appear before Zhou Jin again to execute another heart-wrenching tactic, she received an urgent order to return to the military.

Lin Xiyuan was a military doctor. The places she frequented were always filled with the smell of gunpowder.

And this time, the situation was even more urgent.

Fortunately, this time, she was in the same battlefield as Duanmu Zhe.

This consoled Lin Xiyuan's heart.

At the very least, amid the hail of bullets, she was standing side by side with Duanmu Zhe.

The only downside was that Mo Qingyi was also present.

At the border between China and Vietnam.

Artillery fire filled the sky. Vietnam, vast in territory, had been suffering from continuous civil war, a country with two rulers, both wishing to devour China.

Whoever could conquer China, would then be able to vie for supremacy over the whole world.

However, before they could even breach the borders, they were repeatedly repelled by the soldiers from China.

Suddenly, amidst the thick smoke, a stiff voice in Chinese rang out, "Duanmu Zhe, if you want your wife, Mo Qingyi, to live, lay down your weapons!"

"Where is Colonel Mo?" Duanmu Zhe looked towards an adjutant by his side.

The adjutant was also puzzled, scratching his head, "She was just here a moment ago."

"Duanmu Zhe, the person you're looking for is here." The smoke started to dissipate.

In sight was a tall and burly member of the Vietnamese faction, holding Mo Qingyi hostage across the dividing line between the two armies. The gun in his hand was pressed ruthlessly against Mo Qingyi's head, as if the slightest inattention would make her head burst like a flower.

Duanmu Zhe looked towards the front, his eyes narrowed, and he signaled with his hands. The surrounding soldiers stopped their assault.

"Lay down your weapons and let us through," demanded the man.

Duanmu Zhe, dressed in the dignified uniform of the military, looked at Mo Qingyi and slightly squinted his eyes.

He was a soldier, and at this moment, he had to consider not only his family but also his country. If he let these Vietnamese factions in, they could potentially wreak havoc on a city.

Yet, if he did not comply, he would not be able to protect Mo Qingyi.

Duanmu Zhe, usually resolute to the point of extremity, was facing a dilemma for the first time in his life.

Not far away, Lin Xiyuan also narrowed her eyes, a cold light flashing in the depths of her gaze.

She couldn't afford to miss this opportunity.

"Have them lay down their weapons," Duanmu Zhe commanded in a low voice, looking towards the adjutant beside him.

In Duanmu Zhe's heart.

Family is important.

The country is important.

Mo Qingyi is even more important.

Mo Qingyi was his most fatal weakness.

He simply couldn't bear to watch her come to harm right before his eyes.

Thus, under such circumstances, he could only choose to ensure Mo Qingyi's safety.

The adjutant glanced at Duanmu Zhe and then looked in the direction of Mo Qingyi. Following an order, everyone put down their guns.

Heroes have a hard time overcoming the barrier of a beauty.

At this critical juncture, if Duanmu Zhe allowed these factions to invade, it would bring unimaginable disasters to the entire China.

If they couldn't invade, then it was fine, but if they managed to storm into the city and coordinate with forces outside, the consequences were unthinkable.

In the end, Duanmu Zhe's decision was far too hasty.

It could have been a cunning strategy, yet Duanmu Zhe turned it into complete chaos.

The Vietnamese man holding the gun to Mo Qingyi snorted coldly, his eyes filled with a bloodthirsty and sinister glint, "It seems our strategist was right. As long as we have you, we're not afraid of failing to take down China."

The borders between China and Vietnam were heavily guarded and illuminated with auspicious light, making them easy to defend but hard to attack.

If it weren't for capturing Mo Qingyi today, they would not have broken through the defenses so easily.

Or perhaps, this defense line could not be breached at all.

Mo Qingyi glanced at the burly man from Vietnam. "Do you barbarians really think you can reclaim the Three Realms? Such wishful thinking!" Mo Qingyi remained very calm, with no trace of panic in her eyes. After so many years in the military, how could she possibly be frightened by the danger in front of her?

This soldier's duty was to protect her country and live amidst the gunfire and explosions.

"You'd better behave yourself! Otherwise, don't blame me if this bullet isn't sympathetic!" the Vietnamese brute warned viciously.

Mo Qingyi smiled faintly, "If you have the guts, shoot me dead!"

Since this Vietnamese man had taken her hostage, he wouldn't harm her easily.

If this Vietnamese brute was too proud and couldn't resist her provocation, accidentally firing the gun, it would be a good thing for her, for Duanmu Zhe, and for the entire Three Realms.

If something really happened to her, Duanmu Zhe wouldn't need to consider so much.

The current situation was indeed very unfavorable for Duanmu Zhe.

"Kill you? Rest assured, I'm not going to touch you now." The face of the Vietnamese brute was full of smugness as he continued to shout, "Duanmu Zhe, have everyone raise their hands and let us in."

First, they were to discard their weapons, and now to raise their hands.

Once those Vietnamese actually came in, Duanmu Zhe's side would have no advantage at all.

What was thought to be a minor conflict had escalated beyond anyone's expectations.

Mo Qingyi looked at Duanmu Zhe and spoke very rationally.

"Duanmu Zhe, don't worry about me, you must not do as he says! Even if you really did as he says, he won't spare me! Duanmu Zhe, you're a soldier! A soldier should stand tall and protect the country, putting personal emotions aside..."

Mo Qingyi had always been an exceptionally calm person, especially after joining the military.

She knew that under such circumstances, only her sacrifice could secure peace for the entire Three Realms.

At all costs, she could not let the Vietnamese cross this defense line.

The Vietnamese brute was not very fluent in Chinese, and by the time he understood the meaning of Mo Qingyi's words, she had already finished speaking.

"Shut up!" The Vietnamese brute slapped Mo Qingyi across the face and said harshly, "If you dare say one more word, I'll have someone cut out your tongue!"

"Stop!" Duanmu Zhe's eyes were bloodshot as he glared at the brute, his hands trembling with the gun.

"Put down your gun! Otherwise, I'll send your woman to meet Yama right now!" The Vietnamese brute looked coldly at Duanmu Zhe.

Mo Qingyi spat out the blood in her mouth and looked at Duanmu Zhe, raising her voice, "Duanmu Zhe! You must not disappoint me! Always remember the duty of a soldier!"

Duanmu Zhe was trembling all over, unable to remain calm in the face of Mo Qingyi.

The opposing Vietnamese army was also exploiting this weakness of his.

And so the standoff continued.

"Commander, Colonel Duanmu is being indecisive. If this goes on, the Vietnamese army will really be able to enter without losing a single soldier!" Lin Xiyuan narrowed her eyes slightly and looked up at the officer next to her.

This officer was the commander in charge here.

He was closely watching the situation in front and did not respond to Lin Xiyuan's comment.

Lin Xiyuan continued, "Commander! We can't just sit here and wait for death."

The Commander looked at Lin Xiyuan and slowly said, "Then what do you suggest?"

"The sacrifice of Colonel Mo for the peace of the Three Realms would be worth it," Lin Xiyuan's eyes flashed with a glint. "Being a soldier means being ready to sacrifice for the peace of the Three Realms at all times. Colonel Mo, though dead, would be glorious and will forever live in our hearts."

The Commander didn't respond, just stared intently ahead.

He didn't say anything, but Lin Xiyuan knew that the Commander had already made a decision in his heart.

Duanmu Zhe put down the gun and raised both hands, "As long as you keep your promise not to harm her, then everything can be worked out."

The Vietnamese brute smiled in satisfaction and waved to his troops behind him. Countless mechas, cannons, and sharpshooters followed him in.

As they got closer to the defense line, Mo Qingyi grew more anxious.

If the Vietnamese successfully occupied this place, they would completely lose the ability to counterattack.

Just then, a bullet silently shot towards the Vietnamese brute.

This was a silenced gun; there was no sound at all.

But the Vietnamese brute reacted quickly, his sturdy body nimbly dodging and pushing Mo Qingyi out of the way with a backhand shove.

"Pop." The bullet went straight through Mo Qingyi's chest.

Nobody had anticipated such a turn of events.

Because of that single bullet, both sides immediately exchanged fire and the scene spiraled out of control.

Duanmu Zhe's emotions became desolate in an instant. He turned around and roared, "Who? Who fired the shot!"

Yet no one behind him responded.

All that answered him was a rapid exchange of gunfire.

One shot, after another, and then another.

In the hail of bullets, Duanmu Zhe dodged the flying bullets while firing at the enemies closest to him, making his way to Mo Qingyi's side.

At that moment, Mo Qingyi's face was deathly pale, the blood-red fluid having already soaked her military uniform.

"Qingyi, Qingyi," Duanmu Zhe weakly slapped Mo Qingyi's face.

But Mo Qingyi showed no reaction, her eyes tightly shut.

Sharpshooters by their side provided cover fire, as bullets whizzed past them.

"Colonel Duanmu, now is not the time for sentimentality, come with me to a safe zone," Lin Xiyuan said, braving mortal danger to reach Duanmu Zhe's side, grabbing his hand and pulling him away.

"Get lost! Let go of me!" Duanmu Zhe threw off Lin Xiyuan's hand with a shove.

He was so forceful that Lin Xiyuan was pushed to the ground.

"Qingyi, open your eyes and look at me," Duanmu Zhe pressed his face against Mo Qingyi's.

The sound of gunfire had drowned out his words.

Lin Xiyuan looked at Duanmu Zhe, bit her lip, and then waved towards the medical team not far away.

The medical team immediately came over with a stretcher.

Duanmu Zhe finally let go, placing Mo Qingyi on the stretcher and said to the medical staff, "Take good care of Qingyi!" Having said that, he pulled out two handguns from his waist and with bloodshot eyes, charged toward the front line.

The medical team took Mo Qingyi away for emergency treatment.

Duanmu Zhe charged ahead, his eyes and military uniform stained with blood, and as gunfire rang out, countless others fell one after another.

The Vietnamese retreated step by step. The advantage they had gained earlier by capturing Mo Qingyi was quickly dissipated under the ferocious assault.

Within moments, they had retreated to their stronghold, daring not to make any more reckless moves.

Clearly, they had underestimated the current strength and military prowess of China.

"Colonel Duanmu, are you okay? Are you injured anywhere?" Lin Xiyuan approached Duanmu Zhe, noticing his bloodied body and asked anxiously.

"I'm fine, go find someone else who needs you," he said before hurrying toward the medical team's direction.

Lin Xiyuan watched his retreating figure, her eyes filled with melancholy.

Indeed, if Duanmu Zhe truly were a heartless man, then he wouldn't be the Duanmu Zhe she knew.

When Duanmu Zhe arrived at the medical room, the surgery light was still on.

He grabbed a nurse and asked, "How is she doing in there?"

"I'm not very clear on the details, but please rest assured, I will do my utmost to save the patient," the nurse replied in an official manner.

As a military officer, Duanmu Zhe could not threaten others with brute force, so he had no choice but to sit in the waiting area, hoping for the surgery to end successfully.

"Colonel Duanmu, don't worry, Sister Qingyi will be okay," Lin Xiyuan came over and handed Duanmu Zhe a cup of milk tea, then said, "Have something to drink first. I'll stay here for you; you should go and change your clothes."

"No need, but thank you for the kind offer," Duanmu Zhe declined.

Lin Xiyuan sighed, then said, "Doctor Nalan is the best doctor in the military region. I believe he will save Sister Qingyi. Colonel Duanmu, don't worry too much."

Duanmu Zhe's gaze was locked on the surgery room door, his face almost expressionless, as he seemed to not hear Lin Xiyuan at all, as if deaf.

Knowing when to drop a subject, Lin Xiyuan said nothing upon seeing Duanmu Zhe's state.

Three hours later, the surgery room door opened, and Doctor Nalan, wearing a white lab coat, stepped out.

Duanmu Zhe immediately went up to him, "Doctor Nalan, how is Qingyi?"

Doctor Nalan shook his head regretfully, "I'm sorry, the bullet went through her heart; there's nothing I could do. Please forgive me for my powerlessness."

Duanmu Zhe's world crumbled in that instant.

He had just heard the most unbearable news in the world.

"How could this happen?" Duanmu Zhe grabbed Doctor Nalan by the collar, shouting angrily, "Aren't you the best doctor in the military region? Why couldn't you do anything? Didn't you do your best?"

"Colonel Duanmu, please don't do this. Life is unpredictable, and Doctor Nalan doesn't want it this way," Lin Xiyuan pulled Duanmu Zhe's hand, trying to calm his emotions.

"Colonel Duanmu, please calm down," Nalan sighed. "I know how hard this is to handle and I'm saddened that I couldn't save Colonel Mo too. I admit, my medical skills weren't good enough. Under the circumstances, you might try taking Colonel Mo back to the capital. The capital has advanced medical facilities and many famous doctors; there, Colonel Mo might still have a chance."

Upon hearing this, Duanmu Zhe gradually calmed down and released Doctor Nalan's collar before rushing into the surgery room.

Doctor Nalan straightened his coat calmly, glanced at Lin Xiyuan, and muttered, "This Duanmu Zhe is really a madman!"

Lin Xiyuan quickly said, "Doctor Nalan, don't mind him; Colonel Mo's condition is uncertain, and it's understandable for Colonel Duanmu to be like this."

Doctor Nalan just smiled, a wise gleam flashing behind his glasses, said nothing more, and turned to leave.

Doctors, especially military doctors, had seen too much of life and death.

That's why Nalanda appeared so calm.

In the operating room, Mo Qingyi lay on the hospital bed, her face covered with an oxygen mask, her complexion as pale as paper, barely showing signs of life.

"Qingqing." Duanmu Zhe rushed in, took Mo Qingyi's hand, and pressed it against his face.

Mo Qingyi's hand was also cold.

"Mo Xiaosan, it's me, Duanmu Xiaosi. Please, open your eyes and look at me." Duanmu Zhe's voice was close to hoarse, but he still held back his tears, not letting a single drop fall.

At such a critical life or death moment, tears were most taboo.

On the operating table, Mo Qingyi showed no response at all, her breathing was extremely weak as if she could pass away in the next second.

"Colonel Duanmu..." Lin Xiyuan followed behind and walked in.

Duanmu Zhe acted as if he hadn't heard Lin Xiyuan's voice, not even glancing at her.

"Colonel Duanmu, I just asked Doctor Nalan, he said Sister Qingyi's internal organs have started to fail, I'm afraid... it's hopeless..." Lin Xiyuan continued.

"Sister Qingyi became like this for the peace of all three realms, try not to be too sad..."

"Shut your mouth!" Duanmu Zhe coldly turned towards Lin Xiyuan.

His voice was loud, carrying a cold and bloody undertone.

It shook Lin Xiyuan to the core, making her abruptly fall silent.

She had never seen Duanmu Zhe like this, on the brink of endless sorrow and rage, as if he might explode at any moment.

"Qingqing, you'll be okay, trust me, I will find a way to save you." Duanmu Zhe gently held Mo Qingyi's hand, his eyes and eyebrows filled with tenderness as he looked down at her, his eyes held an indelible affection.

Watching this scene, Lin Xiyuan's expression didn't change as she said, "Colonel Duanmu, face the reality. Sister Qingyi really is beyond help. Keeping her alive like this only adds to her pain. She has already become like this; let her go comfortably."

Lin Xiyuan appeared to have Mo Qingyi's best interests at heart.

"Colonel Duanmu, if you truly love Sister Qingyi, let her go. I'm a doctor, I know the pain she's enduring!"

Duanmu Zhe loved Mo Qingyi so much, he surely couldn't bear to see her suffer like this.

And indeed, Mo Qingyi was beyond saving now.

Lin Xiyuan wasn't lying. No one knew the extent of the pain Mo Qingyi was enduring at that moment.

Better to die quickly than live in such pain.

Duanmu Zhe ignored Lin Xiyuan's words, lifted Mo Qingyi in his arms, "Qingqing, I'll take you home, we'll go home, and I will find a way to save you, don't worry..."

"Colonel Duanmu! Doing this will only increase Sister Qingyi's pain! She has already become like this, just let her pass away peacefully!" Lin Xiyuan reached out to stop Duanmu Zhe.

"Get lost!" Duanmu Zhe coldly glanced at Lin Xiyuan.

"Colonel Duanmu!" Lin Xiyuan, unwilling to leave, hoped that Duanmu Zhe could look beyond Mo Qingyi and see her.

With endless rage in him, Duanmu Zhe swung his long leg, kicking Lin Xiyuan to the ground before stepping over her body and continuing on.

Lin Xiyuan watched his retreating figure with a sorrowful gaze, clutching her fists tightly, staying silent.

Outside, a private plane was waiting for Duanmu Zhe.

The plane was also equipped with two medical personnel.

Duanmu Zhe boarded the plane with Mo Qingyi in his arms.

With a roaring sound, the plane disappeared into the dense night.

Only after the plane had flown away did Lin Xiyuan walk out of the medical room.

The lights stretched her shadow very long.

She looked up at the sky, her eyes revealing an unfathomable darkness.

Somewhat mournful.

Suddenly, she was lost, not even sure if what she had done was right.

Some say that to love someone is to wish for their happiness.

Yet, she had once again destroyed their happiness.

Right or wrong, she had done what she did, and she had to keep going.

Just then, a figure emerged from the night, lighting a cigarette and slowly exhaling a ring of smoke, "Your skills in changing identity aren't bad, you must have learned from Elder Number Five, right?"

Lin Xiyuan looked up, surprised, and calmly replied, "I don't understand what you're talking about."

The man was the doctor who operated on Mo Qingyi, Doctor Nalan.

Doctor Nalan, with a smile that did not reach his eyes, continued, "Indeed, out of all the elders' disciples, you were the only one they couldn't bear to lose so soon. Not everyone gets the chance to start anew. Why bother chasing after those past memories? Isn't living well enough for you?"

A second chance at life was hard to come by, yet Lin Xiyuan still took a path of no return.

Chapter 859: There's Always a Way to Solve It

It seemed that Nalanda had already seen her downfall through her eyes.

Lin Xiyuan remained calm. She glanced at Nalanda and said indifferently, "Doctor Nalan must have had too much to drink."

Nalanda did not speak but smiled mysteriously, then disappeared into the boundless night. His silhouette appeared both enigmatic and desolate.

Lin Xiyuan watched Nalanda's retreating figure and narrowed her eyes slightly before she too turned and left.

The Imperial Capital.

Duanmu Zhe's private plane landed directly at the largest hospital in the Imperial Capital.

Despite the late hour, it was the hospital director himself who received Duanmu Zhe.

Moreover, it was the director and the deputy director who personally performed surgery on Mo Qingyi.

The surgery took a long time, and since it was late at night, Duanmu Zhe did not inform the elders of both families.

By the time the surgery ended, dawn was breaking.

The hospital director, with a heavy expression, said to Duanmu Zhe, "Mr. Duanmu, Miss Mo's life is temporarily saved, but the chances of her waking up are very slim. You should be prepared."

The magnitude of this statement left Duanmu Zhe somewhat unable to react.

"Director, how small are the chances? Just tell me straight!" Duanmu Zhe tried to remain calm.

The director sighed, "Although Miss Mo is temporarily out of danger, the poison has spread throughout her body, and her organs have started to fail. It's very likely that she could..." The rest was left unsaid.

"Director, I beg you, save her! If you can save her, I am willing to give everything I have." For the first time in his life, Duanmu Zhe, who kneels only to heaven, earth, and his parents, knelt down to the hospital director.

"Mr. Duanmu, please get up," the director hurriedly helped Duanmu Zhe to his feet. "It's not that we don't want to save her, we truly are powerless. Miss Duanmu not only suffered a gunshot wound but was also infected with a rare virus..."

A virus?

Duanmu Zhe frowned slightly, caught the key point, and looked at the director, "Wasn't Qingyi injured by a gunshot? How did she get poisoned?" Besides, when in the medical room, Nalanda only mentioned that Mo Qingyi was shot and didn't mention anything about her being poisoned.

The director glanced at the report in his hands, then continued.

"It's a rare virus that thrives in uninhabited snow-capped mountains. Under normal circumstances, it rarely infects humans and is hard to detect during its incubation period. It can only be found through blood tests and those infected usually appear no different from normal people. Moreover, according to our observations, Miss Mo has been poisoned for quite some time now, which is also why she hasn't been able to conceive for many years."

The color on Duanmu Zhe's face gradually grew colder.

He had been careless. He had shared the bed with Mo Qingyi for so many years, yet he didn't even know she had been poisoned.

He was not a good husband.

Who exactly had gone to such great lengths to harm Mo Qingyi?

"Where did that virus come from?" Duanmu Zhe abruptly looked up at the director.

"The snow-capped mountains," the director said seriously.

Snow-capped mountains?

In the Superpower World, there weren't many who could cross the snow-capped mountains and who had a past with Mo Qingyi.

"When approximately did Qingyi get infected with the virus?" Duanmu Zhe continued to ask.

The director thought for a moment, then said, "About four or five years ago."

Four or five years ago.

Duanmu Zhe frowned slightly, and two words flashed in his mind.

Xi He.

Four or five years ago, Xi He was still alive and had even joined the military as a medic.

It might have been during that time that Mo Qingyi was infected with the virus in the army.

At that time, as a military doctor, it would have been easy for Xi He to tamper with something.

And the person who didn't want Mo Qingyi to have children and harbored such resentment against her was none other than Xi He.

Who would have thought that even after Xi He's death, such a huge problem was left behind.

Duanmu Zhe clenched his fists and fiercely smashed the wall, his eyes bloodshot.

The hospital director sighed, "Mr. Duanmu, there is always hope, so don't panic just yet. There's another person who might be able to help you."

"Who?" Duanmu Zhe grasped at the last straw, looking up at the hospital director with hope.

Looking at Duanmu Zhe, the director slowly uttered three words, "Madam Chu Jin."

Four years ago, it was Chu Jin who had pulled Duanmu Sheng back from the Grim Reaper's grasp. At that time, the director had assisted Chu Jin during the surgery.

Chu Jin's medical skills were brilliant. In such a moment, the only person the director could think of was her.

Apart from her, no one else could save Mo Qingyi.

Duanmu Zhe was in such grief that he hadn't thought of Chu Jin at all, but now he brightened up, looking at the director with hope, "You're right, perhaps Madam Chu can save Qingyi."

Upon saying this, Duanmu Zhe immediately made a phone call to notify the parents of both families.

When Mo Qingyi's grandmother received the call, she nearly fainted.

The situation at the Duanmu Family was also very bad.

Early in the morning, both families rushed to the hospital without even having breakfast.

Zhou Jin arrived at the same time as Mo Qingyi's grandmother.

Duanmu Canghai was away on business, but now he was rushing back home.

"Little Zhe, how is Qingyi? What did the doctor say?" Zhou Jin and Mo Qingyi's grandmother approached Duanmu Zhe, asking anxiously.

Having not slept all night, Duanmu Zhe looked thoroughly exhausted, "The situation is very bad. The doctors said that the chances of her waking up are very slim. Mom, where is Madam Chu? She's the only one who can save Qingyi now."

Mo Qingyi's grandmother sighed, "Little Zhe, don't panic, I have already notified Madam Chu and they are rushing back now. They should arrive before long. Let's go see Qingyi first." Tears glistened in the grandmother's eyes.

Duanmu Zhe nodded, "I'll take you there right now."

Mo Qingyi was in the ICU. Duanmu Zhe led the two elders to change into isolation suits before entering the ICU.

Mo Qingyi lay there on the hospital bed, her body full of tubes, like a lifeless puppet, bereft of any sign of vitality.

"Qingyi," Mo Qingyi's grandmother choked out.

Zhou Jin's eyes were swollen and red.

Mo Qingyi, always so lively and energetic, was now in such a state, a sight that would sadden anyone who laid eyes on her.

The visiting time in the ICU was limited, and soon the three of them stepped out of the room, speechless and quietly wiping away tears.

When Chu Jin and Mo Zhixuan arrived, it was almost afternoon.

They had come directly on a flying machine, otherwise they wouldn't have been able to make it so quickly. They had not even gone home, heading straight for the hospital upon their return.

Chu Jin and Mo Zhixuan walked ahead, while behind them ran two little ones.

"Brother Nine, Sister-in-law!" Seeing the arrivals, Duanmu Zhe stood up excitedly.

"What exactly happened?" Mo Zhixuan asked with a slight frown, a deep chill in his eyes.

Guilt was written all over Duanmu Zhe's face, "Here's what happened..." He explained the situation to Chu Jin and Mo Zhixuan in detail, including Mo Qingyi's poisoning.

The faces of Chu Jin and Mo Zhixuan turned very grim.

After all, the person lying on the hospital bed was their sister.

Their only sister.

"Grandma!" Bao Bao and Bei Bei ran to Mo Qingyi's grandmother.

"Grandma, why are you crying?" Bei Bei reached out her little hand to wipe away the tears at the corner of her grandmother's eyes.

"Gran, don't cry, who bullied you? Tell Bao Bao, and Bao Bao will take revenge for you!" Bao Bao comforted his grandmother as well.

The two little ones were like little adults.

"Grandma is fine," Mo Qingyi's grandmother dried her tears and forced a smile, "Have you two eaten? Are you hungry now?" Seeing the two adorable little ones made the grandmother feel much better.

"Grandma, we're not hungry," Bei Bei said sensibly, shaking her head.

Bao Bao added, "That's right, we're not hungry, Grandma, you don't need to worry."

Although Bao Bao and Bei Bei didn't know exactly what had happened, they could feel that it must be very serious, otherwise their parents wouldn't have rushed back so quickly, and Grandma wouldn't be crying so sadly.

Even if they were truly hungry, they would have to endure it at a time like this.

Zhou Jin looked at the two adorable little ones surrounding the elder Mrs. Mo, envy appearing in her eyes.

These two little ones are really cute, it would be nice if she had two adorable children like them.

Unfortunately...

After Duanmu Zhe had explained the whole situation, Chu Jin furrowed her brows tightly and said, "You go and ask the dean to bring me the virus report to see." Not long ago, Chu Jin had taken Mo Qingyi's pulse, but at that time, Mo Qingyi's vital signs were all normal and there were no issues.

Unless something triggered the virus in her body, causing the disease to activate.

"Okay," Duanmu Zhe nodded and turned to walk toward the dean's office.

Zhou Jin approached Chu Jin with a hoarse voice and began, "Madam Jiu, I entrust everything to you, please, you must save Qingqing..." By the end, Zhou Jin's voice broke with emotion, and she bowed deeply to Chu Jin.

Chu Jin quickly helped Zhou Jin up, "Don't worry, Qingyi is my only sister, I will definitely do everything in my power to save her."

Upon hearing this, Bao Bao and Bei Bei immediately asked, "Mommy, what's wrong with Auntie?" The concern in their voices was palpable.

Mo Qingyi and Bao Bao and Bei Bei had an exceptionally close relationship, surpassing that of an ordinary aunt and her nieces.

Hearing such voices, Bao Bao and Bei Bei naturally felt worried.

Chu Jin squatted down and touched the heads of Bao Bao and Bei Bei, "Don't worry Bao Bao and Bei Bei, Auntie is fine, she just got a little hurt, and she will recover soon."

"Mommy, I want to go see Auntie," Bei Bei pleaded with big, wistful eyes.

"I want to go too..." Bao Bao tugged at Chu Jin's clothes.

Mo Zhixuan sighed and half-crouched down, "Let's take them to see her."

Chu Jin nodded, "Okay."

The family of four donned sterile suits and appeared in the ICU.

Zhou Jin stood outside the ICU ward while Duanmu Sheng, carrying a bag, ran over from the hallway, leading Nian'en.

"Grandma!" Nian'en exclaimed, hugging Zhou Jin's leg excitedly.

"Nian'en..." Zhou Jin hugged Nian'en, unable to hold back her tears.

Nian'en stood still, not knowing what to do.

Duanmu Sheng said nervously, "Mom, what on earth happened? Please don't cry, when you cry, I don't know what to do..." Duanmu Sheng's eyes also reddened.

Over the phone, Zhou Jin had only asked her to come to the hospital quickly without specifying the issue.

Seeing Zhou Jin like this, Duanmu Sheng knew that it definitely wasn't anything good.

Inside the ICU room.

Bei Bei held Mo Qingyi's hand tightly, tiptoeing and said, "Auntie, I'm Bei Bei, aren't you usually most fond of me? Please open your eyes and look at Bei Bei, will you?"

Bao Bao immediately protested, "Auntie, you clearly like me the most, Auntie, please get up and tell Bei Bei that your favorite is Bao Bao."

Bei Bei, who understood medical principles, grasped Mo Qingyi's hand, turned to Chu Jin and said, "Mommy, Auntie's pulse is very weak, has she suffered a serious injury?"

Chu Jin placed her hand on Mo Qingyi's wrist, and said to Bei Bei, "Let Mommy take a look."

Bei Bei was right, Mo Qingyi's pulse was indeed very weak, and even slower than normal people's by a few beats. If this continued, Mo Qingyi would not be able to hold on much longer.

Seeing Chu Jin's grave expression, Mo Zhixuan asked, "How is it?"

Chu Jin shook her head, and everything was said without words.

Outside the ICU, Zhou Jin told Duanmu Sheng everything.

After hearing the news, Duanmu Sheng was also taken aback, overcome by shock.

She clutched Zhou Jin's hand tightly, "Mom, how could it have turned out like this?"

Zhou Jin could no longer say a word, just crying and shaking her head.

She didn't understand why misfortunes always befell the Duanmu Family.

Previously, it was Duanmu Sheng who had that incident.

Now, Mo Qingyi had fallen into an indeterminate state between life and death.

Seeing Zhou Jin like this, Duanmu Sheng immediately comforted her, "Mom, don't worry, Ninth Sister-in-law is here, Qingyi will definitely be fine, we must believe in Ninth Sister-in-law."

While they were talking, Chu Jin and the Mo Zhixuan family of four came out of the ICU.

Chu Jin and Mo Zhixuan's expressions were very grim, and even the two little ones looked very upset.

"Ninth Sister-in-law, how is Qingyi..." Duanmu Sheng immediately greeted them.

Chu Jin lifted her eyes towards Duanmu Sheng and spoke in a low voice, "Don't worry, I will do my utmost to save Qingyi."

Duanmu Zhe, along with the dean, approached from the other side.

"Mrs. Ninth, this is the report on the M virus inside Miss Mo's body, please take a look," the dean respectfully handed the report to Chu Jin.

Chu Jin took the report and read it carefully, her demeanor seemingly unchanged, but inside, a storm was brewing.

According to the report, Mo Qingyi had been infected with this virus for almost five years now.

It just had not triggered an outbreak until now.

Now that the virus had activated upon contact with blood, even for Chu Jin, it was extremely tricky to handle.

This virus originated from the snowy mountains and since ancient times, no one had found a cure.

"Xi He once served as a military doctor in Area A," Duanmu Zhe said softly beside Chu Jin.

His words were also a reminder to Chu Jin that this matter might be related to Xi He.

Chu Jin slightly furrowed her brows, handing the report back to the dean beside her, "Xi He is already dead."

Xi He's death meant that there was no cure for this poison.

Duanmu Zhe also realized this and looked towards Chu Jin, "Ninth Sister-in-law, is there really no solution at all?"

"This poison... it's my first time encountering it," Chu Jin said with a very heavy look on her face.

Now Mo Qingyi had not only been shot but also infected with this virus, which meant she had both feet in Yama's palace.

When Duanmu Sheng was teetering between life and death, at least Chu Jin had a thirty percent confidence of saving him, but now, Chu Jin didn't even have three percent confidence.

Xi He had buried his lead deeply enough that he managed to infect Mo Qingyi with this virus without anyone noticing five years ago.

"Ninth Sister-in-law!" Duanmu Zhe looked at Chu Jin, his eyes full of pleading.

If even Chu Jin was helpless, then there really was no hope for Mo Qingyi...

"Don't worry, I'll find a way," Chu Jin turned her gaze to the dean, "Please help me prepare a sterile room."

The dean naturally knew what Chu Jin intended and immediately responded, "Of course, I'll go take care of it right away."

Chu Jin nodded slightly, then continued.

"Duanmu, you and Sheng Sheng should take Auntie and get some rest, you haven't rested all day. Mo Zhixuan, you take Mom, Bao Bao and Bei Bei out for a meal." Bao Bao and Bei Bei haven't really eaten all day, the adults might be okay, but the children definitely can't handle it.

"What about you?" Mo Zhixuan looked at Chu Jin, concern flashing in his eyes.

Now that Mo Qingyi was in this state, he had no appetite to eat, but with the elderly and children here, he had to think about them.

"Whatever you're having, just bring me some, I need to operate on Qingyi immediately, otherwise, with her current condition, she might not make it through tonight," said Chu Jin, her voice sounding somewhat cold, her face expressionless.

Upon hearing this, Duanmu Zhe's legs went weak, and he nearly collapsed on the ground, but Mo Zhixuan quickly supported him, "Duanmu, you can't fall at a time like this, don't worry, Qingyi will be fine."

Duanmu Zhe struggled to stand there, then nodded his head.

"Little Zhe, there's always a solution to a problem, come on, I'll take you to get some rest," Duanmu Sheng's voice was close to breaking.

Chapter 860: think carefully

Nian'en followed sensibly behind, without crying, causing trouble, or asking too many questions.

"Little Zhe, everything will pass," Zhou Jin comforted Duanmu Zhe as well.

As a mother, she had to be strong. At this time, she must hold on; if she were to collapse, Duanmu Zhe would have no one to rely on.

Duanmu Zhe was taken by Zhou Jin and Duanmu Sheng to rest.

"Mommy, aren't you coming to eat with us?" Bao Bao tugged at Chu Jin's hand and asked in a childlike voice.

"I'll stay here with auntie. You go with grandma, daddy, and sister," Chu Jin reached out to pat Bao Bao's head.

"I'm not hungry, I want to stay with auntie too!" Bao Bao continued, with determination shining in his large eyes, but just as he finished speaking, a rumble from his stomach echoed through the air.

Bao Bao quickly covered his belly, frightened.

Oh stomach, oh stomach, how could you be so unreliable and growl at such a time!

Chu Jin squatted down to look Bao Bao in the eye, "Alright, quickly go downstairs with daddy to have a meal, then come back up to see auntie afterwards."

Bao Bao nodded and looked at Chu Jin, "Mommy, auntie will be alright, won't she?"

Chu Jin smiled and nodded, "Yes, she'll be alright."

Mo Zhixuan and Madame Mo took Bao Bao and Bei Bei downstairs to eat.

Watching their receding figures, Chu Jin turned to the hospital director, "Let's also get ready. The surgery will begin in five minutes."

The director bowed respectfully, "Madam Ji, this way please."

Chu Jin followed the director to change into surgical attire and, with a dozen assistants, headed towards the operating room.

The surgical light turned on, and a new round of surgery began.

Actually, the gunshot wound on Mo Qingyi's body was not much of an issue in Chu Jin's hands; the most troublesome part now was the virus in her body.

As soon as Chu Jin entered the operating room, Duanmu Zhe came over.

As Mo Qingyi's husband, he simply could not close his eyes because every time he did, Mo Qingyi's figure would appear before him.

He stared intently at the lights of the operating room, hoping that Chu Jin could bring him hope.

Duanmu Sheng approached from behind and seeing Duanmu Zhe like this, she gave a deep sigh and comforted him, "Little Zhe, don't worry too much, it will be alright."

Duanmu Zhe turned to look at Duanmu Sheng and, without saying much, just nodded.

In just a short day, Duanmu Zhe seemed to have aged ten years, his whole being frail, despondent, and without a trace of vitality in his eyes.

Duanmu Sheng gripped Duanmu Zhe's hand tightly, her expression resolute, "Little Zhe, don't worry. No matter what happens, I'm here with you."

Duanmu Zhe remained silent.

The light in the operating room was on for a long time, and when Mo Zhixuan and Madame Mo walked in with Bao Bao and Bei Bei, Chu Jin still hadn't come out.

"Daddy, how long has mommy been inside?" Bei Bei looked up at Mo Zhixuan, slightly worried.

"Bei Bei, don't worry. Mommy will come out soon," Mo Zhixuan picked up Bei Bei, and father and daughter both stared intently at the door of the operating room.

Madame Mo was sitting on a blue plastic chair, holding Bao Bao.

Bao Bao was becoming sleepy, but he still tried his best not to succumb to sleep.

The atmosphere was somewhat quiet.

Compared to the morning, Madame Mo's condition had improved quite a bit.

Zhou Jin saw all these changes; she knew it was all thanks to Bao Bao and Bei Bei.

If only Mo Qingyi and Duanmu Zhe had a child to comfort Duanmu Zhe at a time like this, then he wouldn't have fallen so deeply into despair.

Seeing how Duanmu Zhe was, Zhou Jin truly felt heartbroken.

From the start until now, Duanmu Zhe had not had a single grain of rice or a drop of water, and hadn't even closed his eyes once.

Zhou Jin had never seen Duanmu Zhe like this before.

She couldn't imagine what would happen to Duanmu Zhe if something untoward happened to Mo Qingyi.

Zhou Jin's mind suddenly flashed with a phrase, "...do you really want to watch as the Duanmu Family's lineage ends?"

In the current situation, all they could do was pray that Mo Qingyi was fine, otherwise, the Duanmu Family really might...

Zhou Jin didn't dare to think about the rest.

With this thought, Zhou Jin jolted awake and immediately headed towards the restroom, stopping at the sink to douse her face with cold water.

Just as Zhou Jin lifted her head, she noticed an additional person in the bright mirror, which gave her a startle.

It was a woman dressed in a plain-colored dress.

This person was none other than Lin Xiyuan.

"Xiyuan, what are you doing here?" Zhou Jin covered her chest with her hand, asking somewhat puzzledly.

Lin Xiyuan looked rather haggard. Upon hearing this, she gave a bitter smile and said, "Auntie, you're here too." Lin Xiyuan seemed very calm and wasn't embarrassed by the earlier discussion; it was as if that incident had never happened.

Seeing Lin Xiyuan like this, Zhou Jin also calmed down a lot.

It looked like Lin Xiyuan had come to terms with it, so there was no need for Zhou Jin to dwell on it any longer.

Actually, both of them held the matter in their hearts; it was merely unspoken.

Before Zhou Jin could speak, Lin Xiyuan continued, "How is Sister Qingqing now? Is she okay?" Her eyes revealed deep concern.

Zhou Jin's expression remained unchanged, "The Ninth Lady is already operating on Qingqing inside; she'll be fine, don't worry. But you haven't told me, how did you happen to be here?"

Mo Qingyi had only recently been hospitalized, and Lin Xiyuan had appeared here... Wasn't that a bit strange?

It couldn't help but make Zhou Jin wonder.

Especially since Lin Xiyuan had previously mentioned the idea of having children for Duanmu Zhe.

Lin Xiyuan glanced at Zhou Jin, and a hint of bitterness spread in her eyes as she continued, "Yi Heng is also at this hospital, they're on the third floor. Yan Yi had some issues with her abdomen, but the doctors couldn't find the reason, so they asked me to take a look. Right after I returned from the military, Yi Heng called me over."

Lin Xiyuan's medical skills were quite good, so it was normal for Zhou Yiheng to seek her out.

However, the fact that Zhou Yiheng, as Lin Xiyuan's ex-boyfriend, had come to find her to treat his current girlfriend was a bit abnormal...

Unless, there was another reason behind it.

A flash of surprise crossed Zhou Jin's eyes followed by a sigh, "So, Yan Yi is alright now? Xiyuan... it really must've been hard for you..." Despite being Zhou Yiheng's ex-girlfriend, Lin Xiyuan could actually come over to treat Yan Yi—it was magnanimity not everyone could have.

Put bluntly, Yan Yi was the "other woman."

To be so magnanimous towards a "homewrecker" was quite exceptional for Lin Xiyuan.

Was there something amiss about this whole situation?

"It's fine, Buddha said that saving a life is more meritorious than building a seven-level pagoda. Besides, Yan Yi is pregnant, and as a doctor, my duty is to save the injured and heal the sick." Lin Xiyuan smiled faintly, "And we're all friends, so helping each other is only natural. By the way, Auntie, do you want to come up with me to see them?"

Zhou Jin nodded, "Yeah, let's go."

Whether things were as Lin Xiyuan said they were would be clear once they went upstairs to see.

Lin Xiyuan seemed not to have expected Zhou Jin to directly follow up on her suggestion, a touch of panic fleeting across her eyes.

All of this was noticed by Zhou Jin.

Following Lin Xiyuan to the third-floor ward, they heard a coquettish female voice even before they entered.

"I want to eat grapes!"

"Ouch, that hurts..."

"Am I prettier or is Lin Xiyuan prettier?"

And the voice of Zhou Yiheng, "You're prettier, you're the prettiest."

Lin Xiyuan stood by the door, her expression somewhat bitter.

At this moment, Zhou Jin finally understood what that flicker of panic in Lin Xiyuan's eyes meant earlier.

She had not expected Zhou Yiheng to really be here.

Lin Xiyuan raised her eyes to Zhou Jin, smiling and saying, "Auntie, don't worry about me. I'm fine."

Zhou Jin took Lin Xiyuan's hand, "Xiyuan, you're a good kid. I'm sorry you had to endure this."

"I don't feel wronged. It's my duty to treat and save people, and fate is predestined by the heavens. If there's anyone to blame, it's that Yi Heng and I aren't fated to be together," Lin Xiyuan spoke softly, a sharp glint flickering in her downcast eyes, but alas, no one saw it.

Lin Xiyuan pushed open the door, leading Zhou Jin inside.

On seeing Zhou Jin, Zhou Yiheng immediately stood up, "Auntie, you're here."

"Auntie, I'm not feeling well, so I won't get up. Don't take it amiss that I don't get up to greet you," Yan Yi glanced at Zhou Jin. Clearly, she didn't take Zhou Jin seriously.

"It's fine. Just lie down," Zhou Jin's expression remained unchanged, "Yi Heng, I heard from Xiyuan about Yan Yi's abdominal issue. How is it, is everything okay now?"

"It's nothing to worry about, Auntie. You don't need to be concerned," Zhou Yiheng still held great respect for Auntie Zhou Jin.

Zhou Jin nodded her head.

Yan Yi glanced at Lin Xiyuan, then began to speak, "Miss Lin, I still feel a bit of pain in my lower abdomen. Could you come and check on me? If I had known how exhausting pregnancy is, Yi Heng and I wouldn't have wanted to have children so early..." Her words seemed boastful.

Zhou Yiheng was continuously giving Yan Yi signals with his eyes, but she seemed to not notice at all, continuing to speak nonstop.

Zhou Jin frowned slightly, but since Lin Xiyuan didn't say anything, she also chose not to interject.

Lin Xiyuan seemed too kind-hearted, being bullied by Yan Yi like this and yet not getting angry.

But Yan Yi grew more and more excessive, "Miss Lin, everything I'm going through now is because of you. If you and Yi Heng had a child earlier, I wouldn't have anything to do with this, would I? I wouldn't have to suffer through pregnancy. Come to think of it, you should be thanking me," pride was written all over Yan Yi's face.

"Yan Yi! Shut your mouth!" Zhou Yiheng rebuked in a low voice.

Yan Yi smiled slightly, "What's the matter, Zhou Yiheng? Can't handle hearing a few words about Miss Lin? Does the old flame still burn? Is that why you're so upset about me teasing her?"

"What nonsense are you talking about?" Zhou Yiheng said in annoyance.

"Am I talking nonsense?" Yan Yi said with a hint of mockery, "I think you're the one feeling guilty, aren't you?"

The atmosphere in the ward was suffocating, and Zhou Jin didn't want to stay another second. She took Lin Xiyuan's hand, "Xiyuan, let's go!"

"Auntie!" Zhou Yiheng had just tried to follow when Yan Yi stopped him, "Zhou Yiheng, dare to follow and see what happens!"

Zhou Yiheng had to stop in his tracks, unaware that a sharp glint flickered in Yan Yi's eyes.

Lin Xiyuan was indeed a clever woman. She had the Zhou and Duanmu families wrapped around her finger.

May Lin Xiyuan get what she wants. After all, Yan Yi had already obtained what she desired. Subconsciously touching her stomach, the corners of her mouth lifted into a faint smile.

From a wild young girl to a lady of a wealthy house, she could consider her life fulfilled.

Once outside, Lin Xiyuan was pulled by Zhou Jin, "Xiyuan, you're too soft-hearted! They weren't asking for help; they were trying to intimidate you! If the hospital can't solve the problem, why must you make a personal visit? That Yan Yi seemed quite spirited to me!"

Being able to show off means all is well, doesn't it?

Lin Xiyuan replied with a smile, "Auntie, I'm fine. I volunteered to help. To be honest with you, how could I forget Yi Heng after such a long time? I won't get over the name 'Zhou Yiheng' in this lifetime. They say that when you love someone, you just want to see them happy. I want to see Yi Heng happy, and I'm willing to add splendor to his happiness."

Lin Xiyuan spoke sincerely, her eyes even reddening.

Her words deeply moved Zhou Jin who patted Lin Xiyuan's hand and sighed, "Silly child, your life is long; there's no need to bet everything on Yi Heng. He's not worth it."

Lin Xiyuan smiled lightly, feigning ease, "As the saying goes, 'Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.' No matter what kind of person Yi Heng is, I like him. His happiness is my happiness."

Zhou Jin sighed and continued, "Xiyuan, this is all Auntie's fault. If Auntie hadn't introduced you to Yi Heng initially, none of this would've happened." Zhou Jin felt very guilty about this inadvertent match-making that had ruined Lin Xiyuan's life.

Seeing Lin Xiyuan like this, she feared Xiyuan might never bounce back.

Lin Xiyuan escorted Zhou Jin towards the hospital's back garden, "Auntie, it's not your fault. Marriage is predestined by the heavens, and this is my destiny. I can't blame anyone." Lin Xiyuan appeared at peace, speaking with a sense of detachment.

No amount of resentment could help with the situation as it was.

"Xiyuan, you're a good child, trust me, you will definitely meet someone better," Zhou Jin consoled Lin Xiyuan.

Lin Xiyuan chuckled bitterly, "I should have been dead long ago, but it was Brother Duanmu who saved me. Auntie..." She paused before continuing, "Please give serious consideration to what I mentioned last time. I really don't want to destroy the marriage between Brother Duanmu and Qingyi Sister-in-law. I am aware of her condition. Just the night before last at the military hospital, Doctor Nalan had already given his answer. Let's be real, even if a miracle happens, with Qingyi Sister-in-law's health, she would find it difficult to have more children in the future. And, God forbid, what if something were to happen to Qingyi Sister-in-law? I know Brother Duanmu, if Qingyi Sister-in-law were gone, he would not want to linger in this world. They love each other so deeply, how could he leave Qingyi Sister-in-law? Auntie, if there's a child, it would be different. For the sake of the child, Brother Duanmu wouldn't do anything foolish. Auntie, don't you agree with what I'm saying?"

Zhou Jin's expression grew very solemn.

She knew her own son's temperament very well. Lin Xiyuan wasn't wrong at all.

If anything were to happen to Mo Qingyi...

Zhou Jin dared not think any further.

Seeing Zhou Jin's reaction, a glint shone in Lin Xiyuan's eyes, and she continued, "Auntie, I've made up my mind. Once I give birth to the child, I'll leave the Superpower World. I promise, I won't cause any trouble for you or Brother Duanmu, and moreover, I won't tell anyone."

This matter needed to be struck while the iron was hot.

Zhou Jin's gaze fell on a pair of grandparents and grandchildren in the garden for a moment before she retracted her look and said to Lin Xiyuan, "I will give serious thought to what you have said. Don't follow me; I want to walk alone."

"Alright." Lin Xiyuan nodded, "Then take your time to think about it, I'll head back first." With those words, Lin Xiyuan turned and left directly.

Zhou Jin watched Lin Xiyuan's departing figure and heaved a deep sigh.

Actually, everything Lin Xiyuan had said was correct, and she herself had no ulterior motives, but Zhou Jin simply couldn't get over that hurdle in her heart.

Her daughter-in-law was currently in a life or death situation, yet she found herself discussing such matters with another woman...

Zhou Jin truly felt ashamed.

When Zhou Jin returned to the operating room, Chu Jin had just come out wearing her surgical gown.

The moment he saw Chu Jin, Duanmu Zhe came back to life with full vitality and hurried forward, asking, "Sister-in-law Nine, how is Qingyi now?"

Chu Jin took off her mask and patted Duanmu Zhe on the shoulder, "Don't worry, Qingyi is out of danger now and can be transferred out of the ICU, but for the time being, she cannot wake up. I still need to study that virus properly to come up with the best treatment plan."

"Thank you, Sister-in-law Nine, thank you so much," Duanmu Zhe breathed a sigh of relief, it was enough to know that Mo Qingyi wouldn't leave him.

"However," Chu Jin sighed, her expression unusually grave, "Duanmu, you still need to be mentally prepared. If I can't develop a method to counteract the poison, Qingyi might never wake up." In other words, Mo Qingyi was at risk of becoming a vegetative patient.

Originally, Chu Jin had wanted to keep Duanmu Zhe in the dark about this, but since he was Mo Qingyi's husband, he had the right to know.

He was a man and at times like this, it was his duty to be the pillar of strength for Mo Qingyi.

Upon hearing this news, everyone else drew in a sharp breath.

Duanmu Zhe also understood Chu Jin's intentions. He looked at her and said firmly, "Sister-in-law Nine, rest assured, no matter what, I will stay by Qingyi's side."

Chu Jin nodded.

It was getting late now, so Chu Jin followed Mo Zhixuan back to the imperial palace.

She hadn't rested since returning from Poland Mountain and rushed straight to the hospital to perform major surgery; she was extremely tired now.

Bao Bao and Bei Bei seemed to have grown up a lot all at once. After returning home, they washed, ate, and went to bed on their own, saving Chu Jin a lot of worry.

After taking a bath, Chu Jin locked herself in the medical room; she wanted Mo Qingyi to wake up as soon as possible.

However, the virus inside Mo Qingyi was really too strange, and no matter how much Chu Jin researched, she came up empty-handed.

In the blink of an eye, three days had passed, and still, there was no progress.

In these three days, Chu Jin had kept herself locked in the medical room day and night, not even having time to eat, and she had only seen Mo Zhixuan once.

"Daddy, is Mommy still inside?" Bao Bao and Bei Bei stood in front of the medical room and turned to the Mo Zhixuan beside them.

Mo Zhixuan nodded, "Yes, your mom is still inside. These past few days, both your dad and mom have been away, so you have to be good and listen to Grandma, without giving her any worries, alright?" Mo Zhixuan had also been very busy these days, taking care of the affairs of the Superpower World and finding time to visit Mo Qingyi.

So for the past few days, Bao Bao and Bei Bei had been staying with Mrs. Mo.

Bao Bao and Bei Bei nodded, "Daddy, don't worry, we won't make Grandma worry. We are very good and obedient, it's just that Bei Bei and I miss Mommy a little..."

Just then, the door to the medical room opened.

Bao Bao and Bei Bei immediately ran over and hugged Chu Jin's leg, "Mommy, Mommy."

Chu Jin smiled and stroked Bao Bao and Bei Bei's little heads, "Mommy missed you too."

After not seeing her for three days, Chu Jin looked noticeably thinner. A flicker of distress passed through Mo Zhixuan's eyes as he walked over and took Chu Jin's hand, "Jin, you've worked hard. Are you hungry? I've left some food for you in the kitchen."

Chu Jin nodded, "Let's go eat."

The family of four headed in the direction of the kitchen.

After eating, Chu Jin turned to Mo Zhixuan and slowly said, "Mo Zhixuan, I'm sorry, I haven't made any breakthroughs in these three days."

Mo Zhixuan held her hand, "It's okay, take your time. Let's go see Qingyi later, shall we?"

Chu Jin nodded lightly, "Yes, and I need to discuss something with the dean anyway."

"Mommy, I want to go too," Bei Bei looked up at Chu Jin.

Bao Bao also said, "I want to go too. I haven't seen my aunt for several days."