

2401 Who is that gutsy?

Inside Si Yehan's mansion:

After several days of investigation and preparation, Si Yehan pinpointed Tangtang's location and determined the situation regarding the security at Wanmei Villa. At the same time, all of their men were summoned and could be mobilized at any moment.

As soon as Lin Que thought about how they were going to attack the scariest place in Tianshui City, Wanmei Villa, he started trembling in fright. "Wanmei Villa is the place Yin Yuerong specifically uses to nurture gu, so the ground is filled with poisonous insects and the forest surrounding it is filled with toxic air. No one in Tianshui City dares to approach it..."

Ye Wanwan said, "I requested my brother to have Dead Man make medicinal pouches. They'll be distributed to everyone later. They can help provide resistance against the poisonous insects and toxic air."

As soon as Ye Wanwan thought about how long Tangtang had been in that frightening place, she burned with anxiety.

Initially, she thought Yin Yuerong was merely being prideful and would definitely use Tangtang to trade for Yin Heng after a few days.

To their surprise, Yi Lingjun conducted several probing rounds of negotiations with Yin Yuerong, but the woman remained immovable as a mountain.

After all, this was part of the Arbitration Council's territory, so if this matter escalated, the Arbitration Council couldn't ignore it, and Yi Lingjun would be put in a difficult spot then.

Hence, Ye Wanwan had been placating Si Yehan the past few days while patiently waiting for news from Yi Lingjun.

However, seven days had passed but Yin Yuerong was still unwilling to release Tangtang, so they had no choice but to employ forceful methods.

“Ninth Brother, Ninth Sister, how about... how about we wait until later? It'd be better to go there in the middle of the night, right?” Lin Que persuaded.

Si Yehan's gaze remained placid. “Inform everyone we're departing immediately.”

With every second they delayed, any degree of danger could befall Tangtang.

Ye Wanwan looked exasperated. “Do you think Yin Yuerong would be unprepared? There isn't any difference whether we go during the day or night.”

Lin Que: “Eh...”

Lin Que couldn't refute Ye Wanwan. He simply wanted to die...

In the end, Si Yehan and Ye Wanwan personally led a team of elites and headed toward Wanmei Villa.

At Wanmei Villa:

Auntie Qiao ordered people to purchase many fresh ingredients and even prepared an apron.

Yin Yuerong changed into a leisurely outfit before washing her hands and donning the apron. Then she started preparing dinner in the kitchen.

She couldn't remember how many years it'd been since she had cooked. She initially thought she'd be out of practice, but when she picked up the knife, a familiar feeling returned to her.

That moment, she realized those memories had never truly disappeared or were forgotten. They had merely been repressed in the deepest depths of her mind.

She never expected she'd cook again for someone one day...

Since the kitchen was filled with smoke and soot, Yin Yuerong forbade Tangtang from entering and the little fella could only longingly wait in the dining room.

“Little Young Master, Madam is cooking already, so be good and play here. It will only be a moment!” Auntie Qiao gently

reassured him.

“Okay,” Tangtang replied.

After saying a few more words, Auntie Qiao made her way back to the kitchen to continue assisting Yin Yuerong.

However, on her way there, someone rushed inside in a panic. “Housekeeper Qiao, Housekeeper Qiao! Not good!”

Auntie Qiao frowned slightly. “Why are you making a ruckus? What happened?”

The man dressed as a guard was panting as he said, “Someone’s trespassing! And they’re very fast; they’ve arrived at the foot of the mountain already...”

Auntie Qiao was instantly enraged. “What did you say? Who is that gutsy and dares to break into Wanmei Villa?!”

2402 Just a little ho

“The other party has lots of people and they’re all experts. I’m afraid our people won’t be able to hold them back for much longer!” the guard anxiously responded.

Auntie Qiao’s expression was chilly. “Take me there immediately! I’d like to see who’s so suicidal!”

The guard gulped and cautiously said, “Auntie Qiao, I think the leader seems... seems to be Eldest Young Master...”

Auntie Qiao was startled. “Who?”

“It’s the Eldest Young Master! And there’s a pretty woman next to him...”

Eldest Young Master and Second Miss Nie?

Auntie Qiao never expected Eldest Young Master would employ the direct method of forceful trespassing to snatch someone back with his shrewdness.

However, it also made sense. Auntie Qiao had been in Wanmei Villa the whole time, so she knew Yin Yuerong actually treated the little young master very well, but outsiders wouldn’t think so, Eldest Young Master especially. Who knew how he viewed Madam? It was natural he’d burn with anxiety. Eldest Young Master knew Madam too well and knew that since negotiations with Madam had proven useless, trespassing forcefully was the only solution left.

As Auntie Qiao and the guard spoke, Si Yehan, Ye Wanwan, Lin Que, and Yu Shao had barged into the courtyard from the back.

Lin Que said, “Ninth Brother, Ninth Sister, we’ll split up and look!”

Ye Wanwan nodded. “Okay.”

As the quartet was about to split up their search, a voice suddenly came from the dining room.

“Mommy!”

Tangtang?

Ye Wanwan incredulously turned around and immediately saw the little fella wearing a furry cotton-padded jacket rapidly barreling toward her like a white snowball.

“Tangtang!!!”

Ye Wanwan swiftly darted over and tightly hugged the child.

“Mommy, Tangtang really, really missed you!”

“Sorry... sorry... Mommy didn't come earlier...”

Si Yehan also quickly walked up and the darkness in his face finally dispersed a few degrees upon seeing the little fella's good condition.

Lin Que and Yu Shao also sprinted over. They were very surprised too. The four of them had secretly plotted for so long, thinking Tangtang would definitely be imprisoned in the most secure underground prison at Wanmei Villa.

Because of this, they researched how to break into the prison for several days and finally came to a solution. Who would've expected them to run into this little fella as soon as they entered the villa?

“Baby, how are you?” Ye Wanwan meticulously examined the child up and down and confirmed he didn't have any injuries.

Judging from Tangtang's complexion and expression, he wasn't frightened in the slightest bit. If she had to make a comment...

It seemed like he was wearing too many layers of clothes?

Even now, Lin Que was still in disbelief. “D*mn, isn't this too easy? This isn't deception, right?”

Lin Que couldn't be faulted for thinking like that. Si Yehan and Ye Wanwan were also vigilant.

“Best to be careful.” Ye Wanwan grasped Tangtang's hand and securely shielded him in her arms.

Yu Shao wore a solemn expression. “I’m afraid Director Yin is planning to bait us into her trap and catch all of us in one fell swoop. It was easy for us to enter, but it’ll probably be difficult to leave!”

Ye Wanwan was still questioning Tangtang with concern. “Baby, do you feel unwell anywhere?!”

Baby Tangtang shook his head. “I don’t. Tangtang is very well. It’s just...”

Ye Wanwan was instantly nervous. “It’s just what?”

“It’s just a little hot,” Tangtang replied.

The little fella’s cheeks were flushed red, and a light sheen of sweat also dotted his forehead, perhaps from running earlier.

2403 There's a type of cold called "Grandma thinks I'm cold"

Ye Wanwan was nervously looking at the little fella's round appearance and suddenly discovered the cause. "Eh, baby, aren't you wearing too many clothes?"

He was basically wrapped into a ball, so how could he not be hot?

Although her baby's current appearance was bursting with cuteness...

Tangtang sighed and helplessly replied, "Actually, I'm not cold, but they insisted on making me were this. There's a type of cold called 'Grandma thinks I'm cold'..."

Ye Wanwan: "..."

Si Yehan: "..."

Yu Shao: "..."

Lin Que: "..."

Wasn't there something wrong with this situation?

Even Si Yehan's brows furrowed. "Who made you wear the clothes?"

Tangtang replied, "Grandma! Grandma was afraid I was cold, so she made me wear more clothes."

Si Yehan: "..."

Ye Wanwan: "...Huh?"

Lin Que repeatedly picked his ears. "Did I mishear? Tangtang hasn't become delusional because he experienced a great shock, right?"

Yu Shao asked, “Little Young Master, how did you escape from the underground prison? Did someone purposely release you just now?”

Tangtang blinked, his face baffled. “What underground prison?”

Lin Que asked, “Weren’t you imprisoned in the underground prison these past few days?”

“I wasn’t. I was sleeping in the room next to Grandma,” Tangtang answered.

Lin Que: “...”

Yu Shao: “...”

Ye Wanwan: “...”

Si Yehan: “...”

The more Ye Wanwan heard, the more confused she became. She dazedly turned to Si Yehan. “Ah-Jiu, what’s going on?”

This was Si Yehan’s first time feeling so clueless. He also had no idea what was happening right now.

Judging from Tangtang’s words, not only was he not imprisoned the past few days, but he had also lived comfortably in the villa. Yin Yuerong was even concerned about his wellbeing and made him wear more clothes?

“Ahem, do you know where your grandma is right now, Tangtang?” Ye Wanwan asked.

Tangtang: “Grandma’s making dinner for me in the kitchen!”

Ye Wanwan: “...” What???

Lin Que: “It’s over, it’s over! This child was probably too shocked, so his mind became muddled...”

In the midst of their confusion, footsteps were heard outside of the dining room.

The four of them were instantly on-guard and turned around. However, what they saw was...

Yin Yuerong was wearing a light blue at-home outfit with a light pink apron wrapped around her, holding a plate of sweet

and sour spare ribs...

At the same time, Yin Yuerong also saw the new arrivals in the dining room.

All of a sudden, everyone was staring at each other, dumbfounded.

Lin Que: "My eyes... are they blind?"

Ye Wanwan sluggishly replied, "You aren't the only blind one!"

The instant Yin Yuerong saw the newcomers, her face chilled.

She truly underestimated the nerve of these people! They actually dared to break into Wanmei Villa!

At this moment, Tangtang scurried over to Yin Yuerong. "Grandma, are my sweet and sour spare ribs done?"

Yin Yuerong's expression eased. "Mm."

The sweet and sour spare ribs that Yin Yuerong made were tempting in color and its fragrance assaulted their noses. Even Ye Wanwan couldn't resist staring.

"Wow! Grandma is so awesome!"

Yin Yuerong appeared to treat these trespassing, uninvited guests like they didn't exist and looked at the little fella.

"What else do you want to eat?"

Tangtang thought about it. "Mm... Does Grandma know how to make tanghulu?"

Yin Yuerong replied, "I can try."

Joy filled Tangtang's face. "That's great! Daddy loves to eat tanghulu!"

Yin Yuerong: "..."

Si Yehan: "..."

2404 I trust Tangtang

Although Yin Yuerong acted like a different person toward Tangtang, her cold demeanor returned as soon as she looked at the others.

Yin Yuerong swept her eyes over the “guests” without a trace of warmth in her eyes. “It appears you lot are treating my Wanmei Villa as a famous tourist spot and want to come and leave as you please?”

Si Yehan narrowed his eyes. “Yin...”

However, before Si Yehan could finish speaking, Tangtang cheerfully interrupted, “That’s right, the scenery here is super, super good! And there’s a really, really pretty plum forest in the back. Daddy, Mommy, uncles, you came at the perfect time! We can eat dinner together and go to see the plum blossoms after dinner!”

Yin Yuerong: “...”

Si Yehan: “...”

Ye Wanwan: “...”

Yu Shao: “...”

Lin Que: “...”

View the flowers? And also... also stay here to eat dinner?
Was that a joke?!

It was already a miracle if Yin Yuerong didn’t chop them into pieces and use them as fertilizer for the plum forest!

Yin Yuerong’s expression darkened and shifted several times.

Tangtang proudly bragged: “You’ll be able to taste Grandma’s cooking in a moment! Grandma’s so awesome!”

Yin Yuerong’s expression changed several times before she emptied herself of emotion. She expressionlessly said, “Dinner will arrive shortly. Do as you please.”

Then the four newcomers watched as Yin Yuerong did nothing to them and turned around to re-enter the kitchen. They were stupefied.

“My God! What... what does this mean... she’s really allowing us to stay for dinner?” Lin Que looked like he’d seen a ghost.

Yu Shao was also somewhat panicked. Ever since stepping inside Wanmei Villa, things had progressed beyond his imagination.

...

A moment later, all the dishes were served.

Yin Yuerong, Tangtang, Si Yehan, Ye Wanwan, Lin Que, and Yu Shao all sat at the same table.

Lin Que and Yu Shao didn’t dare to even breathe too loudly. They were actually sitting at the same table and eating dinner—food that Yin Yuerong personally cooked. Moreover, there was even a red, shimmering plate of tanghulu in the middle of the table.

No one would believe it if they told this story!

The only calm person around the entire table was probably Tangtang.

Although Yin Yuerong permitted the four people to stay, she completely treated them like air and started eating.

The little fella first picked up a piece of the sweet and sour spare ribs for his mom. “Mommy, hurry and try it!”

Ye Wanwan gulped. Sweet and sour spare ribs made by Yin Yuerong...

Did she dare to eat it?

However, in this situation, it also wasn’t good if she didn’t eat it right?

Ye Wanwan snapped out of it and hastily nodded. “Okay... okay...”

However, as she was about to open her mouth, Si Yehan stopped her with his hand. “Don’t touch it.”

Si Yehan evidently didn’t trust Yin Yuerong.

Si Yehan’s little motion naturally didn’t escape Yin Yuerong’s eye. Yin Yuerong’s hand around her chopsticks stiffened, and the aura around her chilled instantly.

Ye Wanwan sighed with exasperation inwardly. She lowered her voice and said to Si Yehan, “I know you don’t trust her. Me neither.”

Ye Wanwan paused and glanced at Baby Tangtang. “However, I trust Tangtang.”

Moreover, with Yin Yuerong’s abilities, if she wanted to poison you, she could do it without alerting you in the slightest. There was no way she’d use such a lowly method like poisoning their food.

Then Ye Wanwan lowered her head and bit the piece of sweet and sour spare ribs.

Si Yehan helplessly watched Ye Wanwan eat the piece of spare ribs, his chin tightly taut.

Ye Wanwan: “Uh...”

Si Yehan asked, “What is it?”

Ye Wanwan replied, “This is too delicious!”

Si Yehan: “...”

2405 So delicious!

“Yummy, right? I told you Grandma is awesome! Grandma knows everything!” Baby Tangtang delightfully declared.

Next to him, Yin Yuerong’s face softened minutely.

“Daddy, you should eat too!” Tangtang picked up a piece of simmer-fried fish for Si Yehan.

“Ninth Brother, don’t. Do you really trust Auntie Rong...?”
Lin Que nervously grumbled.

Si Yehan didn’t say anything and directly ate the piece of fish Tangtang offered to him, mild surprise appearing on his face.

He had thought Wanwan only said that because she was afraid Yin Yuerong would be angered otherwise. He didn’t expect Yin Yuerong’s cooking to really be wonderful.

“Daddy, is it tasty?” Baby Tangtang asked immediately.

Si Yehan was quiet for a long while before finally nodding.
“Mm.”

Yin Yuerong was startled briefly but her expression quickly returned to normal.

Since Si Yehan was eating too, Yu Shao had no choice but to also taste a piece.

“D*mn! You guys are way too gutsy! Anyway, I won’t eat it! I wouldn’t eat it even if you threatened to kill me!” Lin Que frightfully shook his head.

In the end...

As Lin Que watched the rest of his group appear to eat happily, he whispered, “Is it really that good? Let me try...”

Lin Que cautiously picked up a piece from a dish, and his eyes lit up.

“Isn’t this too delicious?! Auntie Rong’s actually this good at cooking???”

Finally, the whole table started eating for good and all the dishes were wiped clean with Lin Que eating the most.

So delicious!

As Ye Wanwan ate, she kept casting questioning glances at Si Yehan, and Si Yehan could only helplessly say that he'd never encountered a situation like this one.

After all, Yin Yuerong had expressed her loathing and dislike toward Tangtang in front of him multiple times and even spat out vicious words in the Arbitration Council's hallway that day.

However, after personally witnessing it for themselves, the reality was entirely different from their expectations.

Tangtang's reaction couldn't be faked. The little fella had been here for so many days, yet he was stable. He wasn't only stable but his condition was also great and he was well taken care of.

Yin Yuerong even personally cooked for Tangtang, and she, who never touched meat, actually cooked mostly meat dishes tonight.

Furthermore, Yin Yuerong was clearly on the brink of an explosion earlier, but she actually allowed them over for dinner merely because of a sentence from Tangtang.

Si Yehan's eyes were akin to the deep sea thousands of feet below sea level, hidden currents swirling inside.

The Yin Yuerong before him and the Yin Yuerong he knew were like two completely different people.

However, this only applied to her interactions with Tangtang. When it came to people other than Tangtang, she was still that same Yin Yuerong. Otherwise, he would suspect the woman in front of him was an impostor.

"What's going on with your mom...? I'm flabbergasted..." Ye Wanwan anxiously bit the tip of her chopsticks.

"Perhaps you should ask your son." Si Yehan's gaze landed on the child sitting between Yin Yuerong and Ye Wanwan.

Ye Wanwan mused over it for half a day before slapping her thigh and saying, “Ah-Jiu, I know the reason...”

Si Yehan turned to her. “What is it?”

“It must be because my son is too adorable!”

“...” Si Yehan’s expression was indescribable. Regardless of how adorable something was, it shouldn’t affect Yin Yuerong.

However, aside from that, he also couldn’t figure out why Yin Yuerong’s attitude toward Tangtang was so strange.

“What? You don’t believe me?” Ye Wanwan raised her brows.

Si Yehan didn’t respond. His expression sufficed as an answer.

Ye Wanwan tauntingly asked, “Is that hard to understand? Didn’t you fall in love with me at first sight because I was also too cute?”

Si Yehan said, “...That’s not the same.”

Ye Wanwan grumbled, “It’s clearly similar logic.”

2406 Truly like Tangtang

Lin Que whispered, “Say, Ninth Brother, aren’t you too gutsy? You actually really ate it?!”

“...” Si Yehan silently glanced at Lin Que, the one who ate the most.

He never trusted Yin Yuerong; he merely trusted Wanwan.

Tangtang said, “Daddy, this is the tanghulu you like!”

Ye Wanwan added, “That’s right, that’s right. Tanghulu is your dad’s favorite!”

Si Yehan: “...”

...

And so, this meal passed in absolute harmony, and everyone inhaled the dessert too.

After that, Tangtang really led the group to admire the plum blossoms.

Tangtang exclaimed, “Mommy, Tangtang will take you to see the plum blossoms!”

Ye Wanwan: “Uh...”

We’re really going to see the plum blossoms?!

Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan exchanged a look.

Right now, the top priority was to quickly get their baby out of here.

However, despite sharing a whole meal together, they still didn’t find an opportunity to voice that.

They were very aware that they could reluctantly throw a veil of peace over everything, but once they said that, they probably couldn’t feign peace even if they wanted to.

Ye Wanwan was preparing to admire the flowers first before giving the matter further thought and suggest it in a tactful manner, but Si Yehan spoke first.

Si Yehan said, "Tangtang, we should head back."

Ye Wanwan could only quietly sigh and hold her forehead.

Sigh...

No wonder this mother and son duo had such an awful relationship...

The second Si Yehan spoke, the seemingly warm atmosphere popped like a soap bubble that had shimmered under the brilliant sun but was easily destroyed by the wind.

Ruthlessness flitted through Yin Yuerong's eyes, and she reflexively turned to look at Tangtang next to her.

Ye Wanwan sharply detected Yin Yuerong's gaze changing the instant it landed on Tangtang.

Although that change was nearly imperceptible, perhaps due to her innate maternal instincts, Ye Wanwan clearly saw a trace of warmth in Yin Yuerong's gaze and even... reluctance...

At first, Ye Wanwan also wondered if Yin Yuerong had some secret scheme.

With Yin Yuerong's personality, she never liked to act in a circumvent manner and also wouldn't act to the extent of personally cooking for Tangtang.

Moreover, a child didn't know how to deceive people, and Tangtang's reactions couldn't be faked.

He also really liked this grandma.

Ye Wanwan spent half a day to finally digest this truth: Yin Yuerong most likely truly liked Tangtang.

Otherwise, why would she allow Tangtang to sleep in the room next to hers? Why would she have people prepare clothes for him? Why would she personally cook for Tangtang...?

Which meant...

Yin Yuerong kept refusing negotiations with Yi Lingjun and was unwilling to release Tangtang because she didn't want Tangtang to leave?

Tangtang looked up. “It’s time to go back?”

Si Yehan coldly glanced at Yin Yuerong. “Or are you saying you want to continue to keep Tangtang here?”

The atmosphere suddenly froze, and Lin Que and Yu Shao went on high alert.

Before Yin Yuerong could respond, Baby Tangtang answered with a matter-of-fact expression, “Daddy, Grandma likes Tangtang so much, so of course Grandma wants Tangtang to stay!”

Si Yehan: “...”

When Yin Yuerong heard that, her typically expressionless face actually revealed a trace of stiffness and embarrassment, but she didn’t refute Tangtang’s words in the end.

Ye Wanwan saw Yin Yuerong’s expression and finally confirmed her guess without a cinch.

Hence, Ye Wanwan cleared her throat and said, “Hm, we’ll leave it to Tangtang when he wants to go back. If Tangtang is happy here, he can stay a few more days. Daddy and Mommy live nearby anyway, so we can come to visit you any time!”

2407 Trouble you to take care of him

Yin Yuerong never expected Ye Wanwan to say that, astonishment evident on her face.

She was well aware of how much this woman cared about Tangtang. When Yin Heng abducted Tangtang back then, she had no scruples about exposing her identity.

Tangtang looked at Yin Yuerong. “Grandma, can I speak privately with Mommy for a moment?”

Yin Yuerong replied, “You can.”

Tangtang dragged Ye Wanwan into a stretch of forest deprived of people.

Nearby, Auntie Qiao secretly followed and hid behind a fake mountain.

“Mommy, hug!” The little fella immediately started acting like a spoiled child the second they arrived in an empty spot.

Ye Wanwan nearly melted from the cuteness, so how could she reject him? She hastily knelt down to embrace the little fella.

“Mommy...” The little fella looked a bit sad.

Ye Wanwan quickly asked, “What is it?”

The little fella cast down his head. “Mommy, you didn’t kiss Tangtang...”

Ye Wanwan broke into a chuckle. Did this little guy pull her over here simply because of this?

He probably found it embarrassing earlier because of too many people.

Ye Wanwan hugged the little fella rolled up like a dumpling and gently kissed his cheeks.

The little fella still didn't appear too happy, and Ye Wanwan chuckled again before smacking another kiss on his cheeks.

Finally, the little fella was satisfied. His cheeks were flushed and his eyes sparkling.

“Tangtang, Mommy has a question for you.”

“Does Mommy want to ask about Grandma?”

“Yes. Do... do you like Grandma?” Ye Wanwan probed.

The little fella didn't hesitate before nodding with certainty.

“Tangtang likes Grandma. Grandmother acts like Mommy said. She might be hard to get along with and has a low EQ, but she's a very nice and gentle person.”

Only then did Ye Wanwan recall the things she told Tangtang and coughed lightly. “That's right, that's right... That's indeed the case...”

After hearing that, Ye Wanwan's worries finally eased up.

Regardless of how Yin Yuerong treated other people, at least she wouldn't hurt Tangtang.

At the same time, behind the fake mountain, Auntie Qiao quietly listened to their conversation but realized she didn't need to continue after hearing that, so she covertly left.

Ye Wanwan patted her son's head. “Alright then. If Baby wants to stay, have a few more days of fun here. Daddy and Mommy will pick you up in a few days.”

Baby Tangtang said, “No need, Mommy! I'll ask Grandma to take me home in a few days!”

Ye Wanwan's eyes turned when she heard that.

If they could really make Yin Yuerong send Tangtang home herself, that'd be wonderful!

After all, no matter what method they used to take Tangtang away, they'd probably part on bad terms. If Si Yehan and Yin Yuerong clashed again, they'd waste the days Tangtang spent here for nothing.

And so, after hesitating for an eternity, Ye Wanwan decided to believe in Tangtang. “Okay.”

...

After chatting a little longer, they returned to the dining room.

When Tangtang returned, Yin Yuerong’s gaze immediately shot toward him.

Ye Wanwan held the little fella by the hand and looked at Yin Yuerong with a genial expression. “Ah-Jiu and I happen to be rather busy these days, so can we trouble you to continue to look after Tangtang for several more days?”

Ye Wanwan didn’t mention how Yin Yuerong abducted Tangtang at all.

Shock swiftly flitted through Yin Yuerong’s eyes, but she quickly calmed herself and went along with Ye Wanwan. She calmly replied, “You can.”

Ye Wanwan smiled. “Thank you for the trouble then.”

Si Yehan seemed like he wanted to speak but Ye Wanwan sent him a pacifying look.

After they left Wanmei Villa, Ye Wanwan reiterated her entire conversation with Tangtang to Si Yehan.

2408 There wasn't harm before the comparison

Ye Wanwan exclaimed, "I told you my guess was right! Sure enough, your mom really likes Tangtang! So we just have to go back now and wait for news from Tangtang!"

Judging from Tangtang and Yin Yuerong's interactions throughout this visit, Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan could tell they got along very well.

However, Yin Yuerong's image in Si Yehan's mind was too deep-rooted, so he was unable to wholly believe it.

Lin Que exclaimed, "Boss Tangtang is impressive! He actually managed to take care of Auntie Rong! I was wondering why Auntie Rong acted so abnormally—it turns out she was tamed by Tangtang!"

Then he cautiously glanced at Si Yehan. "Why's there such a difference between a son and a grandson! I wager my Ninth Brother has never eaten food cooked by Auntie Rong! It's seriously true that there isn't harm before the comparison..."

Ye Wanwan instantly glared at Lin Que.

He really had to hit Si Yehan where it hurt, huh?

Yu Shao chuckled. "It's probably because a skip in a generation makes them closer. Many older generation folks are strict toward their children but spoil their grandchildren."

Lin Que grumbled, "But who would've expected Auntie Rong to also have a normal side..."

...

Inside the study in Wanmei Villa:

After Si Yehan and his group left, Auntie Qiao entered the study.

"What did they say?" Yin Yuerong asked.

Yin Yuerong's personality was both sensitive and paranoid, which wasn't something that could be changed immediately. Hence, when Ye Wanwan and Tangtang were alone, she secretly ordered Auntie Qiao to follow them.

Auntie Qiao truthfully repeated Ye Wanwan and Tangtang's conversation in the plum forest.

"Tangtang likes Grandma. Grandmother acts like Mommy said. She might be hard to get along with and has a low EQ, but she's a very nice and gentle person."

"That's right, that's right... That's indeed the case..."

"Furthermore, it appears Second Miss Nie didn't mention to Tangtang at all that you kidnapped him..."

A short few sentences caused Yin Yuerong's expression to change repeatedly.

Auntie Qiao continued, "Of course she doesn't truly think that and probably just doesn't want any resentment or hatred to linger in the child's heart. However, this breadth of mind isn't something that those socialites can compare to."

Although Yin Yuerong didn't say anything, she surprisingly didn't ridicule or retort like she did before. All that remained inside of her was a foreign feeling of having lost something, only to regain it again...

"Ask Tangtang what he wants to eat tomorrow."

"Okay! I'll go right now!"

...

When Si Yehan and his group were trespassing on Wanmei Villa, Ah-Zhong went to the Punishment Hall to receive his punishment and only found out what had happened after leaving.

This development was completely different from his prediction.

In the middle of the night, Ah-Zhong quickly snuck into the dungeon to see Yin Heng.

"Young Master Yin Heng, I'm afraid things are bad!!!"

“What happened? Speak clearly.”

“This evening, Si Yehan and that woman brought a bunch of people to break into Wanmei Villa!”

Yin Heng’s eyes lit up. “What? Did you say Si Yehan actually broke into Wanmei Villa?”

Isn’t that a good thing?

He had been hoping for them to hurry and start fighting until one side perished.

Yin Heng could imagine what a hostile scene that was.

“What’s the situation like right now? Did they start fighting? Yin Yuerong isn’t an easy opponent, so Si Yehan must’ve mobilized all available manpower, right?”

“The security here must be less tight now, so it’s a perfect chance for you to think of a way to get me out of here! After I get out, I will find a safe place to stay for a few days and wait three to five days. Within two weeks, both sides must be wrought with damage!

“At that time, I can appear as the head of the Yin family and clean up the mess...” As Yin Heng spoke, his eyes turned brighter and brighter, his expression determined to win.

He still didn’t realize how awful Ah-Zhong’s expression was.

Ah-Zhong dawdled for an eternity before hesitatingly saying, “Ahem, Young Master, the events turned out differently than we expected...”

2409 Regret his past deeds

“No wonder you managed to sneak inside so easily these past few days. Si Yehan probably doesn’t have the time to care...”

Yin Heng was babbling nonstop when he suddenly heard what Ah-Zhong said. He paused before asking, “Different? What do you mean?”

Ah-Zhong gulped. “Maybe it was because Madam’s attitude was too resolute and she was unwilling to release the brat no matter what that it was useless for even President Yi to act as a mediator. Hence, Eldest Young Master was backed into a wall and dispatched a bunch of elites and attacked Wanmei Villa in the middle of the day with that woman in tow...”

“I originally thought it would be a struggle to the death, but to my surprise, both sides were fine and didn’t start fighting. There wasn’t a hint of commotion, and moreover...”

“Moreover what?”

“Moreover, Madam kept them for dinner, and they even took a walk in the plum forest afterward! In the end, Si Yehan didn’t take away that little brat and said they’d allow the brat to stay to play a few more days!”

“Absolute nonsense!”

“Young Master Yin Heng, I also didn’t dare to believe it, but... but that’s the truth... In reality... there’s another matter I didn’t dare to tell you...”

“What kind of time is it now? Spit it out already!” An ominous feeling intensified in Yin Heng’s heart. His typical pretense and courteousness morphed into rampaging aggression.

Ah-Zhong quickly replied, “It’s... it’s that Madam started treating that little b*stard better and better for some reason... She only had him stay in the neighboring room at first and ignored him for the most part, but eventually, she started caring about that little b*stard’s accommodations and wellbeing. She had Auntie Qiao buy new clothes and candy

for that little b*stard and even permitted him to enter and leave the study as he wanted.”

“Every day, when Madam works, that little b*stard keeps her company in the study. Today... today, Madam also broke her many years of solely eating vegetarian and personally cooked meat for that little b*stard!”

Ah-Zhong spat everything out in one go before looking at the other man nervously. “I originally thought Madam would definitely hate that little b*stard, but who would’ve expected things to have gotten more and more out of hand. Madam... Madam is clearly indulging that little b*stard like a real grandson!”

The more Yin Heng heard, the more awful his expression became. “What did you say... Did you say Mother not only didn’t torment that little brat but also spoils that little brat a lot?”

Yin Yuerong was treating that little b*stard like a real grandson? What a fantasy story!

Ah-Zhong clutched the wounds he got from his punishment, furious hatred brimming from his eyes. “It’s the absolute truth. That little brat is just like his mom. I have no idea what kind of bewitching drug he gave Madam to have made someone like Yin Yuerong so docile.”

“She isn’t just spoiling him! It wouldn’t be an overstatement to say she’d obey every wish he had! That day, Madam was in a bad mood and I was serving her tea outside the study to placate her, but Madam ended up punishing me! However, that little b*stard just had to utter a few words to soften up Madam, and Madam picked him up and carried him into the study!”

Ah-Zhong provided a lot of detail, so he definitely wasn’t lying.

Yin Heng had been by Yin Yuerong’s side for so long, so he thought he knew her inside out. Who would’ve expected this kind of hiccup to happen?!

He had wholly relied on that little b*stard to be the trigger for a war between Si Yehan and Yin Yuerong.

Now though, he tried to be clever and ended up with an egg on his face. There was a great possibility Yin Yuerong and Si Yehan's relationship might gradually improve because of this child...

He simply... shot himself in the foot!

At this moment, Yin Heng was flooded with regret and punched the bars of his cell.

If he knew this would happen, he wouldn't have kidnapped that child! He wouldn't have ended up like this!

2410 Then I'll give her a ride

“Young Master Yin Heng, what should we do now? That little brat is basically living in Wanmei Villa now and Madam is increasingly lenient toward him. Because of him, she's not even pursuing the matter with that woman much anymore.”

Ah-Zhong continued, “After all, the biggest conflict between Madam and Eldest Young Master is that woman. If this continues and Madam and Eldest Young Master's relationship improves, then the position of the Yin family head...”

“D*mn it...”

If this continued and Si Yehan reconciled with Yin Yuerong, returned to the Yin family, and inherited the position of the family head, he'd become a scrapped chesspiece.

Not only would Yin Yuerong disregard his survival but she might also hold a grudge against him if she felt bad for her grandson.

“Young Master Yin Heng, you must hurry and think of a solution!”

“Think of a solution? With my current state, what solution could I possibly think of?” Yin Heng roared like a trapped beast, his expression stormy.

Then Yin Heng's gaze shot toward Ah-Zhong like a viper's tongue. “Ah-Zhong... now that you see Si Yehan possibly becoming the head of the Yin family... What... Do you want to forsake darkness for light?”

Yin Heng's chilly voice sent a shiver down Ah-Zhong's spine. “I... I wouldn't dare! Why would this subordinate think that?! This subordinate is fiercely loyal to Young Master Yin Heng, without a stray thought! Young Master should know that!”

Yin Heng snorted.

Loyal?

It was merely because he held some heinous dirt on Ah-Zhong. If Ah-Zhong dared to betray him, he wouldn't live either.

“Young Master Yin Heng, the top priority right now is figuring out a solution!” Ah-Zhong exclaimed anxiously.

After digesting this information, Yin Heng calmed down a tinge.

Yin Yuerong didn't express any intent to rescue him whatsoever after he was imprisoned for so many days, which was what caused him to have a breakdown and panic.

Ah-Zhong didn't dare to disturb Yin Heng and cautiously waited on the side.

A moment later, bloodthirsty amusement flitted through Yin Heng's eyes. “Rome wasn't built in a day. Even if Si Yehan wants to improve his relationship with Yin Yuerong, it won't happen within a day or two... Say, if Yin Yuerong was ended now, who's the most likely person to succeed as the head of the Yin family?”

Ah-Zhong's eyes turned. “You, of course, Young Master Yin Heng! After all, you're still the future family head that Madam personally acknowledged!”

As Ah-Zhong spoke, his face paled. “But Madam... e-ended? Madam's perfectly fine. Why would she...”

“Of course nothing would happen to her if she's perfectly fine, but what if... I gave her a ride?” Yin Heng's gaze was bone-chillingly cold.

Ah-Zhong jolted in fright. Could it be that Yin Heng wanted to murder Yin Yuerong?

But he was trapped inside this dungeon! How could he achieve that?

Who was Yin Yuerong? Regardless of whether it was killing her outright or an assassination attempt or poisoning, Yin Heng couldn't accomplish it even if he wasn't imprisoned.

Yin Heng seemed to be aware of what Ah-Zhong was thinking and snorted. “It would be impossible to strike down Yin

Yuerong even if it was Si Yehan. There's only one method to eliminate Yin Yuerong—borrow the hands of the Arbitration Council. Coincidentally, I happen to have an item that can force Yin Yuerong down, making her unable to crawl back up!”

“W-what kind of item is it?” Ah-Zhong gulped.

“To find that item, go to Qingyu Alliance and ask for a person named Wang Hu and he'll give it to you. After obtaining the item, figure out a way to place it in Yin Yuerong's study. You should know what to do after that without me directing you!”

2411 This might be a bit difficult

Yin Heng described it vaguely, but Ah-Zhong listened with trepidation and quickly said, “The sole act of putting an item inside Madam’s study is impossible! You should know that no one can enter Madam’s study!”

Yin Heng aloofly glanced at him. “Have you forgotten about that little b*stard?”

“That child...?” Ah-Zhong was baffled.

“Since that child can enter the study freely, you can cajole that child to bring the item inside and kill two birds with one stone,” Yin Heng explained.

“Cajole that little brat? T-that might be a little difficult...” Ah-Zhong replied hesitantly.

“What use are you if you can’t even handle a child who’s only a few years old? Raising a piece of garbage would be better!” Yin Heng quietly insulted him before easing up and saying bewitchingly, “Ah-Zhong, how have I treated you all these years? You should know that everyone knows you’re my person, so you can only survive if the head of the Yin family is me. Otherwise, if we allow Si Yehan to become the family head, do you think you will have any more good days ahead of you?”

Yin Heng’s words were beguiling, but Ah-Zhong also knew Yin Heng was right. If someone else became the family head, his fate would be miserable. However, if Yin Heng succeeded, he would be credited for assisting a leader in his ascension and would be superior to everyone else!

In the end, Ah-Zhong gritted his teeth and agreed. “Young Master Yin Heng, leave it to me! This subordinate won’t fail you!”

“Great,” Yin Heng replied.

...

Under the dark veil of the night, Ah-Zhong swiftly left and headed to the Qingyu Alliance as Yin Heng instructed.

Wang Hu had a good relationship with Yin Heng, which was why Yin Heng asked him to safeguard some important items for him.

After arriving at the spot, Ah-Zhong reported his name and a subordinates immediately led him to a nightclub.

Inside a private VIP room:

Wang Hu tossed a brown paper bag at Ah-Zhong. "Here! This is the thing you wanted."

Ah-Zhong hastily caught it.

Since their conversation in the dungeon, Ah-Zhong had been wondering what it was that could knock Yin Yuerong off of her pedestal and make the Arbitration Council act personally.

Ah-Zhong carefully opened the bag, his expression changing after one glance.

The paper bag actually contained a secret account book that detailed all the records of Qin Zong's under-the-table dealings and some letters and documents.

He never expected Young Master Yin Heng to have obtained such an important item.

After Qin Zong's fall from power, many higher-ups of the Arbitration Council were implicated. However, Yin Yuerong was extremely cautious and never did anything that violated the Arbitration Council's laws. She might've had a decent relationship with Qin Zong, but she wasn't impacted in the slightest after Qin Zong fell.

Once this account book appeared in Yin Yuerong's study, she'd be unable to wash herself of the wrongful accusation regardless of what she did.

At that time, the Arbitration Council would definitely take action, and she'd probably be in a prison for the rest of her life.

“Have you seen enough yet? If you have, then scram!” Wang Hu impatiently ordered him and didn’t ask why Ah-Zhong wanted this item at all. This item was simply a hot potato in his possession, so it suited him perfectly that Ah-Zhong wanted to take it.

“Y-yes...” Ah-Zhong nodded frantically.

...

After obtaining the item, Ah-Zhong immediately returned to Wanmei Villa.

The sky was still dark, so Ah-Zhong first carefully loitered near the study to see if there was an opportunity to sneak inside.

However, Ah-Zhong had worked for the Yin family for so long and knew Wanmei Villa like the back of his hand. He was aware that sneaking into the study was absolutely impossible.

Hence, after thinking it over, he could only employ Young Master Yin Heng’s method and seek out that little brat to place this item. It’d be so covert that Yin Yuerong absolutely wouldn’t discover it.

2412 I'm Grandma's favorite

The next morning finally arrived.

Ah-Zhong went to a store to buy a bunch of candy before secretly planning to seek out Tangtang.

Ever since Tangtang started living there, Yin Yuerong had switched off her usual workaholic mode. On her day off today, she really rested at home and didn't go anywhere or work overtime.

Although the bill revision assembly was imminent, Yin Yuerong remained calm and composed without her typical irritability, as though she had become a different person.

Right now, Tangtang had just finished eating breakfast with Yin Yuerong.

“Grandma, can I go to the plum forest to break off a few branches of plum blossoms?” Tangtang inquired, blinking his large eyes.

From the side, Ah-Zhong inwardly snorted. That brat was truly undisciplined.

Plum blossoms were Yin Yuerong's most favored item. When a servant randomly touched a single leaf, they'd be severely punished. Even him—he accidentally broke a branch one time and received a round of scolding, so how could she permit this little brat to haphazardly break a branch?

Ah-Zhong coolly interjected, “These plum flowers are Madam's favorite, so how could you break them off willy-nilly?”

Although Auntie Qiao wanted to say something, she knew Yin Yuerong's rules, so she kept quiet.

Yin Yuerong glanced at Tangtang but didn't seem angered. She placidly asked, “Isn't it good for the flowers to bloom on the branches?”

Tangtang pressed closer to Yin Yuerong and brightly smiled. "It's pretty for the flowers to blossom on the branches, but Tangtang thinks these plum flowers are better placed near my grandma than blooming on their branches!"

Yin Yuerong was startled briefly before the corner of her lips turned up in an almost gentle smile.

Tangtang added, "I wanted to break a branch to place on Grandma's desk so that Grandma could constantly see it! Wouldn't that be better?"

"Madam, look at how filial Little Young Master is!" Auntie Qiao seriously liked this child more the more time she spent with him. She had forgotten how long it had been since Madam truly lived for herself. Ever since Little Young Master got here, Madam's mood had improved more and more, and she smiled more frequently.

Tangtang paused and intentionally glanced at Ah-Zhong before saying, "Plus, Grandma's favorite isn't plum flowers anymore—I'm Grandma's favorite now!"

Ah-Zhong's expression was as dark as the bottom of a pan.
"..."

"PFT!" A laugh broke out of Auntie Qiao.

Even Yin Yuerong chuckled aloud. "You aren't humble at all."

Ah-Zhong forced himself to remember that he still needed the little brat's help for something today, so he forcefully suppressed his rage, but menace filled his heart.

Young Master Yin Heng was right. If they allowed this little brat to remain the favorite, his position would be nowhere in sight after the Yin family changed masters.

...

In the plum forest:

Ah-Zhong brought along the candy and secretly followed Tangtang.

When they reached a spot without any bystanders, Ah-Zhong called out immediately, "Little br—Little Young Master!"

Upon hearing him, Tangtang turned back. “Oh, it’s you, Ah-Zhong! Do you need something?”

This child was clearly only four or five years old and had to look up at people, but his cold gaze made him look like he was born to look down at Ah-Zhong, sending waves of displeasure in the man’s heart.

“Little Young Master, these are candies and toys I bought for you! See if you like them!” Ah-Zhong was fawning in his demeanor.

Tangtang raised his brows at the big brimming bag of candy and assortment of toys in Ah-Zhong’s hold, a glint flashing through his eyes.

One who was solicitous for no reason hid evil intentions.

Ah-Zhong saw the child’s eyes light up, and his expression revealed how pleased he was with himself. “Little Young Master, do you want them? I can give all of this to you as long as you do me a tiny favor!”

2413 No one would hate my mommy

Tangtang leisurely asked, “What favor?”

Ah-Zhong looked to the left and right before digging out an exquisitely beautiful wooden box carved with flowers. “Little Young Master, can you help me place this item in a drawer inside Madam’s study?”

Tangtang glanced at the wooden box. “Why won’t you place it yourself?”

Ah-Zhong sighed before replying, “Little Young Master, you should know that I can’t enter the study without Madam’s permission, so I can only ask for your help!”

“What’s inside?” Tangtang asked.

Ah-Zhong hastily opened it, “It’s a piece of porcelain.”

Inside laid a thin and small celadon dish.

“Why do you need to put this inside Grandma’s study?” Tangtang asked.

Ah-Zhong gritted his teeth. This little brat is so paranoid; why is he asking so many “whys”?

Ah-Zhong donned an anxious expression and pitifully said, “Sigh, honestly, this is what happened... Madam ordered me to enter and clean up the study last time, but while I was cleaning, I accidentally shattered this piece of porcelain.

“I was afraid of Madam punishing me, so I didn’t dare to tell Madam and went to buy an identical piece in a wish to replace it before Madam found out! Little Young Master, please do a kind deed and help me out!”

When Tangtang didn’t respond, Ah-Zhong gently said, “Little Young Master, you just need to wait until Madam isn’t there and sneakily help me put it inside. It’s very simple!”

Tangtang didn't agree or decline, a contemplative expression on his face.

Seeing the situation look hopeful, Ah-Zhong start persuading him more earnestly, "Little Young Master, although I've offended you many times previously, it was with your wellbeing in mind! You don't know but Madam is especially strict normally, so I was afraid you'd do something wrong and anger her. I was afraid she'd punish you, which is why I reminded you carefully every time!"

"Is that so?" Tangtang asked.

A sharp glint flickered in Ah-Zhong's eyes. He intended to use this opportunity and sow some discord, so he said, "That's right! Don't you know, Little Young Master? Madam actually has a bad relationship with your dad and has done many, many terrible things to your dad and even kicked him out of the house. Madam also really hates your mom..."

Before Ah-Zhong could finish speaking, the semi-interested Tangtang's expression suddenly changed and his eyes shot toward him like an ice blade. "No one would hate my mommy!"

"Ahem..." Ah-Zhong was at a loss for words momentarily. "But Little Young Master, what I said is the absolute truth! If you don't believe me, you can go out and ask around! Everyone knows about this!"

Tangtang's cherub face was brimming with a coldness that didn't match his age as he stressed every word he said, "Why should I ask around? I just need to listen to what Mommy tells me. Mommy told me Grandma is a nice person, so Grandma is a nice person! You're speaking badly of Grandma! You're a bad person!"

Ah-Zhong never expected this unpredictable development from the child and was dumbfounded.

He was originally preparing to paint himself with a more favorable light and then vilify Yin Yuerong a bit more. How did he suddenly turn into a bad person?

But wait, Yin Yuerong was a villain from the start, so why did he need to vilify her? Yet this little brat was this stupid and wouldn't believe anything he said.

Ah-Zhong had no choice but to relent. "Little Young Master, I was wrong, I was wrong! It's fine if you don't believe me. I was being a loudmouth and shouldn't have run my mouth off. I beg you to help me and put this item inside! Otherwise, my life will be in peril!"

2414 Bask in the sun together

Tangtang harrumphed. “I kinda don’t want to help you!”

Ah-Zhong’s expression froze. “Little Young Master... I’m truly begging you... Just what do I need to do to make you help me? I will go buy more snacks and toys for you, alright?”

Tangtang mulled it over before replying, “If you want me to help you, I can. But I have a request!”

Ah-Zhong turned joyous. “What request? I’ll agree to it regardless of what it is!”

Tangtang nonchalantly said, “Alright, then say my grandma is a beautiful and kind-hearted celestial maiden 100 times!”

“...” Ah-Zhong was utterly dumbfounded.

What the heck?

Is this little brat serious?

I-Isn’t that too embarrassing?!

“You won’t say it? Then I’ll leave! Don’t disturb me from picking flowers for Grandma!” Tangtang turned to leave when Ah-Zhong failed to speak for ages.

Ah-Zhong panicked. “No no no, I’ll say it! I’ll say it right now! Madam is... is a celestial maiden...”

“You missed something! You can’t miss a single word,” Tangtang said.

Ah-Zhong was miserable. Although he was talented in boot-licking, he’d never had to say such humiliating things before.

“Madam... Madam is a beautiful and kind-hearted celestial maiden... Madam is a beautiful and kind-hearted celestial maiden... Madam is...”

Tangtang started to leisurely walk ahead to continue picking flowers for Yin Yuerong while Ah-Zhong gritted his teeth and

trailed behind like a lackey, forced to repeat the words Tangtang demanded in an endless loop.

Forget it, I'll endure it! After today, it'll be my world!

Little brat, just wait!

When Ah-Zhong finally finished, Tangtang also chose an especially pretty plum flower to pluck.

“Little Young Master, you'll agree to help me now, right?” Ah-Zhong wiped his sweat.

“Bring it over!” Tangtang was brisk this time.

Ah-Zhong excitedly handed the item over. “Little Young Master, you must remember! Avoid others and secretly put it inside!”

“I know! So naggy... do you think I'm a fool?”

Ah-Zhong chortled inwardly, thinking: I managed to get you to do what I wanted with a few words, brat. You **are** a fool!

However, Ah-Zhong probably forgot that he didn't use “just a few words”...

Tangtang accepted the item and asked, “Do I put it inside the drawer?”

Ah-Zhong quickly answered, “The last drawer in the left cabinet!”

Yin Yuerong didn't use that spot often, so she wouldn't discover it for now.

“Got it,” Tangtang said.

...

Ah-Zhong was naturally worried, so he followed Tangtang the entire way there and watched Tangtang enter the study and visually confirmed he took the box inside.

A moment later, Tangtang came out and the item was gone from his hands.

After making sure Tangtang took the item inside, Ah-Zhong followed Yin Heng's plan immediately and anonymously reported Yin Yuerong.

When Ah-Zhong finished, he released a long sigh of relief. He finally completed his mission and just needed to watch the good show coming up.

After today, he would partially become the Yin family's master and wouldn't need to act like a dog under Yin Yuerong and live every day in fear! He wouldn't have to take anything from a little brat anymore either!

The weather was nice today, the winter sun casting its warm rays on the earth. After picking his plum flowers, Tangtang dragged Yin Yuerong to the courtyard to bask in the sun.

Two lounge chairs—one big and one small—were placed in the courtyard and the duo comfortably lay on top of them. They didn't do anything and merely quietly basked in the sun with some chatter exchanged here and there.

2415 Anonymous Repor

Before, Yin Yuerong wouldn't waste a single second or minute and constantly racked her brain to fight for power and profit.

Doing nothing but lying in the courtyard to bask in the sun was a child's tale for her.

At this moment, as she quietly lay on her lounge chair, peering at the sun above through the slits in her fingers, she oddly felt as if everything was a lifetime ago...

Auntie Qiao stood in the distance and watched this scene, the rims of her eyes tearing up.

She originally thought Madam wouldn't change for the rest of her life. Auntie Qiao didn't expect the heavens to finally take pity on Madam for once and send this child to Madam's side.

"Housekeeper Qiao..." A servant approached Auntie Qiao.

The servant was about to continue when Auntie Qiao interrupted, "Quiet down. Madam and Little Young Master are resting."

The servant reported, "Some people from the Arbitration Council are here! They want to see Madam!"

"The Arbitration Council?"

"That's right. It's someone from the law department and they've brought a large group here."

Auntie Qiao had a faint feeling that something was wrong and didn't dare to delay matters, so she swiftly walked toward Yin Yuerong to inform her.

"Madam, someone from the Arbitration Council's law department is suddenly visiting. Their purpose is uncertain," Auntie Qiao said hastily.

Yin Yuerong switched back into her "Director Yin of the Arbitration Council" mode almost instantly and straightened her clothes before standing up. "I'll go and see them."

Then she turned to Tangtang and gently said, “Grandma has visitors to receive. Play by yourself for a little.”

“Okay, Grandma.” Tangtang docilely nodded and watched Yin Yuerong quickly heading toward the living room.

The guards naturally didn’t dare to block the people from the Arbitration Council and could only allow them inside and send someone to inform Yin Yuerong after confirming the identity of the visitors.

Inside the living room:

The chief of the Arbitration Council’s law department was standing there with his arms behind his back while the staff he brought had locked down all entrances and exits to the villa, their ill intentions apparent.

At the same time, Ah-Zhong stood on the side with his breath held as he concealed the excited and greedy glint in his eyes.

He didn’t expect them to come so fast!

However, it wasn’t a surprise since the Arbitration Council attached great importance to Qin Zong’s case.

Yin Yuerong calmly greeted them. “Pardon me for not going out to meet you, Chief Liu. Ah-Zhong, bring some tea.”

“Yes...”

Chief Liu lifted his hand. “Director Yin, no need for the tea. I am here on official business today.”

Yin Yuerong narrowed her eyes. “Official business?”

Chief Liu donned a polite smile. “Director Yin, you should know that I’ve been in charge of Qin Zong’s case, but there’s a very important account book that we’ve been unable to find.”

Yin Yuerong remained composed. “I do know. What about it?”

When Chief Liu saw that her expression remained unchanged still, his eyes chilled. “Just now, someone anonymously reported that this account book is inside your study. May I ask if there’s anything you would like to say, Director Yin?”

Yin Yuerong's gaze flickered before she turned to Chief Liu.
"Is Chief Liu joking?"

"Whether I'm joking or not, we'll find out after a search. What do you say, Director Yin?"

"After all, there's no smoke without fire. To prove your innocence, Director Yin, I had to make a personal visit. You'll definitely cooperate with me, right, Director Yin?" Chief Liu spoke beautifully. He didn't offend anyone but also didn't allow anyone to refute him.

Yin Yuerong knew that since Chief Liu paid a personal visit and brought so many people with him, they wouldn't relent until they conducted a thorough search.

The abruptness of this incident didn't give her any room to react. The only thing she could do was allow the other party to search as they desired.

2416 Take good care of Tangtang

Yin Yuerong aloofly replied, “Of course, as you wish.”

Yin Yuerong quickly regained her composure. She normally had an unyielding attitude and enforced laws especially strictly, so she made many enemies. People had reported her out of sheer displeasure before.

However, she’d always been cautious and careful and didn’t allow anyone to gain leverage on her. Hence, the majority of those people only reported her to repulse her.

Whether it was her ancestral Yin residence or Wanmei Villa, they were both tight as an iron tub, and no problems should arise.

Upon hearing affirmation from her, Chief Liu waved his hand and ordered his men to search swiftly.

Yin Yuerong called Auntie Qiao over. “Auntie Qiao!”

Auntie Qiao, who was standing on pins and needles, rushed over. “Yes, Madam? What are your orders?”

“Have people take good care of Tangtang. Don’t let him come to the front.”

Auntie Qiao knew that Yin Yuerong was afraid this display would scare Tangtang and quickly answered, “Yes, Madam...”

She had always been by Madam’s side and knew Madam the best. She was well aware Madam had nothing to do with Qin Zong’s dirty business, so how could she secretly be hiding something as important as Qin Zong’s account book?

However, Chief Liu came so menacingly and said it with such certainty that Auntie Liu couldn’t help but worry...

Within five minutes, a young man in uniform hastily returned with an item in his hold. “Chief! I’ve found it!”

When Yin Yuerong saw that young man walk out of her study with an unfamiliar red, carved wooden box, coldness flickered through her eyes.

She'd never seen this box before. How did it appear in her study?

Chief Liu quickly walked over and opened the box, discovering a celadon porcelain dish laying inside.

Chief Liu ordered, "Break the box apart."

The young man obeyed and pulled out a dagger, carefully prying the exquisite wooden box apart.

A moment later, the thicker board at the bottom was pried open with a kachak. The box actually had a hidden layer and inside the hidden layer was an item wrapped in a brown paper bag.

The subordinate exclaimed and handed the item over. "Chief!"

Chief Liu slowly opened the item. It was evidently Qin Zong's ledger...

"Director Yin, what do you have to say now?" Chief Liu's expression was chilly.

Yin Yuerong stared at the ledger, a storm brewing on her face. "Heh..."

Say what? In this type of situation, there truly wasn't much she could say anymore...

She was overly confident and never expected someone to place this item inside her study without any notice.

This was the scene that met Auntie Qiao when she returned. She turned pale with fright. "Chief Liu, that's impossible! There must be some misunderstanding! Our madam has always acted honestly, so how could she possibly do something like this? Someone must have intentionally planted this ledger there!"

Chief Liu shot her a cold look. "Plant? This is Wanmei Villa! May I ask who's capable enough to openly place something like this inside Director Yin's study?"

Auntie Qiao replied in a panic, “Madam’s study is tightly secured and no one can enter without permission indeed, but...”

Before Auntie Qiao could finish, Chief Liu interrupted her, “Since that’s the case, there’s no mistaking it!”

Auntie Qiao reflexively glanced at Yin Yuerong. What she didn’t finish saying was... but Little Young Master could freely enter as he wished...

2417 Never thought about struggling

Little Young Master was the only person who had entered Yin Yuerong's study recently.

Could it be...

Impossible! How could that be possible?!

Forget about it being impossible. Even if they said it, no one would believe a child would do something like that.

With such concrete evidence, Yin Yuerong wouldn't be able to explain herself regardless of what she said.

Auntie Qiao met Yin Yuerong's eyes and Yin Yuerong understood what the other woman was thinking.

She knew her study best and Tangtang was the only one who could enter. Tangtang was also the only one who could secretly put things inside her study without anyone noticing.

Moreover, Tangtang was the only one she didn't guard herself against at all...

An extremely terrifying thought gradually rose in Yin Yuerong's mind, this thought slowly swallowing her whole like a quicksand...

It was Tangtang?

Why...

The darkness that Yin Yuerong had been forcefully suppressing in the bottom of her heart instantly rushed up like a flood.

Heh, no wonder.

She treated his dad and mom like this and she was so unlikeable, so why would he like her?

Why would he show such concern and intimacy toward her after learning about her identity? Why would he treat her like his grandma—his family?!

How cold... how could there be someone who liked her?

The child became close to her merely for this moment—merely to take revenge on her, right...

In the end, her wishes were too far-fetched...

When Auntie Qiao saw the expressions flashing across Yin Yuerong's face, her heart panged with sympathy. She wanted to comfort Madam but didn't know what to say.

She could only pray that the situation wasn't as she thought. Otherwise... the effect on Madam would be too great...

She liked, indulged, and trusted that child so, so much...

"Apologies, Director Yin. Please come with us!" Chief Liu said.

In his hiding spot, the excitement and joy in Ah-Zhong's eyes couldn't be concealed anymore.

Finally! Yin Yuerong was finally finished!

Young Master Yin Heng's method was simply too brilliant!

Not only did they take care of Yin Yuerong but he also stayed completely clean. Regardless of what that little b*stard would reveal later, no one would believe a child's words.

Speaking of which, it was thanks to that little b*stard this time for acting so efficiently and placing the item exactly where he instructed so that things progressed so smoothly.

Auntie Qiao wanted to say something but Yin Yuerong's gaze prohibited her from saying anything else before turning to Chief Liu. "Let's go."

Although this was a higher-up from the Arbitration Council, they still had to follow the due process. Chief Liu ordered people to bring forth the chains and handcuffs specially crafted for people with high martial strength. "Pardon this offense."

Yin Yuerong expressionlessly stared at those handcuffs and remained silent. Her eyes dimmed little by little as though an enormous vortex was swallowing all of the light.

In the end, she merely gave one instruction to her housekeeper. “Auntie Qiao, after I leave, send Tangtang to Ah-Jiu’s place.”

She should’ve known that she shouldn’t have ever forcefully demanded things that didn’t belong to her.

How funny. She made a mistake. She actually made a mistake again...

When Auntie Qiao heard Yin Yuerong’s instructions, tears spilled out. “Madam! Madam, you’ll be fine! You’ll definitely be fine!”

However, in this kind of situation, the evidence was discovered at the scene, so even Madam was helpless.

Or rather... Madam didn’t... didn’t seem to have even thought about struggling...

Auntie Qiao could tell that Madam was truly greatly impacted this time.

2418 No one is allowed to take my grandma away!

The past few days, Yin Yuerong had lived like she was dreaming. She might've been relaxed and happy but she was also plagued with fear, afraid that days like these were just an illusion and would disappear in the blink of an eye.

Now that it finally came true, she felt oddly relieved.

As expected, she had to pay the price for something so wonderful.

“Let's move.”

Since this was Tangtang's wish, then so be it...

When Chief Liu saw Yin Yuerong didn't resist, he released a sigh of relief. His subordinates each took a side as they approached and shackled her. Chief Liu ordered, “Take her away!”

Before Yin Yuerong walked through the front entrance, a childish voice suddenly shouted, “Hold on!!!”

The little fella's voice was a bit young but his aura was abnormally fierce.

He darted in front of Yin Yuerong, using his tiny body to protect her behind him. “No one is allowed to take my grandma away!”

Yin Yuerong reflexively used her sleeves to cover the handcuffs around her wrists, her expression dazed as she looked at the child who suddenly appeared. “Tangtang...”

Chief Liu saw the child that popped out of nowhere and automatically started examining the child. A glance and he was surprised.

Eh? This child... really resembles Director Si...

So this was the child detained by Yin Yuerong that everyone was babbling about?

Didn't they say Yin Yuerong loathed this child's mother so she detained this child to torment him every day?

Because of this, the higher-ups of the Arbitration Council had complaints about her and thought her actions affected the Arbitration Council's reputation, so they were planning to condemn her together.

So why did it look like things weren't as the rumors claimed?

If Yin Yuerong tormented this child every day, why would he step forward to protect her at a time like this?

Yin Yuerong never expected Tangtang to appear and froze in her spot...

Tangtang was a tiny ball, but he staunchly stood in front of Yin Yuerong and said, "It was me who placed this red wooden box inside Grandma's study this morning! It has nothing to do with Grandma!"

When Auntie Qiao heard this, surprised covered her face.

When Yin Yuerong heard Tangtang personally admitting that he was the one who put the box there, her face turned as pale as snow and the last trace of warmth in her heart completely dispersed in the chilly wind...

It really was Tangtang who placed it there...

But since it was him who did it, why did he come forward to admit it now?

At this moment, half of Yin Yuerong's heart was sunken into a cold river while the other was burning in a blazing flame.

Ah-Zhong was watching as Yin Yuerong was about to be taken away, but then this little brat suddenly popped up and caused trouble. He hastily approached and said, "Little Young Master, you mustn't speak rashly. You're just a child, so how could you do such a thing? I understand you don't want them to take Madam away, but sigh, even if you say all this, it's useless..."

Because no one will believe you.

Clearly, Chief Liu looked at Tangtang like he was a child throwing a tantrum.

Tangtang glanced at Ah-Zhong. “I’m a child, so of course I wouldn’t put this item inside Grandma’s study for no reason. I did it because you told me to put it there.”

Upon hearing that, Yin Yuerong’s gaze shot toward Ah-Zhong like a knife.

Ah-Zhong told Tangtang to put it in there?

A moment ago, her mind was rattled, so she completely lost the ability to think and didn’t consider Ah-Zhong at all. She merely recalled that Tangtang was the only one who could enter her study.

Perhaps because concern threw one’s mind into chaos, Yin Yuerong’s first assumption was that Tangtang did this because he hated her and never considered that Tangtang might’ve been tricked...

2419 Did you think I was a feeble-minded child?

Ah-Zhong expected Tangtang to say that and made preparations beforehand, so he wasn't afraid. He feigned a stunned expression as he asked, "Little Young Master, you can't wildly say things like that! I've been with Madam for so many years, and I'm undyingly loyal. Why would I tell you to do such a thing?"

"Although I also really hope it was me who did this so Madam will be okay. Unfortunately, Chief Liu won't believe you even if you say that..."

As Ah-Zhong tried to clear his name, he didn't forget to express his loyalty and pretend to be a good person.

Hmph, little brat! You want to drag me in? You're too naive!

Words alone weren't proof. Plus, Tangtang was a child, so what he said was completely useless.

Yin Yuerong was also aware of that fact...

However, it was enough.

This child might loathe her but had a kind-hearted nature and couldn't bear it when he saw her being taken away.

To her, it was already enough that Tangtang could step forward and say what he said at a time like this.

When Tangtang heard Ah-Zhong, he looked at Ah-Zhong like he was looking at an idiot. "Ah-Zhong, don't tell me that you thought I was a feeble-minded child this whole time?"

Are you saying you aren't a child? Are you saying you're stupid?

Although Ah-Zhong thought that, he maintained his courteous front. "Of course not, Little Young Master! You're naturally exceptionally intelligent, Little Young Master!"

“Oh...” Tangtang nodded. “Since I’m not an idiot, then it appears you’re the idiot. Why do you think I wouldn’t be cautious when you acted completely out of character and used toys and snacks to tempt me to do a strange task?”

The child’s words made Ah-Zhong’s heart indescribably skip a beat. This child’s expression was truly too calm and didn’t resemble a child who didn’t know anything.

However, Ah-Zhong still didn’t think such a young child could know anything. Moreover, it was useless even if he did.

Ah-Zhong feigned ignorance. “Little Young Master, what are you saying? I don’t understand!”

Tangtang docilely smiled. “It appears you aren’t only idiotic but idiotic beyond cure.”

Tangtang then dug out an object from his pocket and turned to Chief Liu. “I know words alone aren’t proof, so this is my proof.”

Yin Yuerong immediately saw what Tangtang was holding. That was... the fountain pen I gave Tangtang a few days ago...

This child actually carried it on him constantly...?

“What is this?” Chief Liu frowned.

Tangtang pressed the power button on the pen and Ah-Zhong’s voice immediately drifted out from the pen.

This pen was equipped with a recording function.

[Ah-Zhong: Little br—Little Young Master!]

[Tangtang: Oh it’s you, Ah-Zhong! Do you need something?]

[Little Young Master, this is candy and toys I bought for you! See if you like them! Little Young Master, do you want them? I can give all of these to you as long as you do me a tiny favor!]

...

Tangtang expressionlessly asked, “Do you want to keep listening?”

When Ah-Zhong heard his own voice ringing out from the pen, he was dumbstruck.

From his interactions with Tangtang the past few days, Ah-Zhong perceived Tangtang as a cute and innocent bat who only knew how to act like a spoiled child and play cute. He never expected the child to be cunning enough to specifically record a random conversation he had with him.

“Madam... Chief Liu... I was just randomly chatting with Little Young Master...” Ah-Zhong finally panicked.

Chief Liu shot him a cold glance. “Quiet. Keep listening.”

Soon, Tangtang resumed the recording.

2420 Unforgettable evidence-gathering experience

[What favor?]

“Little Young Master, can you help me place this item in a drawer inside Madam’s study?”

[Why don’t you place it yourself?]

Because Tangtang clearly asked at that time, he meticulously recorded the whole process of how Ah-Zhong cajoled him.

The red, carved wooden box and celadon porcelain dish that Ah-Zhong mentioned were identical to the ones they found in the study.

Chief Liu’s expression was austere as he seriously listened to this important piece of evidence. The more he heard, the more he thought...

This servant named Ah-Zhong was probably a bit dumb. The child had an underlying meaning in nearly every sentence he spoke, tricking information out of Ah-Zhong, yet Ah-Zhong didn’t detect a single thing.

[Little Young Master... I was afraid you’d do something wrong and anger her. I was afraid she’d punish you, which is why I carefully reminded you every time!]

[Don’t you know, Little Young Master? Madam actually has a bad relationship with your dad and has done many, many terrible things to your dad and even kicked him out of the house. Madam also really hates your mom...]

When Yin Yuerong listened to how Ah-Zhong got Tangtang to frame her, her expression remained calm. However, when she heard Ah-Zhong actually sowing discord in the relationship between her and Tangtang, her expression changed at once.

With a bang, Yin Yuerong kicked Ah-Zhong on the knee. “Dog servant!”

A man who is never content is like a snake trying to swallow an elephant...

When she saved him from the burial mounds, he was overflowing with gratitude toward her and devotedly loyal to her.

However, a person's desires and greed were limitless.

The better she treated him and the more she trusted him, the more it fostered his greed instead...

Also, there was Yin Heng.

It wasn't difficult for Yin Yuerong to figure out who was behind Ah-Zhong...

This thought sent her plunging into an ice cavern.

"AHHH!!!" Ah-Zhong screamed from the kick and fell to his knees with a plop, rolling on the ground in agony.

Yin Yuerong's spine was stiff as she stared intently at Tangtang. When even a close servant of hers viewed her like this, what would Tangtang think?

No wonder Tangtang helped Ah-Zhong...

At this moment, Tangtang's chilly voice was finally heard from the recording pen.

[No one would hate my mommy!]

[But Little Young Master, what I said is the absolute truth! If you don't believe me, you can go out and ask around! Everyone knows about this matter!]

[Why should I go out and ask around? I just need to listen to what Mommy tells me. Mommy told me Grandma is a nice person, so Grandma is a nice person! You're talking badly of Grandma! You're a bad person!]

...

Yin Yuerong never expected Tangtang to respond that way, shock brimming from her eyes.

This child actually never hated me?

When Auntie Qiao heard this, she felt comforted. She knew Little Young Master wouldn't treat Madam like that!

As expected, a mother's guidance toward their child was most important. If Miss Nie didn't keep saying that to Tangtang, Tangtang wouldn't maintain such naivety or his kind heart.

As for Chief Liu and his underlings, they all couldn't help but inwardly mutter: Director Si's fiancée actually praised Yin Yuerong as a good person...? What a magical woman!

Then Ah-Zhong coaxed and pretended to be pitiful in all sorts of ways in the recording until Tangtang seemed to finally soften and told Ah-Zhong he would help if Ah-Zhong agreed to a request from him.

When Chief Liu and his group heard the request Tangtang brought up, their expression was... complicated...

What was more frightening was... just like that... they were forced to listen to "Madam is a beautiful and kind-hearted celestial maiden".

Because they were worried they would miss some important evidence in the recording, everyone present forcefully listened to that 100 times.

Toward the end, Chief Liu's expression couldn't be any darker.

This was probably the most unforgettable piece of evidence he had gathered in his life.

2421 Tangtang will protect Grandma

If Yin Yuerong's heart felt sucked dry of water earlier, as dry as a desert, then Tangtang saying "My grandma is a beautiful and kind-hearted celestial maiden" was like a timely rainfall after a long drought.

A second ago, she felt like she was in hell, but now, she felt like she'd returned to the mortal world.

This was the first time in her life that she felt redeemed.

Merely because Tangtang didn't hate her...

This thought alone was enough to soothe all the darkness in her heart.

Yin Yuerong gladly listened to it 100 times, but the others had different thoughts.

Chief Liu nearly wanted to vomit blood. This sentence was akin to a devil's chant that continued to echo in his head still.

Finally, they endured it all the way until Ah-Zhong finished saying it.

The exchange went a little longer—including all of Ah-Zhong's instructions for Tangtang—and completely solidified his crime of getting Tangtang to put the ledger in Yin Yuerong's study.

Chief Liu immediately ordered for Ah-Zhong to be captured.

The person who felt most tortured and the most despair was none other Ah-Zhong. As he listened to the entire recording, he was a dumbstruck fool the entire time.

Chief Liu turned to the child and unconsciously treated him like an adult, asking him as an equal, "Can I ask you a question?"

"Please," Tangtang replied.

“How did you know something was off and why did you start recording from the very beginning?”

Tangtang blinked. “A person who had always been mean to me suddenly secretly sought me out holding candy and toys and smiling like a chrysanthemum. Even a dummy would know something was off, right?”

“Mn... That’s irrefutable.”

Ah-Zhong: “...!!!”

How was that possible?! This little brat realized something was wrong from the very beginning?

Chief Liu asked with intrigue, “Since you knew something was wrong, why didn’t you reject him directly?”

Tangtang calmly explained, “I knew he was up to no good, but I didn’t know what he was doing so I just made the best of it and slowly probed for his objective and also retained evidence as a precaution. Thankfully, I always carry the pen Grandma gave me.

“If I rejected him from the start, he’d definitely think of another method to harm Grandma. That way, wouldn’t my grandma constantly be in danger? I naturally wanted to expose his true nature somehow, but I also needed to ensure my grandma’s safety!”

The little fella said everything matter-of-factly, all but asking: Isn’t that obvious?

Chief Liu cleared his throat. ‘That’s right, that’s right. You’re correct...’

Like father, like son. This child truly was Director Si’s son and Yin Yuerong’s grandson.

Just how stupid was this servant to underestimate and look down on this child?

Chief Liu suddenly realized Yin Yuerong was still handcuffed and quickly ordered, “Ahem, hurry and release Director Yin already!”

His people hastened over and unlocked Yin Yuerong's shackles.

Meanwhile, all that rang in Yin Yuerong's ears was the little fella's resolute voice saying, "I needed to ensure my grandma's safety..."

Yin Yuerong leaned down. "Tangtang..."

"Grandma!" The little fella dashed over immediately and launched himself into his grandma's arms. He used his little hand to pat Yin Yuerong's hair as he comforted her.

"Grandma, don't be scared! Tangtang's here! Tangtang will protect Grandma!"

Yin Yuerong tightly hugged the little fella and closed her eyes, a teardrop falling down on his body.

Thank you...

Thank you for not hating Grandma...

Thank you for staying here...

This was Chief Liu's first time seeing such a warm side to Yin Yuerong and chuckled. "Director Yin, you have a good grandson!"

2422 A happy family together

“Unfortunately... that adopted son...”

Chief Liu continued, “Director Yin, forgive me for being blunt, but this servant couldn’t have planned such an important matter or obtained such an important ledger. There must be someone else behind him.”

Yin Yuerong aloofly replied, “I know.”

It could only be Yin Heng.

At this moment, Ah-Zhong finally realized his predicament and loudly started crying for help. “Madam! Madam, I was wrong! It wasn’t me! I didn’t want to do this! It was Young Master Yin Heng!

“He’s the one who ordered me to frame you! He’s the one who thought of having me use Little Young Master to put this item inside your study! He gave me this ledger! I’ll tell you everything!”

Ah-Zhong knew he was completely finished, so he ratted Yin Heng out without a pause.

Yin Yuerong coldly looked at the ceaselessly begging Ah-Zhong without a trace of warmth in her eyes. She didn’t even want to raise a single inquiry about why he betrayed her.

“Chief Liu, take him away,” Yin Yuerong told him directly.

Chief Liu responded, “Alright, I’ll take him away now. I will continue to investigate things, including the people connected to this ledger. Please pardon us for the offenses earlier.”

“You’re being polite.”

“Excuse us.”

“Auntie Qiao, escort Chief Liu out.”

“Madam! Madam, save me! I beg you to spare me! Spare me just this time! It was really Young Master Yin Heng who ordered me to do everything...”

...

Ah-Zhong’s wails were cut off after the front door closed as he finally disappeared from Wanmei Villa.

When Tangtang saw Yin Yuerong pale as a piece of paper and somewhat absent-minded, he quickly helped her to sit down on a chair. “Grandma, are you okay?”

“Grandma’s fine.” Yin Yuerong was gentle.

“Don’t be sad, Grandma. My mommy once taught me that people who can bear to hurt you aren’t worth your sadness,” Tangtang comforted her.

Yin Yuerong looked at the little fella and couldn’t help but remember her Ah-Jiu.

In truth, as a mother, merely going by how well that girl, Worriless Nie, raised Tangtang, Worriless Nie was 100 times stronger than her...

“Thank you, Tangtang,” Yin Yuerong said.

Tangtang responded with a smile, “Grandma, we’re family!”

When Yin Yuerong heard that, an ache filled her heart.

“Tangtang, if I was really the same as described by outsiders, what would you do?”

“The same as described by outsiders?”

Yin Yuerong finally told him the truth. “I don’t have a good relationship with your dad and mom. Because of some matters, there’s a very large gap and conflict between us...”

She didn’t want to deceive Tangtang anymore.

Tangtang seriously mulled over it before honestly saying, “Grandma, I don’t know why you have a conflict, but I think you must both have your own reasons. Tangtang understands, but Tangtang would probably still be sad...”

Tangtang looked up and quietly asked, “Grandma, can’t we be a happy family together?”

Yin Yuerong turned silent. “...”

A happy family together?

What a foreign and distant concept for her...

She knew her own personality well. Some things were engraved deep in her bones, and she wouldn’t be able to change or forgive her entire life.

When it came to the matter regarding the revision of the laws alone, as long as she and Ah-Jiu couldn’t reach an agreement, they would stand in opposition their entire lives.

2423 This maneuver is too flashy

At the same time, Si Yehan and Ye Wanwan were urgently called over by Yi Lingjun all of a sudden.

When they arrived, Yi Lingjun swiftly explained the incident at Yin Yuerong's villa to them.

“When I received the report, Chief Liu was already at Wanmei Villa. I was about to rush there when Chief Liu unexpectedly informed me I didn't need to since the matter had been resolved by my darling grandson, Tangtang... At that time...”

After listening to Yi Lingjun's detailed explanation, both Si Yehan and Ye Wanwan were obviously surprised.

Yi Lingjun proudly said, “He's truly my grandson! He's too smart! You guys don't know but Chief Liu praised him hundreds of times after coming back! He's so jealous of me!”

The corner of Ye Wanwan's lips twitched. Your grandson? Don't immerse yourself in the act so deeply, alright?

“What's so shocking about that? This is just par for the course for my Baby Tangtang! It's perfectly normal.” Ye Wanwan gloatingly latched onto Si Yehan's arm. “After all, my baby inherited his dad's intelligence!”

A smile flitted across Si Yehan's eyes.

Yi Lingjun was at a loss for words. Praising her son was fine, but she didn't forget to praise her man along with it too!

“Oh right, come here, come here. I'll let you listen to something fun!” Yi Lingjun secretively took out a recording pen from his drawer.

“What is it?” Ye Wanwan leaned over curiously.

“You'll know when you hear it! It's my precious grandson's recording from Wanmei Villa!” Yi Lingjun grinned.

Tangtang's recording?

Ye Wanwan glanced at him before taking the recording pen and pressing the play button.

Si Yehan and Ye Wanwan soon heard the recording.

At first, the contents were fairly normal. Tangtang was angry about Ah-Zhong cajoling him then they heard Tangtang mention he had a request...

"Baby, what do you think our Tangtang will request?" Ye Wanwan murmured, intrigued.

Si Yehan glanced at her and truthfully answered, "I can't guess, but it probably wasn't something that this servant could easily accomplish."

Ye Wanwan's ears perked up to continue listening, and then... the subsequent storyline completely collapsed...

Say his grandma was a beautiful and kind-hearted celestial maiden 100 times???

After Si Yehan and Ye Wanwan finished listening to Ah-Zhong repeat "Madam is a beautiful and kind-hearted celestial maiden" that many times, their expressions were indescribable.

Not simple! It really wasn't simple!

Ye Wanwan was beside herself with laughter. "Hahahaha! My baby's maneuver was too flashy! Not bad, not bad. He really deserves to be my son! Biological without a doubt! He's seriously inherited all of my teachings! No, he's surpassed his teacher!"

Yi Lingjun nodded enthusiastically. "I finally understand why Director Yin likes that little fella this much! Just look at his EQ!"

After saying that, Yi Lingjun returned to business matters. "Director Si, please hand Yin Heng over to the Arbitration Council. He has deep ties with Qin Zong and we need to interrogate him."

Si Yehan replied, "Okay. I will have him sent over."

As Si Yehan spoke, his phone started ringing. It was a call from Lin Que.

Si Yehan took the call and turned to Wanwan. “Lin Que said that Director Yin has sent Tangtang back.”

Ye Wanwan was both shocked and joyful. “What? Let’s hurry back then!”

“Okay,” Si Yehan agreed.

Yi Lingjun thought for a moment before saying, “I will come too. If there are any conflicts, I can help mediate!”

2424 Very swee

Ye Wanwan speechlessly glanced at Yi Lingjun. Why's he joining the fun?

When Yi Lingjun tried to follow, Ye Wanwan hastily stopped him.

“What are you doing?” Yi Lingjun looked at Ye Wanwan.

Ye Wanwan smiled faintly. “Dad, you attend to hundreds of important matters every day, so you don't need to concern yourself with these family matters.”

“What are you saying? I do attend to important matters every day, but when it comes to family matters... don't these matters concern me too?” Yi Lingjun asked.

Ye Wanwan: “...”

“Dad, you're right, but... you should understand Ah-Jiu and Director Yin's relationship. It'll be difficult to talk with too many people there. Moreover, with Director Yin's personality, if you're there, she'll definitely talk business again,” Ye Wanwan said with a hint of exasperation.

“The bill hearing is about to start, so you should prioritize matters relating to the bills first, President,” Si Yehan said to Yi Lingjun.

Yi Lingjun contemplated it before finally recognizing the fact that he was the President of the Arbitration Council. He then agreed to stay behind and not follow.

...

Soon, Si Yehan and Ye Wanwan returned to Si Yehan's current residence.

“Ninth Brother... you're finally back!”

Lin Que was excited when he saw them, as though he found a straw to clutch at.

God knew the repressiveness he felt while staying under the same roof as Yin Yuerong. He was so afraid that he'd evoke Yin Yuerong's anger with the smallest accident and subsequently make Yin Yuerong poison him to death.

Every time he saw Yin Yuerong, at least he had Ninth Brother next to him to boost his courage.

"Where's Tangtang?" Ye Wanwan asked Lin Que.

"In the living room with Auntie Rong," Lin Que replied.

Si Yehan immediately headed toward the living room, his face devoid of any emotion.

Ye Wanwan closely followed. She better not let Si Yehan and Yin Yuerong come into contact alone or else with Si Yehan's EQ... the mere thought frightened her.

Si Yehan had directly inherited Yin Yuerong's EQ. This duo's biggest similarity was how they managed to have a hand of beautiful cards yet had a rotten game. They were truly mother and son through and through.

If Si Yehan had even a third of Tangtang's EQ, his relationship with his mother absolutely wouldn't have deteriorated to this extent.

Ye Wanwan soon followed Si Yehan to the living room.

Ye Wanwan watched as Tangtang held a piece of watermelon in his hand and lifted it to Yin Yuerong's mouth.

Yin Yuerong furrowed her brows. She rarely ate sweet things.

"Grandma, this watermelon is very sweet. Tangtang just tried some. Grandma, have a bite." Tangtang looked up at Yin Yuerong, his eyes sparkling like stars.

Yin Yuerong glanced at Tangtang and couldn't stand to reject him, so she could only take a bite as Tangtang wished.

"Is the watermelon sweet, Grandma?" Tangtang grinned.

"Very sweet," Yin Yuerong answered.

Si Huaizhang never ate sweet things, so... she also rarely ever touched sweets all these years and even forgot the taste long

ago. However, because of this child, she broke her rules again and again.

She also discovered... she didn't dislike this...

“Grandma, you must eat more fruit from now on. Fruit have a lot of vitamins and are good for the body. Plus, fruit are very sweet.” Tangtang acted like an adult and spoke to Yin Yuerong solemnly.

Yin Yuerong was silent for a moment before actually nodding lightly. “Okay.”

This scene before her filled Ye Wanwan with thoughts. Look at this! This is the power of EQ! If Si Yehan also had EQ like Tangtang's, he wouldn't have gotten to where he is. If I allow Si Yehan and Yin Yuerong—this mother and son duo who have extremely high IQ but EQ in the negatives—to interact with each other, won't that be the same as Mars colliding into the Earth?!

2425 Reluctance

“Mommy!”

Before Tangtang could say anything else, he caught sight of Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan standing at the door in his peripheral vision. He immediately dashed toward Ye Wanwan.

“Good Tangtang.” Ye Wanwan had nothing but adoration on her face.

“Eat some watermelon, Mommy.” Tangtang picked up a piece of watermelon for Ye Wanwan.

“Very sweet...” Ye Wanwan praised the fruit happily after taking a few bites.

“Eat some watermelon, Grandma.” Tangtang handed the last piece of watermelon to Yin Yuerong.

Si Yehan: “...”

...

“Since you’re back, I won’t prolong my stay,” Yin Yuerong said aloofly as she stood up.

Ye Wanwan blinked and couldn’t help but be surprised. Yin Yuerong really came to drop Tangtang off!

Back then, even if you beat her to death, she probably wouldn’t believe that Yin Yuerong, who personally detained Tangtang, would personally send him back to them.

“Hold on, Director Yin.”

Si Yehan turned to Yin Yuerong. “The bill hearing is approaching. May I ask you what your thoughts are, Director Yin?”

Ye Wanwan looked at Si Yehan, stunned. This man’s EQ had clearly improved recently, so why did it plummet to an all-time-low as soon as he saw Yin Yuerong?

Even if he wanted to change Yin Yuerong's mind, he shouldn't be so direct!

Plus, this tone and attitude... what was he thinking?!

Yin Yuerong glanced at Si Yehan, her attitude not any better than his. "I didn't come here today to discuss work with you. Moreover, there aren't any openings with me, so the future will be decided by how the proposed bill plays out."

"Is that so?" Si Yehan asked coldly.

At this moment, Yin Yuerong and Si Yehan faced off with their swords drawn, sending the bystanders into what felt like an ice cavern.

"Daddy."

Tangtang suddenly grasped Yin Yuerong's hand but looked at Si Yehan. "Daddy, how can you speak to my grandma with this kind of attitude?"

Si Yehan: "..."

Ye Wanwan: "..."

Yin Yuerong: "..."

"Grandma was framed by bad people earlier. Not only is Daddy not showing any concern for Grandma but he is also treating Grandma like this. Daddy's wrong," Tangtang said.

Si Yehan: "..."

"Grandma, you must've not taught Daddy well. You have to teach Daddy properly from now on," Tangtang then said as he turned to Yin Yuerong.

Yin Yuerong: "..."

Si Yehan: "..."

As Ye Wanwan watched the mother and son duo that was rendered speechless by Tangtang, she silently turned away and suppressed her laughter.

Yin Yuerong cleared her throat. "Tangtang, Grandma will leave now."

Yin Yuerong knelt down as she spoke and looked at the little fella, a rare trace of reluctance flashing through her eyes.

“Alright.” Tangtang nodded.

Following that, Yin Yuerong felt an inexplicable, indescribable sense of disappointment. She thought Tangtang would ask her to stay longer.

After she left this time, they might not have a chance to meet again.

She had to get everything she wanted in her life. However, this child was the only person whom she didn't want to hate her.

Even if the price was possibly never seeing him again.

“Mommy, Grandma and I will be leaving now. We'll come to see you again next time.” Yin Yuerong was about to leave when Tangtang turned around and said that to Ye Wanwan.

An indescribable light flickered in Yin Yuerong's eyes when she heard Tangtang.

“Aren't you... going to go back with your dad and mom?” Yin Yuerong asked hesitantly.

Tangtang blinked. “Tangtang and Mommy agreed that Tangtang would stay with Grandma a few more days. Tangtang can always spend time with Daddy and Mommy, but if Tangtang returns to Yun City with Daddy and Mommy, while I can come to visit Grandma any time I want, I won't be able to see Grandma every day!”

2426 Not a problem, we'll satisfy you

Ye Wanwan was amazed.

Look! Look at my son's EQ!

She was originally worried about how she would clean things up if her parents found out the Yin family abducted Tangtang and created a storm. Now it appeared she had nothing to worry about.

What mother-in-law and daughter-in-law conflict did she have to be afraid about? What mother and son friction did she have to be afraid of?

Ye Wanwan covertly gave Baby Tangtang a thumbs up.

Awesome job, my baby Tangtang!

When Tangtang saw his mommy praising him, happiness filled his starry eyes.

After saying goodbye to his parents, Tangtang led Yin Yuerong by the hand and started walking toward the front entrance.

"Grandma, let's go back! I'm hungry..."

"Alright." Yin Yuerong blindly followed the little fella's lead.

She would never admit she had ever extravagantly wished for "family". However, with a tug, this child's tiny hand tugged her into a warmth she could behold but couldn't obtain...

"I want Grandma's sweet and sour spareribs," Tangtang said.

"Okay." Yin Yuerong nodded.

"Grandma, I also want to eat tanghulu... and red braised pork," Tangtang added.

Under the watch of Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan, the grandmother and grandson duo left the manor.

The first time, it was Yin Yuerong who forcefully detained Tangtang. This time, it was Tangtang who willingly followed Yin Yuerong home.

A moment later, Ye Wanwan turned to Si Yehan, who seemed to be deep in thought.

“What are you doing?” Ye Wanwan asked.

“Thinking about something.”

“Mn... You should indeed think about why your mom treats Tangtang like a treasure and treats you like some weed.” Ye Wanwan sighed, her face exasperated.

Si Yehan: “...”

...

“Grandma, let’s walk around.”

After leaving the manor, Tangtang looked up as he made this suggestion to Yin Yuerong.

The streets and alleys were bustling with people. Yin Yuerong didn’t know how long it’d been since she felt this alive. It was as if this was what life should feel like—a life she’d long been missing.

“Grandma, carry Tangtang... Tangtang’s tired...”

Tangtang extended his arms toward Yin Yuerong.

Yin Yuerong took a long look at the boy in front of her and her lips turned up, revealing a never-seen-before warmth. She slowly bent down and tightly hugged Tangtang.

...

Yin Heng was soon taken away by the Arbitration Council for an investigation.

At court, Yin Heng refused to plead guilty and pushed all the blame onto the servant, Ah-Zhong.

Ah-Zhong was also a brainless fool and didn’t keep any evidence back then and couldn’t prove that it was Yin Heng who gave him the ledger.

Since Yin Heng vehemently denied all faults, the court entered a stalemate.

If they couldn't find Yin Heng guilty by the predetermined time, then Yin Heng would have to be released.

You won't admit it? Fine. It's no problem; we'll satisfy you.

Since Yin Heng denied any guilt, Yi Lingjun directly returned him to Si Yehan.

Yin Heng was dumbfounded.

He was confident that the Arbitration Council would release him if they didn't obtain any evidence, and he could flee immediately. He never expected Yi Lingjun to actually send him back to Si Yehan.

Yin Heng initially wanted to negotiate with Si Yehan to be released but eventually realized a problem.

It would be scarier if Si Yehan released him!

He heard Yin Yuerong had people standing guard nearby. As soon as he was released by Si Yehan, Yin Yuerong's people would capture him.

Yin Heng would currently rather be imprisoned at Si Yehan's place forever than ever leave. If he was locked in this wretched place, he would still be alive. But if he was released, Yin Yuerong wouldn't spare him...

2427 Everybody's happy

Moreover, from the guards' conversation, Yin Heng learned that Yin Yuerong had ordered Auntie Rong to ask Si Yehan for him. However, this time, they weren't retrieving him to save him—it was to take his life away.

The fear that plagued Yin Heng couldn't be described with words anymore. No matter what, he couldn't end up in Yin Yuerong's hands! He absolutely couldn't!

...

Inside the dungeon, Yin Heng watched the man he hated striding inside. He concealed all the dissatisfaction on his face and put on a front. "Elder Brother..."

Right now, he didn't care about anything. Nothing was more important than his life.

Si Yehan apathetically stared at Yin Heng. "Congratulations on regaining your freedom."

What? Si Yehan is really releasing me?

Yin Heng's face dropped immediately. Regaining his freedom...? No, he didn't want his freedom! He was willing to stay in this place forever, even if it meant being a prisoner!

Yin Heng believed that Si Yehan was well aware Yin Yuerong absolutely wouldn't give him any chance of survival after he was released.

Si Yehan wanted him to die!

"You can reunite with Mother soon," Si Yehan added aloofly.

"No... Elder Brother, it's quite nice here... I don't need to go out yet!" Yin Heng vehemently shook his head.

"It's not up to you."

After saying that, Si Yehan ordered his men to drag Yin Heng out of the dungeon and evict him.

Within 15 minutes of Yin Heng being kicked out, Auntie Rong appeared and ordered her people to take Yin Heng away.

A problem that originated from the Yin family naturally had to be resolved by the Yin family themselves.

Everyone knew that there wouldn't be a wisp of news of Yin Heng in the Independent State from today onward. This person would disappear forever.

He was merely an orphan who was brought home and personally nurtured by Yin Yuerong. He managed to climb to this position today, but his ambition grew bigger and bigger. Not only did he attempt to shove away the rightful master but he also conspired with outsiders behind Yin Yuerong's back and even wanted to send Yin Yuerong to her death. No one felt a trace of sympathy for Yin Heng's fate.

Inside Si Yehan's manor:

Ye Wanwan released a sigh of relief and looked at Si Yehan. "Your mom wanted you to release Yin Heng but you refused to do so. Who were you throwing a tantrum for? Isn't it great that you released him?! This way, everybody's happy!"

Auntie Qiao visited them many times in the hopes that Si Yehan would free Yin Heng but was rejected every time. In the end, Ye Wanwan couldn't stand it anymore and forced Si Yehan to release the man.

Of course, while they were "releasing" Yin Heng, to put it plainly, they were merely delivering Yin Heng into Yin Yuerong's hands.

A few days later, the summit reached its end, and the yearly bill revision hearing would finally begin.

The majority of the people who would attend the bill revision hearing were directors and higher-ups from the Arbitration Council. However, they also allowed a limited number of audience members. Due to her connection with Yi Lingjun, Ye Wanwan could also attend as an observer.

The bill hearing was everything but harmonious. Due to all kinds of proposed law revisions, the Arbitration Council's

higher-ups and directors were quarreling nonstop, their faces flushed with anger.

The Twelve Independent States had an extremely large number of laws and regulations, and minor adjustments had to be made every year. Because some bill revisions could violate people's principles, arguments were unavoidable. After all, everyone possessed different opinions.

Disputes could be heard all morning. It wasn't until Yi Lingjun spoke that the atmosphere loosened up a tiny degree.

...

“Alright, recently, the matter regarding residents of the Independent State marrying outsiders has evoked quite a few incidents. This is a rule that has been passed down since ancient times. I would like to listen to everyone's opinions on whether this rule is reasonable or not and whether we need to make revisions or not.”

Around the evening, Yi Lingjun interjected.

2428 Pass by unanimous vote

Following Yi Lingjun's words, the room turned quiet.

Everyone knew Yi Lingjun intended to revise this rule. If they opposed, wouldn't that be the same as singing a different tune from him...

Moreover, even if they put aside the matter of offending the President and Director Si, this rule alone contained many unreasonable flaws.

"Heh, President Yi, as you said, this is a law passed down from ancient times. Ancient times are ancient times, and modern times are modern times. What era are we in now? I think that we should revise such an inhumane law—no, we should abolish it," a director responded with a light chuckle.

"Yes, Director Zhou is right. People in ancient times would say that a person's marriage is dictated by their parents, but what era are we in now? Who doesn't know that people are free to marry and love whoever they want? Isn't it strange to use such an antiquated rule to restrict young people's romantic lives? I think that this law should be abolished or else we'll eventually have a big problem on our hands!"

Amongst the 12 directors present, including Si Yehan, 11 directors agreed to abolish this rule, leaving Yin Yuerong the only one who hadn't spoken yet.

However, if they wanted to abolish a law, it had to be passed unanimously without a single objection.

"So what does Director Yin think?" Yi Lingjun asked as he turned to Yin Yuerong some time later.

Everyone's gazes landed on Yin Yuerong.

Who didn't know the relationship between Si Yehan and his mother was akin to fire and water? Si Yehan fully supported the abolishment of this law, and the debate was initiated by Si Yehan. How could Yin Yuerong pass this rule? It was absolutely impossible.

Ye Wanwan's heart also raised to her throat. She hoped a miracle would happen.

"Apologies, but I don't agree," Yin Yuerong expressionlessly said, looking at Yi Lingjun.

Si Yehan deeply furrowed his eyes. "Director Yin..."

"Director Si, I hope you won't interrupt when I'm speaking," Yin Yuerong coldly rebuked.

Then, Yin Yuerong turned back to Yi Lingjun and continued: "If it exists, then there's a reason for it. I won't doubt our ancestors' wisdom, so I don't agree."

Disappointment filled Ye Wanwan. However, even if it didn't pass this year, there was still next year... If they put more work into it, perhaps they could change Yin Yuerong's mind.

She merely hoped Elder Brother wouldn't be so impulsive again. His relationship with Ling Miao would definitely have a good ending.

"Alright, let's vote to decide then, everyone," Yi Lingjun finally said.

Everyone was at a loss for words. Yin Yuerong's attitude was crystal clear, so continuing to vote was superfluous.

However, they still had to follow the process. 11 directors voted in favor.

"Where's your vote, Director Yin?" Yi Lingjun inquired when he saw that Yin Yuerong didn't move.

"I won't vote this year," Yin Yuerong replied.

"Won't vote...? What do you mean?" Yi Lingjun was bewildered.

"I'm abstaining," Yin Yuerong said expressionlessly.

Everyone, including Si Yehan and Ye Wanwan, was startled. She was abstaining?!

"Don't you object to this?" Yi Lingjun was astonished.

"Is there a definite connection between me objecting and abstaining?" Yin Yuerong retorted.

“No, no! There aren’t any connections!” Yi Lingjun smiled.
“Alright, since Director Yin is abstaining, this means we’ve passed unanimously. After the hearing adjourns, please abolish this law prohibiting marriage with an outsider, Director Zhou.”
“Understood,” Director Zhou answered.

2429 Because of love probably

The session finally concluded.

This was going to be the most meaningful session in the history of the Independent States.

Soon, the news would spread through all twelve Independent States.

After leaving the Arbitration Council building, Yin Yuerong lifted her head and gazed at the blue sky above her.

In her life, she spent the first half pursuing Si Huaizhang and the latter half pursuing power. She had never obtained happiness in her life and never lived for herself. Now, she was tired.

Although she did something that went against her principles and desires, she had never been this relaxed and tranquil.

It turned out that compromising didn't mean failure sometimes. It led to a whole new world instead.

As soon as the news was released, Ye Wanwan immediately texted Nameless Nie and informed him of this good news.

As she walked out, she mused to herself: "This result is seriously too shocking! I guessed that your mom definitely wouldn't agree, but I didn't expect her to actually abstain! I was prepared for a long battle!"

"I also didn't expect this," Si Yehan said.

Recently, Yin Yuerong had done too many things that differed from his understanding of her.

The two of them had just stepped out of the building when they caught sight of Yin Yuerong waiting for her car in front of the entrance.

Silence dawned on the three of them. None of them knew what to say.

At this moment, a black car pulled up, and Yin Yuerong's driver arrived, finally breaking this awkward silence.

Yin Yuerong looked away and made her way to her car.

Before entering her car, Yin Yuerong suddenly paused and turned around to look at them.

Her gaze landed on Si Yehan as she said, "Ah-Jiu, in truth, Mommy looked forward to your birth the whole time. You were born carrying all of Mommy's hopes..."

Si Yehan's pupils contracted.

Yin Yuerong had never said any of this to him.

"It's just... I've been too cowardly all these years. I was trapped by my failed relationship and life and wanted to imprison you in this lightless prison with me... I wanted you to stay in the darkness with me..."

Yin Yuerong peered up and stared at her son, a sad smile spreading on her face. "Ah-Jiu, in truth, Mommy was just... too lonely..."

"I'm sorry, Ah-Jiu..."

As Si Yehan listened to Yin Yuerong, his hands clenched into tight fists.

Ye Wanwan reached out and gently grasped his lightly trembling hand.

In reality... Si Yehan might not vocalize it, but his mother had always been the scar on his heart.

Si Yehan never understood how a mother could treat her biological child that cruelly. At first, he still held hopes and wanted to know why, but he was disappointed again and again.

Eventually, he finally stopped asking and stopped holding any hopes.

However, in the depths of his heart, what he desired the most was this explanation from Yin Yuerong. And the balm for the

scar in his heart was simply the two words “I’m sorry.”

Yin Yuerong glanced at the girl next to Si Yehan. “Ah-Jiu, you have better taste than Mommy.”

After saying that, Yin Yuerong got into her car and the car started driving, disappearing from sight.

Ye Wanwan held Si Yehan’s hand and softly said, “I was wondering earlier why Tangtang was able to change Yin Yuerong so much, but now, I suddenly understand... It’s probably because of love...”

Yin Yuerong’s icy demeanor was changed because of love and was melted and transformed again by love.

...

2430 Brother-In-Law, I'll help you fight in the van

After the session ended, Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan invited Yi Lingjun for dinner, a farewell meal of sorts.

They originally planned to head back tomorrow, but they received news from Yun City. Because Ye Wanwan and Tangtang had been gone for too long, Nameless Nie couldn't hide it anymore and Dad and Mom learned they went to Yun City.

Hence, the family of three started their journey back to Yun City.

After arriving in Yun City, Si Yehan led Wanwan and Tangtang to visit Grandpa first and inform him about everything that happened during this period of time.

The outcome proved that Si Yehan's decision was correct.

"Alright, I understand. I also understand your intention behind visiting me today. I'll help you make a trip to your parents!"

"Thank you, Grandpa! You're the best!" Ye Wanwan happily threw her arms around her grandpa's shoulders.

"Oh right, Grandpa, don't worry about Si Xia. Thankfully we stopped him in time, so he didn't cause too great an impact. After some imprisonment, he'll be released and expelled from the Independent State."

"It's already good that his life was preserved." Grandpa sighed.

Moreover, Si Xia had lived in China longer than the Independent State, so he was actually more suited for life in China.

After chatting with Grandpa a little longer, Nameless Nie quickly came to pick them up.

“Sister! You’re finally back!” Nameless Nie exclaimed as he ran toward Tangtang and looked him up and down. “Thank god, thank god! It’s fine as long as this little ancestor is fine!”

After saying that, the more he looked, the more something felt off. He reached out and pinched the little fella’s cheeks. “Why does it seem like Tangtang is chubbier? Wasn’t he kidnapped? I thought he’d go down a size! Why is his face rounder instead?”

Tangtang disdainfully slapped away Nameless Nie’s hand and emphasized every word carefully, “Watch your words!”

Nameless Nie was already very satisfied he got to pinch his nephew’s cheeks, so he didn’t dare to keep acting suicidally. He turned to Si Yehan. “Thank you so much for this, Brother-In-Law! Ling Miao is still bedridden, so I’ll help her thank you and Wanwan!”

“It was my duty,” Si Yehan replied.

Nameless Nie clapped his chest and promised Si Yehan: “Don’t worry, Brother-In-Law! I’ve taken charge of your marriage with my sister! I fully support you guys! I’ll help you persuade Dad and Mom, I’ll help you book your wedding and banquet, and I’ll help you fight in the van when we’re escorting the bride! No one will dare to stop you from entering! I’ll help you stand guard on your wedding night! I’ll break the legs of whoever dares to prank you newlyweds! You just need to happily marry my sister!”

Cheer surfaced in Si Yehan’s eyes. “Thank you.”

As Ye Wanwan listened from her spot in the car, her expression darkened. “Hey! You’re getting more and more ridiculous! And look at your elbow! Isn’t it about to break from how far out you’re twisting it? Just who is your family member here, huh?”

Nameless Nie instantly said disapprovingly, “Sister, what are you saying? What do you mean I’m twisting my elbow out[1]! Aren’t we all family?! Anyway, aren’t I doing this to help you? Don’t you want to successfully marry Brother-In-Law? I haven’t even billed you for this five-star one-stop service!”

Ye Wanwan: “You win!”

Half an hour later, the car finally reached the Nie residence.

Baby Tangtang fell asleep in the car, so Ye Wanwan first carried him to his room upstairs and got him settled before going back downstairs.

When she returned to the downstairs living room, Si Yehan, Nameless Nie, Grandpa, and her parents were all present.

Nie Huaili and Madam Nie were both looking at Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan unhappily and only kept themselves from flying off the handle since their father was there too.

[1] A Chinese idiom for helping outsiders instead of family

2431 Discuss marriage

Madam Nie reproached her. “Wanwan, just what were you doing? You ran off to such a dangerous place alone. What would you have done if something bad happened?! Did you want to scare Dad and Mom to death?”

Ye Wanwan was most afraid of this type of situation. “Mom, um...”

Before Ye Wanwan could finish, Nameless Nie immediately said, “Didn’t I tell you, Mom? Wanwan just went to Tianshui City to visit her master, Yi Lingjun, also known as President Yi! What could possibly happen to her? Plus, Wanwan helped expose Qin Zong’s true nature and accomplished a great deal!”

Madam Nie instantly glared at him. “You have the nerve to talk? I haven’t started with you! Tangtang was captured by that Yin family and nearly encountered a mishap, but you actually helped them cover up everything until now?!”

Nameless Nie didn’t wait for Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan to speak and directly helped them explain. “Mom, first, Tangtang was captured by Yin Heng, which technically doesn’t have anything to do with the Yin family. And Yin Heng has now been expelled from the Yin family, so he definitely doesn’t have anything to do with the Yin family.

“Second, your precious grandson is perfectly fine! Didn’t you see how Tangtang’s face is a size chubbier after coming back?! It was all from being fed by his grandma! His grandma seriously likes him!

“Did you see that truck outside? It was Yin Yuerong who made us bring back that whole truck of snacks and toys! If it weren’t for my sister stopping her, Yin Yuerong would’ve probably emptied all the snack stores and toy stores in Tianshui City...”

Madam Nie: “...”

Although she didn’t really believe her son, she did see that Tangtang was indeed a lot chubbier and his little face was also

round and flushed.

Nie Huaili cleared his throat and was about to say his piece as the head of the family. “Mr. Si, I have some words...”

However, he’d just started when Wanwan’s grandpa took a sip of tea from his spot on the sofa and casually interjected. “If there aren’t any problems, then Worryless and Ah-Jiu’s marriage has been decided.”

Nie Huaili: “...”

Nie Huaili was stunned, his entire speech cut off. Madam Nie hastily said, “Dad, isn’t this marriage... too reckless? We should give the matter further thought!”

The elderly man sent his daughter a displeased look. “Tangtang’s already so big, so how should we give it further thought? Do you want Tangtang to forever hold a title as an illegitimate child?”

When Madam Nie heard this, she became hesitant.

Nie Huaili deliberated his words for a moment before saying, “You’ve also seen Yin Yuerong’s attitude. Even if she didn’t harm Tangtang this time, she probably still doesn’t agree to this marriage... At that point, we can’t be lacking even a marriage proposal!”

The elderly man aloofly said, “I don’t think that’s necessary as long as the two children are willing. When you married my daughter, forget about a marriage proposal, but there wasn’t even a wedding.”

Nie Huaili was instantly rendered speechless.

Instant KO!

Madam Nie immediately played the mediator. “Dad, Huali just has Worryless’s wellbeing in mind. Marriage is a big deal, after all. Oh right, there’s also Tangtang. How about we wait until Tangtang wakes up tomorrow to ask the child for his opinion? After all, Mr. Si was gone for so many years and was missing from Tangtang’s side. The child needs some time to accept him...”

Since her father cared about Tangtang so much, Madam Nie decided to start with Tangtang.

She could tell that Tangtang somewhat rejected Si Yehan, this father who appeared out of nowhere.

When Si Yehan heard this, ripples appeared in his face, which had been calm this whole time.

Ye Wanwan astutely noticed Si Yehan's expression and inwardly sighed. She found so many opportunities for them to spend time together. Don't tell me he still hasn't won over our son?

2432 Like you more

When the elderly man heard his daughter's suggestion, he hummed in thought.

At this time, footsteps were heard from the stairs. Baby Tangtang foggily ran down in his fuzzy cartoon pajamas.

When Madam Nie saw that Tangtang had woken up, she immediately stood up, distraught. "You're awake, Tangtang. Did we wake you up?"

The little fella rubbed his sleepy eyes and walked toward Si Yehan on the sofa in his rabbit slippers. He extended his short little arms toward Si Yehan and glutinously said, "Hug, Daddy!"

Si Yehan froze in his spot for a moment before regaining his senses and reaching out to embrace the soft child who smelled like milk.

"Daddy, Tangtang had a nightmare..." The little fella sulkily complained as he buried his head into his dad's arms.

Si Yehan carefully hugged the dumpling in his arms and gently patted his back. He comforted Tangtang a bit sloppily. "It's nothing. Nightmares are all fake."

"Mn..." Only then did the little fella feel relieved. He closed his eyes and fell asleep again.

The living room was oddly quiet. Patriarch Nie and Madam Nie didn't speak a word as they watched this scene.

"It appears Tangtang is getting along nicely with Ah-Jiu," the elderly man said.

This time, Patriarch Nie and Madam Nie had no rebuttal.

And so, the matter was settled just like that. Si Yehan carefully carried Tangtang upstairs, and Ye Wanwan also followed.

After entering Tangtang's room, Si Yehan gently placed the little fella on the bed and covered him with the comforter.

Si Yehan and Ye Wanwan were about to leave when Baby Tangtang suddenly opened his eyes and called out, “Mommy...”

Ye Wanwan turned back around in surprise and saw her son’s eyes, which didn’t contain a trace of sleepiness. “Baby? You aren’t sleeping?”

“Hug, Mommy!”

Ye Wanwan quickly hugged the little fella.

“Mommy, did Tangtang perform well?”

“Of course. Baby was too awesome!” Ye Wanwan smacked a kiss on the eager little fella’s cheek and didn’t know whether to cry or laugh.

She thought Tangtang was finally getting attached to Si Yehan, but who knew the little fella was just trying to help them tackle her parents?

Ye Wanwan praised him, “You performed very well! You guys acted like a real father and son!”

Baby Tangtang: “Mommy, we really are father and son though.”

Si Yehan also added, “We really are father and son.”

Ye Wanwan: “...”

Alright, fine, fine... it was a slip of the tongue on her part. It wasn’t her fault these two acted so awkward around each other!

At night, due to the little fella’s request, Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan stayed and slept with him.

With Baby Tangtang and Si Yehan by her side, Ye Wanwan quickly entered dreamland.

Si Yehan gently looked at his son next to him. “Are you asleep?”

Tangtang immediately opened his eyes.

Of course he hadn’t slept yet. Mommy was finally sleeping with him, so he couldn’t bear to fall asleep so fast.

You need something?

Tangtang inquired with his eyes.

“Can I ask you the reason why?” Si Yehan asked.

Although Si Yehan didn't say it explicitly, Baby Tangtang seemed to immediately understand what the man was asking him.

Si Yehan was asking Tangtang why he didn't like him.

Baby Tangtang peered at his mommy next to him, his pink cheeks puffing up and his lips pursing, as though he thought of something very unhappy.

Si Yehan didn't pressure him and merely waited silently.

An unknown amount of time passed before little fella finally unwillingly answered, “Because Mommy likes you more...”

Mommy likes him more, which is greater than her like of me.

Shock flitted through Si Yehan's eyes. He seriously didn't know whether to cry or laugh.

He never expected this to be the reason why the little fella scorned him.

He truly didn't know whether to be happy or exasperated.

In terms of possessive behavior, his son deeply inherited this without a doubt...

2433 Can't you sweet-talk him?

The next morning, Si Yehan went back first. Then Ye Wanwan had a sincere conversation with her parents, and Madam Nie and Patriarch Nie's oppositional attitude finally lessened.

Of course... with Grandpa supporting them, her parents' opposition wasn't all that important anyway.

After eating lunch, Ye Wanwan intended to go find Si Yehan to discuss some matters.

"Mommy, are you going out?" Baby Tangtang stood up immediately when he saw Mommy appearing to leave.

Ye Wanwan patted the little fella on the head. "Yeah!"

"Where are you going?" Tangtang asked.

"Your dad's."

When Tangtang heard this, nervousness appeared in his large eyes. "When are you coming back?"

"Hm... I need to discuss something with your dad, so it might take a while."

"Oh..." The little fella was clearly unhappy.

"Be good, baby. Mommy will try to come back to keep you company as fast as I can. Or how about you come with Mommy?" Ye Wanwan furtively suggested.

"No." The little fella was resolute.

"Eh..." Ye Wanwan didn't know whether to cry or laugh. "Did you get into a fight with Daddy?"

Tangtang's little face froze. "No."

Since she couldn't get any answers from her son, Ye Wanwan could only go and visit Si Yehan first.

In Asura's garden:

When Ye Wanwan arrived, Si Yehan was looking at a thick album. Ye Wanwan casually peeked at it and discovered it was an album of wedding dresses...

Si Yehan saw Ye Wanwan coming over and an awkwardness flitted across his face lightning fast. He calmly closed the album and asked, "Everything good still?"

"What problem could we have with Grandpa there? Plus, since my brother and Baby Tangtang helped out and I pleaded some more with my parents, everything's been taken care of!" Ye Wanwan replied. "Oh right, Ah-Jiu, what's going on with you and Tangtang? Did you say something to him last night? Why do I feel like Tangtang likes you less?"

Si Yehan's expression didn't reveal anything. "It's nothing."

Ye Wanwan narrowed her eyes. "How could there be nothing? Something must've happened! I told Tangtang I was coming to your place this morning, and the little fella was absolutely resentful! I asked him if he wanted to come with me, and he refused!"

Si Yehan glanced at her before saying, "Last night, I asked Tangtang why he didn't like me."

Ye Wanwan's eyes lit up. She really wanted to know the answer to this question. "So how did Tangtang reply?"

"Tangtang said it was because you liked me more."

Ye Wanwan: "..."

Sweatdrop...

She thought Tangtang must've had some special reason. She never expected this...

Yep, they were truly father and son without a doubt.

Ye Wanwan hastily asked, "How did you respond?"

For some reason, an ominous feeling rose inside of her...

Si Yehan said, "I told him you were my wife, so of course you'd like me more."

"Ha ha..."

Ye Wanwan had no idea what to say. He deserved it! It wasn't wrong at all for him to be disliked by Tangtang!

Ye Wanwan facepalmed. "Couldn't you have sweet-talked him?"

Si Yehan glanced at her. "I was telling the truth."

After saying that, he even intently stared at her with a "Or do you think I wasn't telling the truth" expression.

How could Ye Wanwan dare to say it wasn't the truth...

This guy seriously rendered her speechless.

Ye Wanwan could only sigh. She hastily replied, "Yes yes yes, you're right. It's the truth, it's the truth. I like you the most..."

2434 Want you to wear one for me every day

From the corner of her eye, Ye Wanwan caught a glimpse of the album sitting on the table in front of Si Yehan, and her eyes turned.

She didn't expect Si Yehan to secretly look at wedding dresses by himself...

Of course she'd choose to leave it alone... not! That was impossible!

Ye Wanwan leaned over with a grin and pretended to nonchalantly open the album. "Baby, are you looking at wedding dresses? Which one do you like?"

As Ye Wanwan spoke, her eyes focused on a fairly extravagant antique-style dress. "Oh, I think this one is quite nice. What do you think?"

Si Yehan glanced at it. "I've reserved this style already."

"You also prefer this one?" Ye Wanwan blinked in surprise.

Then she kept flipping through the album before stopping and pointing at a white mermaid dress. "This one is also nice!"

"I also reserved this one."

Ye Wanwan looked up in shock. "You predicted what I'd like again? You're really my baby! You know me the best! But... this silver voluminous skirt one is also pretty! It's so hard to choose!"

The wedding dresses in this album were classic creations from famous designers all around the world, so every single one of them was pretty. Ye Wanwan only flipped for a little bit before she turned dizzy from the choices.

Si Yehan calmly said, "I reserved it."

She picked three dresses in a row and Si Yehan had clairvoyantly reserved all of them. Ye Wanwan looked up again in surprise. “Baby, are our hearts really that linked?”

“I reserved every dress in this album,” Si Yehan replied.

Ye Wanwan was stunned, and her lips started twitching unceasingly. “...”

So this guy was saying he bought every single dress in this top-notch wedding-dress catalog?!

Was it true that the best solution for indecisiveness was to buy everything?

Ye Wanwan was at a loss for words. “Why did you buy so many? Is it because your vinegar factory is going out of business, so you’re switching paths and opening a wedding dress boutique?”

Si Yehan’s bewitching eyes glowed stunningly as he suddenly leaned forward and kissed her on the lips. In between breaths, he said, “I want you to wear... every single one for me.”

Ye Wanwan: “...!!!”

Ye Wanwan’s heart pounded so fast that it felt like she’d just fought a life or death battle with Piece of Sh*t.

She really didn’t expect this answer!

Life was seriously full of ups and downs! Who would’ve known she’d be seduced by Si Yehan to this point?

Ye Wanwan clutched her boiling cheeks. “Ahem, didn’t you buy too many? How long will it take for me to wear all of them?”

Si Yehan gently played with the strands of dark hair drifting by her ears. “Is that a lot? After all, I’m only marrying once in my whole life, so you can take your time wearing them.”

Ye Wanwan: “...” You win...

“Oh right, I nearly forgot to talk business with you. I came here because I wanted to discuss something with you. For our wedding, I might not... hold it using my identity as Worryless

Nie... We might also not... hold it in the Independent State...”
Ye Wanwan said after deliberating her words for a moment.

Si Yehan didn't seem to have any objection to this and directly agreed. “Sure. You can hold it wherever you want with whichever identity you choose. Of course, it's also fine if you want to hold a wedding with every single identity. I can take back what I just said about only marrying once.”

Ye Wanwan: “...!!!”

But I don't want to marry that many times! Thank you very much!

If she added up her aliases with his aliases, how long would all the weddings take if they married using every single one of their aliases?

2435 Calm down a little, baby

If they held a wedding using every single one of their aliases, she'd probably have to spend the rest of her life in an endless stream of weddings...

When Ye Wanwan saw that Si Yehan was seriously considering this, terror filled her, and she quickly reined the topic back on course.

“Ahem, hold it, hold it! What are you thinking? Who'd hold that many weddings? I just want to hold our wedding using Ye Wanwan's identity in China, alright?!” Ye Wanwan hastily said.

Si Yehan looked at her. “We naturally have to hold a wedding in China, but the Independent State...”

Ye Wanwan didn't dare to let him finish speaking and interrupted him at once. “It's very simple! We'll invite all of our friends and family from the Independent State to China! I've already told my parents and my grandpa, and they all respect our decision!”

After the law was revised, there were much fewer restrictions between China and the Independent State, and visits in between them were very easy.

Si Yehan furrowed his brows. “Are you sure you don't want to hold several more weddings in the Independent State?”

“Hold... several more?” Ye Wanwan glowered. “Calm down a little, baby!”

Si Yehan aloofly glanced at her. “I'm very calm.”

Ye Wanwan: “...”

Calm your a**!

Do you very calmly want to hold 100 weddings?!

...

A few days later, Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan boarded a plane to China.

Ye Wanwan's original intention for coming to the Independent State was to figure out her identity and background. Now that everything was revealed and she found out who she was, she naturally had to go back and give Dad, Mom, and Ye Mufan an explanation.

In the years that her memory was replaced, she lived in China as Ye Wanwan. During these years, she completely treated herself as Ye Wanwan.

Although this identity was fake, the interactions and bonds from this time were real.

There were many people in China waiting for her—waiting for Ye Wanwan.

She definitely had to go back and explain everything that needed to be explained.

Otherwise, it'd be unfair to her people in China.

Perhaps it was because proximity increased trepidation that despite having made mental preparations beforehand and deliberating every single word in her explanation, Ye Wanwan still unavoidably felt nervous when the plane landed.

During these years, Dad Ye and Mom Ye spoiled her with love and she also considered them as her family, even her con brother, Ye Mufan...

In truth, she didn't know how to reveal such a cruel truth to them. She didn't know how to tell them the daughter by their side wasn't actually their daughter. Their biological daughter had died in that explosion many years ago, and even her remains were lost.

If they were unable to accept this, then her only choice... was to strip herself from this identity that didn't belong to her forever.

Probably detecting the girl's mood, Si Yehan gently patted her on the head.

“Wanwan——”

While Ye Wanwan was lost in thought, Ye Mufan’s exhilarated voice bursted from the arrival reception area.

Next to Ye Mufan, Ye Shaoting and Liang Wanjun had also come and were eagerly sifting through the throngs of arriving passengers. As soon as they saw her, their eyes lit up.

“Dad... Mom...”

“Brother...”

Ye Wanwan sprinted toward the three of them while Si Yehan stayed behind her, pulling her luggage.

“Wanwan!!!”

Liang Wanjun’s eyes reddened when she saw her daughter, and she tightly hugged Ye Wanwan. “I’m glad you’re back... I’m glad you’re back...”

2436 Let's go home

Liang Wanjun closely examined this both strange and incredibly familiar girl who she hadn't seen for many days. Her fragile shoulders were slightly trembling as she said, "Wanwan, Mom thought... Mom thought you'd never come back..."

Ye Shaoting was also beside himself with excitement and turned around to wipe his tears when he heard his wife.

Ye Wanwan's eyes turned teary. She faintly felt something was off about Liang Wanjun's words but due to the storm of thoughts inside her mind, she didn't think too much about it. She quickly replied, "Mom, what nonsense are you spouting? Why would I never come back?! I'm your precious daughter! I still need to stay with you for the rest of my life!"

When Liang Wanjun heard that, she couldn't hold back her tears any longer, and they gushed out. "Wanwan..."

Ye Shaoting clapped Liang Wanjun's shoulders. "Alright alright, don't cry. Isn't our child back? Look at you... don't scare our child!"

Ye Mufan also quickly started to comfort her. "That's right, isn't Wanwan back now? Let's go home first to talk!"

"Mom, let's go home!"

"Yes... Yes... Go home..."

...

At Golden Seas:

Soon, the family drove back to the mansion.

"Wanwan, where... where are you planning to live since you're back?" Liang Wanjun asked with a tinge of nervousness.

Ye Wanwan looped her arms around Liang Wanjun's arm. "I'll live at home! I want to spend more time with you!"

“Good good good...” A bright smile filled Liang Wanjun’s face. “Mufan, hurry and put your sister’s luggage in her room!”

“I know!” Ye Mufan resentfully grumbled. “Mom, I’m not talking bad, but the number of times you’ve smiled since you’ve seen my sister is more than the number of times you’ve smiled at me in an entire month!”

Liang Wanjun shot him a reproachful look. “Your sister is so well-behaved and clever and sensible and has such an outstanding boyfriend, but what about you? You haven’t brought even a shadow home!”

Ye Mufan was speechless. “Mom, why are you launching a personal attack on me?! Why about all the girls I’ve brought home before?”

“Where do you get the face to mention the past? What kind of people did you bring home every day, huh? If it weren’t for your sister looking after you, you probably wouldn’t even have your pants left from being conned by those atrocious women!”

Ye Mufan’s expression was as dark as the bottom of a pan. “Mom, these are blatant double standards! My sister was clearly more horrible than me before! Her taste in men was 100 times vile than my taste in women, alright?!”

Liang Wanjun pinched Ye Mufan by his ears without demur. “How can you say that about your sister?”

Ye Shaoting also glared at his son. “D*mn punk, is your skin itchy for a beating?”

...

As Ye Wanwan watched the conversation between this family of three, a sense of *déjà vu* hit her.

The similarities between this and the conversations between her real parents and Nameless Nie were stunning!

However, as Ye Wanwan watched them joking around harmoniously as a warm family, she recalled the words she needed to say later and found it harder to say them...

After setting down the luggage, the family sat down on the couches in the living room.

“Do Yanran, Gong Xu, and the others know about you coming back?” Ye Mufan asked.

“I haven’t told them yet. I’m planning to secretly surprise them later!” Ye Wanwan replied.

“Oh right, the script you picked for Gong Xu was quite nice. He can probably contend for an award overseas this time!” Ye Mufan said.

“Oh...?”

“Yanran is also quite outstanding! Her journey has been very smooth and she isn’t troublesome at all!”

“I wasn’t worried about Yanran, of course.”

2437 Already know

After a round of chatting, Ye Mufan sensed Ye Wanwan's absentmindedness and asked, "What are you thinking about? Why are you so distracted?"

Liang Wanjun quickly inquired, "Wanwan, are you too tired? How about you go to your room and rest?"

Ye Wanwan shook her head. "No..."

In the end, Ye Wanwan took a deep breath before pulling out a document file from her bag and looking at Liang Wanjun, Ye Shaoting, and Ye Mufan. "Dad, Mom, Brother, I actually came back this time because I have a very important matter to confess to you!"

Liang Wanjun's fingers clenched and she glanced at Ye Shaoting. "Very important... matter?"

Ye Shaoting gently patted Liang Wanjun's hand before looking at Ye Wanwan and asking, "What is it, Wanwan?"

Ye Mufan frowned deeply. "Just what is it? Why are you so solemn? Don't tell me..."

Ye Mufan's gaze shifted between Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan before landing on the document file in her hand. "Don't tell me you have an accident from your wildness? Ye Wanwan, you aren't premaritally pregnant, right?! Is that a physical exam from the hospital? Are you distracted because you're afraid Dad and Mom will beat you?"

Ye Mufan's fairly tightly packed hypothesis dissipated all of Ye Wanwan's suppressed grim emotions. She was rendered speechless. "..."

Even Si Yehan's expression was difficult to describe. "..."

As soon as Ye Mufan spoke, Liang Wanjun harshly slapped him on the head. "D*mn punk, what nonsense are you spouting? Do you think Wanwan is as inappropriate as you?"

Ye Shaoting also agreed. “Even if Wanwan really was pregnant, that’d be a wonderful thing!”

Ye Mufan’s expression was dark as he grumbled in displeasure at once, “Dad, you were just telling me last month that you’d break my legs if I dared to get a girl pregnant before marriage!”

Ye Shaoting said, “I did say that. Is there a problem with that?”

Ye Mufan choked, disbelief filling him. He grievously whispered, “I see it now. Between Wanwan and I, I’m actually the one who isn’t the biological child...”

Ye Mufan’s words sent the living room into silence.

Ye Wanwan was dazed for a few seconds before slowly realizing something.

What did Ye Mufan’s words... mean?

From Liang Wanjun’s “I thought you’d never come back” when she arrived at the airport earlier to the understanding that seeped into Liang Wanjun and Ye Shaoting’s eyes when they heard she had something important to confess to them...

And then Ye Mufan’s careless words just now...

Ye Wanwan furtively asked, “Dad, Mom, you know?”

Liang Wanjun and Ye Shaoting didn’t speak at first, as if they didn’t know how to respond.

In the end, it was Ye Mufan who scratched his head and replied, “Ahem, are you talking about how... you aren’t my younger sister? If that’s the matter... then we do already know...”

Ye Wanwan was dumbfounded for a moment before it was replaced by astonishment. She didn’t expect them to have already known about this matter that she found so hard to explain. “How did you know?”

Ye Mufan was quiet for a moment before sighing. “My sister was overseas for a pretty long time and didn’t spend a lot of time with us, so I really didn’t notice at first.

“If you had kept acting so foolishly and had an absolutely awful taste in men and terrible flirting skills, I never would’ve suspected anything for my whole life.

“However, I’m at least certain of one thing: no matter what happens, genetics can’t change abruptly.

“Even if a person suffered trauma and experienced some changes in their personality, their abilities couldn’t undergo such a great transformation in such a short period of time. Whether it’s your martial arts skills or some of your professional abilities, my sister couldn’t accomplish those...

“Oh right, there’s also your taste. That man next to you? He’s completely different from the type my sister liked! Since she was young, my sister has only liked the fake gentlemen type like Gu Yueze!”

2438 Support everything by yourself

Ye Wanwan turned blank for a while after hearing Ye Mufan. She never expected the always unreliable Ye Mufan to also have such a meticulous side.

“When did you start suspecting it...?”

Ye Mufan thought about it. “I don’t remember clearly. There were many things, but it was probably when you suddenly changed your attitude toward Shen Mengqi. At first, it was just those little changes, so I didn’t think too much about it... The time that made me distinctly suspicious was probably...”

“When?” Ye Wanwan looked up.

Ye Mufan coughed and gulped as if there were still lingering fears inside him. “The time... the time you punched a giant hole in the hood of Gong Xu’s sports car...”

Ye Wanwan’s expression froze and she wordlessly clutched her forehead. “Alright...”

So it was the time she got drunk and went crazy...

“Later... I thought about everything from the beginning and realized you seriously changed too dramatically... You were clearly a fragile and delicate girl, but you would always stand in front of us and could resolve everything no matter what. You had a bad memory since you were a child, but now you suddenly have a photographic memory. Although it was plausible you learned some martial arts, you absolutely couldn’t be that fearsome...” Ye Mufan said as he sifted through his memories.

“So you went and did a DNA test because you suspected my identity?” Ye Wanwan asked furtively.

Ye Mufan shook his head. “No. No matter how I suspected you, I never did a test. I just secretly mentioned it to Dad and

Mom a few times in a roundabout way...”

Ye Mufan smiled helplessly. “In truth, I could tell that Dad and Mom also had some doubts, but like me, they also partially thought it was impossible. The other part was that they both subconsciously avoided this topic...”

Ye Wanwan was confused. “Then how...?”

Then how did you confirm it...?

Although Ye Wanwan didn't finish her sentence, Ye Mufan knew what she wanted to say and glanced at the man next to her. “A few months ago, your man suddenly visited in the middle of the night and told us the truth.”

Ye Wanwan turned to look at Si Yehan in shock. “Ah-Jiu told you?”

Why didn't I know anything?

Ye Wanwan never expected Si Yehan to have told them the truth that long ago.

Ye Mufan nodded. “Back then, we did faintly sense something was off about you, but hearing the truth from his mouth was still too hard to accept... Then... he just stood outside the door and waited... and also apologized to Dad, Mom, and me...”

Shock covered Ye Wanwan's face. She had no idea this happened.

Ye Wanwan looked at the man next to her again. “Why did you come back by yourself to do this?”

Si Yehan calmly replied, “Considering your personality, after learning about your true identity, you definitely couldn't bear to conceal it from them and would tell them the truth. It was my fault to begin with, so you shouldn't have to bear this weight.”

Ye Wanwan hadn't anticipated Si Yehan would even consider that.

He knew she valued her relationships and didn't want her to face it alone, so he helped her handle everything long, long ago.

Bitter and complicated emotions swelled in Ye Wanwan's chest. She didn't know what to say.

“What do you mean it's your fault? You only did it because of me... It was me who was too weak and didn't have the courage to face everything, so I selfishly asked you to help me forget those memories. Even if an explanation was needed, it should've been me who explained...”

2439 More afraid of you leaving

It was because of her weakness and avoidance. Yet, he unconditionally followed and indulged her wishes and supported her by himself.

He even took the Ye family into consideration for her.

Liang Wanjun and Ye Shaoting's emotions were more stable now.

Ye Shaoting said, "At first, Wanjun and I both couldn't accept this reality, so we didn't accept his apology and he stayed standing outside the door..."

Ye Shaoting sighed. "Later on... we calmed down... Thinking back on it... in a twist of fate, this matter also saved our family..."

Ye Shaoting's mind drifted as he replied, "Back then, when my daughter was studying overseas, she encountered a riot and everyone lost their lives in a blazing inferno in that riot without a single survivor. Because the explosion was too strong... no one's remains were preserved..."

Ye Shaoting took a deep breath and continued, "Back then, Wanjun was too heavily affected and her mental state deteriorated. She didn't drink or eat the whole day, and her health worsened more and more. She even tried to commit suicide several times. It wasn't until one day three years ago that we found our daughter. She was blessed and was saved by a kind passerby. She merely suffered some injuries and lost some of her memories..."

"Because our daughter was found, Wanjun finally lifted her head and we never doubted you weren't our daughter..."

Ye Wanwan replied with difficulty, "I'm very sorry. Back then... my memories were replaced already. I didn't

intentionally deceive you, but it was me who caused this to happen so there's no defending myself!"

Ye Shaoting sighed. "Mr. Si already explained the general circumstances to us..."

Although Si Yehan withheld the more confidential bits, he sincerely explained the general events to Ye Shaoting and Liang Wanjun.

Ye Wanwan closed her eyes. "Apologies. I've caused a lot of trouble for you..."

Ye Shaoting looked at the girl in front of him and said while pained, "Although I don't know how memory replacement works, you were truly identical to our old Wanwan. If it was our Wanwan, the things she would've done actually wouldn't be all too different from what you did..."

"Back then, the second branch already wanted to target us, so the outcome would be the same even if it was a different Wanwan. And with such a useless father like me, Wanwan's fate wouldn't be any better right now even if she survived..."

"It was us parents who weren't able to protect our daughter well..."

"Dad..." Ye Wanwan hoarsely protested. "Don't say that. You're a wonderful father!"

Ye Shaoting took a deep breath. "You though—you, a single girl, stood your own ground and protected the entire Ye family by yourself. I truly can't blame you for anything..."

Moreover... these past few years... your mom and I... have truly been very grateful... grateful that you came to our side..."

Tears flowed down Liang Wanjun's face as she said, "No matter what, we can't change the truth that my daughter has passed away. The heavens have already bestowed us with a blessing by letting you come to our side. This was why I didn't dare to expose anything despite all the oddities I discovered.

"It wasn't until Mr. Si told us the truth and completely shattered my hopes... I really couldn't accept it at first, but..."

Liang Wanjun stared at Ye Wanwan. “But Mom’s more afraid... afraid that you’ll leave... I’m afraid... you’ll also leave me forever...”

2440 The meaning of my existence

After learning the truth, Liang Wanjun struggled in agony. She couldn't accept the truth that her daughter was dead through and through. More than that though, she couldn't accept the girl, who'd kept her company all these years and whom she completely treated as her own daughter, could leave her and disappear from her life.

Ye Wanwan hastily grasped Liang Wanjun's hand. "Mom, I won't! I was only afraid you couldn't forgive my deceit! If you're willing, I'll be your daughter my whole life!"

"Wanwan..." Tears poured down Liang Wanjun's face like rainfall, and she sobbed as mother and daughter tightly hugged each other.

Ye Mufan gently patted Liang Wanjun's shoulders in comfort. "Later on, during that period in between, we knew the truth, but we feigned ignorance and kept in contact with you like normal. On one hand, we didn't know how to face you, but on the other hand, we were also afraid. We were afraid that you'd leave if we addressed the elephant in the room. And if you left, we wouldn't have any reasons to keep you. After all, you aren't actually related to us..."

Ye Wanwan instantly glared at Ye Mufan. "At least I've been your sister for so long. Am I that ungrateful? I've already planned to hold my wedding in China as Ye Wanwan! Of course, that's if you'll allow it... After all, this identity doesn't belong to me..."

Ye Mufan's eyes shot open. "You're getting married? When?"

Ye Wanwan retorted, "Isn't that why I came back to discuss the exact date with Dad and Mom?!"

Liang Wanjun and Ye Shaoting met each other's eyes, seeing each other's euphoria. "You're holding your wedding in

China? But for such an important event, you should allow your... your real parents to decide!”

Ye Wanwan quickly responded, “I’ve discussed it with my parents and Grandpa already! They all agree to me holding it here. At that time, they can come to China, and we can invite our friends over here too!”

Liang Wanjun and Ye Shaoting didn’t expect Ye Wanwan would choose to get married with the Ye family. They were touched.

“If you’re willing... of course you can!”

They couldn’t personally witness their daughter get married anymore, so this would fulfill one of their dreams...

...

That evening:

Ye Wanwan escorted Si Yehan to the front door.

“I’ll stay with my dad and mom for now, and I’ll go see Grandma tomorrow,” Ye Wanwan said.

“Okay.”

Ye Wanwan sighed. “In truth, I can handle it myself. I’m not a child; I was a golden manager at least, alright? I’m best at handling all kinds of tricky problems.”

Si Yehan was so taciturn and inarticulate. She found it hard to imagine how he explained everything to the Ye family.

The man intently stared at the girl’s face with his ocean-like eyes. His large hand patted the top of her head extremely gently and his voice sounded like he was praising a child.

“Mm, you’re very awesome. I know that.”

For some reason, Ye Wanwan’s heart started speeding up again merely from his simple praise.

Sunlight scattered across the man’s icy eyes, melting them into a warm stream. He softly added, “However, if I allowed you to handle everything yourself, then what would be the point of my existence?”

He clearly did so much, but he never said anything. With one simple word from her and a willful request, he silently kept guard over her and never tried to explain himself even when he was misunderstood.

Ye Wanwan smiled tenderly at this cold man who was also a gentleman. “The best trade in my life was probably exchanging a shaobing for you.”

2441 Birthday Surprise 1

After leaving Golden Seas, Si Yehan returned to the ancestral Si residence first to visit his grandma before driving to Jin Garden and staying the night there.

Meanwhile, Ye Wanwan was lying in her bed, a bit fatigued from spending the day on the plane.

She was about to put down her phone and go to sleep when she saw the date on her phone. She abruptly rolled around and crawled back out of bed.

Today was December 21st, so tomorrow was December 22nd, which was the Winter Solstice and also... Si Yehan's birthday!

In all the time she'd known Si Yehan, he never mentioned his own birthday and wasn't accustomed to celebrating his birthday.

Ye Wanwan knew he didn't like to talk about his birthday, so she avoided mentioning it in the past.

Later, when Tangtang was staying with Yin Yuerong, he seemed to have talked about many things with Yin Yuerong and Ah-Jiu was brought up somewhere in the conversation.

After they returned to Yun City, she conversed with Tangtang, who mentioned Ah-Jiu was born on a very cold winter night.

She kept that in mind and had Tangtang call Yin Yuerong to ask when Si Yehan's birthday was.

Baby Tangtang successfully completed his mission and figured out his dad's birthday... which was December 22nd.

Today, she came back to China and saw her parents and was so preoccupied with revealing the truth to them, so she nearly forgot about it.

Ye Wanwan glanced at the time on her phone. It was 10 pm; midnight was two hours away.

Thank goodness! There's still time!

Ye Wanwan got out of bed and sprinted to Ye Shaoting and Liang Wanjun's room, asking them for her household registration booklet before going to Ye Mufan's room and knocking.

“Brother! Open the door, open the door!”

Ye Mufan opened the door, slippers on his feet and his posture slouched. “What is it? I was about to sleep...”

“Lend your car to me! I'm in a hurry!” Ye Wanwan asked in a rush.

Ye Mufan frowned. “It's late. Why aren't you sleeping?”

Ye Wanwan quickly responded, “Tomorrow's my baby's birthday. It'll be 12 in two hours! I need to hurry over and give him a surprise then wait in front of the civil administration office overnight so that we can become the first couple to be officially wed tomorrow morning! Isn't that so romantic?”

Stuffed with a bucket of dog food unexpectedly, Ye Mufan nearly suffocated. It took him a moment to regain his senses. “You're a girl; can't you act more reserved?”

Ye Wanwan was incredulous. “Are you kidding, Brother? My baby is so outstanding. If I was reserved, I'd have no place left! Hurry, hurry, give me your key!”

“...”

Ye Shaoting and Liang Wanjun appeared to have heard the commotion and also came out of their room.

Ye Mufan immediately seized the opportunity to tattle on her. “Dad, Mom, hurry and look at your daughter! She's stealing her household registration booklet in the middle of the night and wants to go get married to her man! Aren't you going to tell her off?”

Ye Shaoting glared at his son. “There's no stealing. I gave her the booklet.”

Ye Mufan: “...?”

Liang Wanjun also softly said, “It's good for young people to have passion! Mufan, it's too late now, so it's not safe for

Wanwan to be out by herself. Drive her there.”

Ye Mufan: “...???”

“Thank you, Dad! Thank you, Mom!” Ye Wanwan then urged him gloatingly, “Let’s go, let’s go! Or else we won’t make it in time! I need to say happy birthday to my baby the second 12 o’clock hits! Oh right, if you could help me find a box of fireworks, that’d be even better!”

Ye Mufan simply wanted to kill her with a slap. “Fireworks my a**! Imperial City prohibits fireworks and firecrackers, alright?!”

2442 Birthday Surprise 2

In the end, under pressure from his parents, Ye Mufan accepted his fate, got changed and drove Ye Wanwan.

Forget it—it wasn't safe for her to travel there by herself? It wasn't safe for the pedestrians on the streets...

Ye Mufan first drove Ye Wanwan to the ancestral Si residence so that Ye Wanwan could get Si Yehan's household registration booklet from Grandma Si.

“Who'd like a granddaughter-in-law as brassy as you?! They'd probably be scared off by you! Just watch—his grandma will definitely kick you out!” Ye Mufan grumbled derisively.

However, 10 minutes later, Ye Wanwan came out again with a strikingly scarlet household registration booklet in her hand and a benevolent-looking elderly woman by her side.

The elderly woman merrily grasped the girl's hand as she said, “Hurry on then, but take your time on the road! Do you need Grandma to get a driver for you?”

“No need, no need, Grandma. My brother came with me, so he can drive me there!”

“Great great great...”

Ye Mufan stared at this incredibly harmonious scene in front of him. “...”

Why was the script turned upside down? Was he lagging behind the times???

...

Ye Wanwan looked at the time on her phone and estimated the time she had remaining.

“Hurry hurry hurry, help me go buy fireworks! We can light them in the suburbs!” Ye Wanwan urged.

She still hadn't forgotten about this!

Ye Mufan gritted his teeth. “Is being allowed to light fireworks the main point? Where am I supposed to buy fireworks for you in the middle of the night? Don’t you think you’re being too awful to me, a single dog?”

What kind of sin did he commit to be forced to follow her this whole time and be stuffed with dog food the entire trip?

“Eh, it’s all because you’re my brother!” Ye Wanwan blithely grinned. “Brother, I know you treat me the best, better than my real brother! No, wait, you are my real brother!”

Ye Mufan glanced at her from the corner of his eyes, concealing the ecstasy in his eyes. “Really?”

“Of course!”

“I remember there’s a store nearby where we can buy them. Let’s go there and try our luck!”

...

Thankfully, their luck was good and Ye Mufan really managed to buy a box of fireworks.

After stuffing the car trunk full of fireworks, they made their way to Jin Garden.

“Brother, please! You just need to go to the lake in the back! That place is the most ideal! You can start lighting them when it’s time!” Ye Wanwan instructed him.

“OK! Leave it to me!”

After saying that, Ye Wanwan avoided the main entrance and scaled the wall in the back courtyard in order to surprise Si Yehan.

She’d completely renovated Jin Garden once and planted it full of fruit trees and vegetables.

Although it was winter right now, Ye Wanwan still saw many fruits that were in season and even saw a giant vegetable garden greenhouse in the distance.

It was very down-to-earth!

It appeared Steward Xu meticulously took care of the garden while she was gone, and the enormous garden was bustling with life and growth.

“WHO’S THERE?”

Ye Wanwan was wandering around when she heard a harsh shout, promptly followed by the sound of the slashing wind.

Ye Wanwan extended her arm in a flash and blocked off the attack.

“Miss... Miss Wanwan!” Surprise filled Xu Yi’s face when he saw the visitor.

“Miss Wanwan, why are you here?”

“I’m not allowed to be here?” Ye Wanwan raised her brows.

“You can. Of course you can. It’s just... Why did you... why did you come inside by scaling a wall?”

“It’ll be your Ninth Master’s birthday when it’s 12! I want to give him a surprise!”

“Tomorrow’s Ninth Master’s birthday?”

Si Yehan really never celebrated his birthday, so even Xu Yi had no clue about the exact date of Si Yehan’s birthday.

2443 Birthday Surprise 3

“Steward Xu, enough talking. I don’t have time; I’m going to go now!” Ye Wanwan shouted.

“Alright, Miss Wanwan, but wait—Ninth Master probably isn’t in his bedroom right now. Go to the loft on the top floor and take a look there!” Xu Yi said.

Ye Wanwan paused. “The loft?”

Xu Yi nodded. “Yes, after coming back to Jin Garden, he went to the loft by himself. I heard Ninth Master isn’t in a good mood on this day every year...”

Ye Wanwan furrowed her brows. “OK, got it!”

Ye Wanwan glanced at the time on her phone and rushed to the loft.

There were 10 minutes left.

Ye Wanwan sprinted to the top floor in one go before bursting through the door to the loft.

“Ah-Jiu!”

Ye Wanwan called softly, but the loft was silent without a sound.

“Ah-Jiu...?”

What’s going on? He doesn’t seem to be here...

Did he leave already?

After calling a few more times, Ye Wanwan still didn’t hear anyone, so she could only check elsewhere.

Because she wanted to give him a surprise, she moved carefully and as quietly as possible. She could only covertly search room after room.

In the end, she couldn’t find him anywhere. He wasn’t in the loft, the study, or the bedroom.

D*mn! Where the heck did he go?

Ye Wanwan watched the clock drop down to three minutes before midnight and spun around anxiously.

Her birthday surprise!!! Was it going to be aborted prematurely just like this?

Three minutes...

Two minutes...

Ye Wanwan was standing in front of the bedroom, about to look elsewhere, when her ears twitched and heard some shuffling from the bedroom.

Eh?

Ye Wanwan opened the bedroom door immediately. The noise seemed to have come from the bathroom.

D*mn! She was in too big a hurry earlier and only looked outside, not expecting him to be in the bathroom.

Sh*t! I only have one minute left!!!

Ye Wanwan had no presence of mind for anything else and launched toward the bathroom like a rocket, kicking open the door without a word.

BANG!

The door slammed against the wall, shaking from the impact.

And so, with the man's stunned gaze on her, Ye Wanwan leaped toward him, maintaining her bullet speed...

Si Yehan appeared to have just finished showering. His hair was wet and he still wasn't dressed with only a white towel tied around his waist.

"Wanwan?" Si Yehan's hands stayed poised inches from his hair with a towel in them, in the middle of drying his hair. He didn't expect Ye Wanwan to suddenly appear at all, staggering a step back when she barreled into her.

Si Yehan immediately extended his arms to stabilize her and prevent her from falling. His expression was solemn as he asked, "Why did you come here? Did something happen?"

Ye Wanwan ignored Si Yehan's inquiries and hastily made a shushing noise, signaling him to be quiet before peering down at her phone. She counted down, "Nine, eight, seven, six..."

Five...

Four...

Three...

As Ye Wanwan counted, she scrambled to pull out a slender sparkler from her pocket and lit it with a lighter before turning off the bathroom light with a pah...

DONG!

Downstairs, the clock resounded as it struck midnight.

At the same time... Sizzle!

The sparkler ignited and the faint but brilliant sparks illuminated the small bathroom, casting a glow on the girl's flushed, panting face as well as her mesmerizingly enchanting eyes.

"Si Yehan..."

The girl raised her sparkler as she stood on tip-toe and kissed the man on the lips. Her sweet and glutinous voice, accompanied by the sound of the fireworks and the chiming clock, rang next to his ears. "Happy birthday..."

2444 Birthday Surprise 4

“Si Yehan...”

“Happy birthday...”

Si Yehan felt as if there was a blazing flame dashing toward him along with the girl and it slammed into his heart.

BANG!

Outside the window, a ball of light started small and rose in the night sky before exploding into a bright and resplendent flower, illuminating the entire sky.

From the small window in the bathroom, Ye Wanwan faintly saw the fireworks outside and turned euphoric. Ye Mufan finally didn't let her down for once!

“Baby, come here, come here!” Ye Wanwan eagerly dragged Si Yehan to the balcony outside the bedroom.

The second the balcony door opened, fireworks burst in front of their eyes, sprawling across the sky.

Ye Wanwan looked at the fireworks in the sky while waving her sparklers and lamenting, “Sigh, I know this birthday celebration is a bit tacky, but I was pressed for time, so it was all I could do!”

Si Yehan looked at the girl in front of him, a myriad of emotions billowing in his chest. His voice was low and hoarse as he asked, “How did you know...?”

“I had Baby Tangtang ask Director Yin! Oh right, Xu Yi told me you were in the loft and also said you're typically in a bad mood at this time every year, so how come today...”

When Ye Wanwan charged into the bathroom, Si Yehan was showering and didn't appear to have any traces of sadness on his face, so Ye Wanwan couldn't help but find it odd.

Si Yehan silently looked at the girl before replying, “Xu Yi's right. My mood isn't too good every year at this time, but this

year is different.”

“This year is different?”

“Mm, I’m in a very good mood this year.”

Ye Wanwan grinned. “Is it because we’re about to get married?”

Si Yehan didn’t deny it and leaned down to kiss her on the lips. “Yes, it’s because we’re about to get married.”

Ye Wanwan enigmatically pulled two little booklets out of her pocket. “Then you’ll definitely like my birthday present!”

Si Yehan looked at the two household registration booklets she was holding, his unfathomable eyes overflowing with a brilliant light and vibrant colors. “This is...”

“It’s our household registration booklets! We’ll go and get our marriage license first thing tomorrow morning!” Ye Wanwan paused a moment before continuing: “Oh right, I’ve taken care of our marriage license in the Independent State already. We originally needed to go in person, but I asked Master to open the back door for us, so everything is taken care of!”

At the same time, Yi Lingjun, who was far away in the Independent State, thought: Ha ha, I’ve always abided by the principle of acting upright and honest as the president of the Arbitration Council. This is the first time I’ve opened the back door for someone, and it was to help my little disciple obtain a marriage license!

Wasn’t this using a sledgehammer to crack a nut?!

He was so powerful, so he should’ve at least pulled something big!

But what could he do? A “Dad” from his little disciple and he’d help her do anything she wanted!

Back in China, Ye Wanwan clicked open the photo album on her phone as she spoke and pulled up the photo of the marriage license that Yi Lingjun sent her. “Look!”

The marriage license in the Independent State was also a red booklet. Gold-foiled letters were printed inside and the photo

featured was one that she picked from her array of photos with Si Yehan.

“Hehe, do you like your birthday this year? I know you don’t like to celebrate your birthday, but I made the decision to help you celebrate without asking you. You aren’t angry, right?” Ye Wanwan asked nervously.

“I like it...” The man leaned down again and fiercely kissed her lips.

How could he dislike it?

He’d always viewed the day he was born as a day of misfortune and calamity.

Now though, he’d never been as glad as this moment that he was brought into this world and was bestowed the chance to meet her.

2445 Announce it to the world

The next day, Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan went to the civil administration office early in the morning to obtain their marriage certificate.

After obtaining the license, the first thing Ye Wanwan did was: Announce it to the world.

“Baby, come here! Take a picture with me!” Ye Wanwan pulled Si Yehan toward her. She used the festive red backdrop that was the civil administration office and took a photo with him.

Then Ye Wanwan clicked open her friend circle and also took a photo of their marriage certificate before posting it along with the photo of her and Si Yehan. She paired it with the description:

[I’ve traveled to many places and seen many sights, but no matter how far mountains and rivers stretch or how much flowers bloom like a piece of brocade, they aren’t as good-looking as you.]

...

Ye Wanwan posted this using her main WeChat account which had many friends, including people from both China and the Independent State.

As soon as this status was posted, regardless of whether they were from China or the Independent State, her entire friend circle exploded.

Gong Xu truly deserved the title of Gossip Prince. He successfully managed to be the first one to leave a comment.

Due to being too emotional, he lost all ability to speak and could only drop a countless amount of exclamation marks.

And then, Gong Xu immediately screenshotted this status and sent it to their company WeChat group chat.

[Gong Xu: Sh*t! Who can tell me what's going on?! My Brother Ye actually got married!!!!!!!!!!]

This message and friend circle screenshot from Gong Xu successfully forced all of the lurkers in the group out of silence.

[Luo Chen: ...]

[Fei Yang: D*mn, what the heck is this? Where did you this photo? You PS'ed it right?]

[Gong Xu: PS my a**! Brother Ye just posted this on her friend circle! Take a look yourself!]

[Fei Yang: I've returned! It's true!!!]

[Jiang Yanran: Wow, Wanwan actually got her certificate with President Si! Congratulations, congratulations!]

[Han Xianyu: Ye Bai's location tag is Imperial City. When did she come back?]

[Gong Xu: I'm! Going to! Socially! Withdraw!!! I actually had no idea when Brother came back! And I only found out Brother Ye got married from her friend circle! Am I really not Brother Ye's most beloved little darling anymore?!]

[Luo Chen: When were you ever?]

[Gong Xu: D*mn! Do you want to fight, Luo Chen?! What time is this? Why are you still fighting with me?! Brother Ye has been stolen, wahhh!]

Upon seeing the chaos in the group chat, Ye Mufan finally appeared late to the scene.

[Ye Mufan: Calm down...]

[Gong Xu: How could I be calm?! Say, CEO Ye, aren't you too awful? You must've known already, right? Why didn't you tell us earlier?]

[Fei Yang: That's right! CEO Ye, it's your bad for causing us to be stuffed a mouthful of dog food so unexpectedly! I wasn't

prepared at all!]

[Ye Mufan: (snort.jpg reaction) Heh, you've eaten this little bit of dog food. Is it a big deal? Because today is Si Yehan's birthday, she insisted on preparing a birthday surprise for her man at midnight last night, so she ordered me to drive her across half of the Imperial City. Not only did she steal household registration booklets, but she also went searching for fireworks all over the city! After that was done, I had to go to the lakeside and endure the chilly wind in the middle of the night to help her release fireworks and make it romantic. What? You've only seen a status update yet you feel wronged? Huh?]

[Gong Xu: Ahem, um... It looks like you're the more tragic one, CEO Ye, haha...]

[Fei Yang: +10086. CEO Ye is more tragic...]

[Jiang Yanran: Brother Mufan, you've suffered...]

If they had dog food scattered over their faces, then Ye Mufan was probably directly sitting on a mountain of dog food...

2446 Abandon a harem of 3,000

When Ye Wanwan's post was published in her WeChat friend circle, the people in the Independent State also saw it naturally.

The first person to notice it was Big Dipper.

Big Dipper's eyes shot open. "D*mn! Sis Feng and Lord Asura got their marriage certificates in China! Are they at rocket speed? Isn't this too fast?!"

First Elder, Third Elder, and Seven Star turned to Big Dipper at once.

First Elder asked, "What, what? The President received her marriage certificate with Lord Asura?"

Third Elder exclaimed, "Are you for real? The President actually got married?!"

Fu Mingxi darted over and grabbed Big Dipper by the collar. "What nonsense are you spouting?! That's impossible! With the President's personality, even if she liked Lord Asura, she absolutely wouldn't get married to him!"

Big Dipper shrugged. "There's no use shouting at me? You'll see when you look at Sis Feng's friend circle. Of course, I personally advise you not to look at it..."

There was no way Fu Mingxi wouldn't look. He pulled out his phone and clicked open Ye Wanwan's friend circle and instantly saw Ye Wanwan's PDA-filled status.

The attached photos were a photo of the bright red marriage certificate and a selfie of the couple. In the photo, Lord Asura's stunningly bewitching face didn't need additional mentioning, and a bright and beautiful smile was spread across their own president's face.

Fu Mingxi had always known his president was beautiful, but this was his first time realizing she could be this beautiful...

That smile was warm and brilliant, as though she was an angel whose wings were spread behind her.

When Fu Mingxi managed to finally pull away from the photo, he noticed the description that his president wrote:

[I've traveled to many places and seen many sights, but no matter how far mountains and river stretch or how much flowers bloom like a piece of brocade, they aren't as good-looking as you.]

Big Dipper saw Fu Mingxi's face draining of color and his figure swayed as if about to fall. He exasperatedly said, "I told you to not look at it?! Who can tolerate this PDA-filled dog food? I want to die from how stuffed I feel!"

Fu Mingxi tightly clutched his phone. "Impossible. This is impossible. The President clearly said her wish was..."

"The starry universe?" Big Dipper reflexively finished for the other man.

Fu Mingxi glared at him. "It's a harem of 3,000!!!"

"Eh... That does sound like something our Sis Feng would say..." Big Dipper mumbled.

First Elder and Third Elder also nodded in agreement.

First Elder mused, "As I said, Sir Lord Asura is very good!"

Third Elder also added, "Exactly! He was actually crafty enough to make our president abandon her harem of 3,000 and willingly jump into the grave of marriage!"

As Fu Mingxi listened to their discussion, his face turned livid.

Big Dipper clapped Fu Mingxi on the shoulder and comforted him. "Ah, Xiao Ming, you should give up. Don't tell me you don't understand what Sis Feng meant by posting those words?"

Fu Mingxi's face was chilly. "What did she mean?"

Big Dipper murmured, “No matter how far mountains and rivers stretch or how much flowers bloom like a piece of brocade, they aren’t as good-looking as you’. Isn’t that the same as saying wildflowers aren’t as fragrant as her flower at home? Sis Feng is clearly telling you she currently only likes this one flower she has at home and all the flowers outside don’t enter her sight!”

Fu Mingxi was dumbfounded for a moment before bursting into tears and he sobbed, unwilling to give up so easily. “But wait, the President posted a marriage certificate from China, not the Independent State! That’s right, a marriage certificate from China doesn’t mean anything!”

As soon as Fu Mingxi said that, he saw Big Dipper refreshing the page with his finger and said, “Oh my, Sis Feng posted a second identical status... Oh wait, there’s a third photo this time. Hm? That looks like a marriage certificate from the Independent State?”

Fu Mingxi: “...!!!”

2447 Wedding tour?!

Ye Wanwan allowed everyone to see her first friend circle update but limited the second status to only her friends from the Independent State.

After posting this, Si Yehan also followed her lead and posted two updates cooperatively.

His photos were identical to what Ye Wanwan posted, but the description he posted was: [You're the flowers, you're the rivers, you're the mountains—you're my whole world.]

If Ye Wanwan's affectionate words sent people's teeth aching from the sweetness, then Si Yehan's post almost sent people's eyes popping out from shock.

Others didn't dare to say anything, but Jiang Lihen directly left a comment on his post and complained: [Sh*t! My wretched eyes! What kind of sin did I commit to have to see this post?!]

His words echoed everyone's opinion.

Xie Qianchuan looked surprised. "I didn't expect them to really get married!"

Jiang Lihen pursed his lips. "They're planning to get married in China? I absolutely won't go!"

"I'm not sure," Xie Qianchuan replied.

As the duo spoke, they were pulled into a group chat almost simultaneously.

The person who added them was Ye Wanwan, but they weren't the only ones pulled into the group chat. There were also many leaders and members of various groups and factions in the Independent State.

After adding everyone, Ye Wanwan @everyone and specially notated all of her aliases.

After all the different commotions she caused in the Independent State, she'd basically exposed all of her aliases

and didn't need to be secretive about them. She also didn't need to conceal her identities over in China.

Hence, Ye Wanwan's current name was "Ye Wanwan+Ye Bai+Bai Feng+Worriless Nie+Yi Yunmo."

[Ye Wanwan+Ye Bai+Bai Feng+Worriless Nie+Yi Yunmo: My baby and I are getting married this month! Come to China to attend the wedding banquet, everyone! Remember to give me your gift money! It's fine if you don't have cash; you can transfer some to me too!]

[Jiang Lihen: ...]

[Xie Qianchuan: ...]

[Shen Tianchen: ...]

Ye Wanwan's eye-grabbing nickname was seriously too flabbergasting! And her mention of gift money also rendered people speechless.

For a moment, all the leaders in the group didn't know where to start b*tching, causing the chat to descend into a strange silence.

In the end, it was still Jiang Lihen who spoke first.

[Jiang Lihen: D*mn, your wedding is so far away! Who'd have the time to run all the way over there?!]

Wouldn't they be spending money to ask for torture?!

Jiang Lihen's words echoed everyone's thoughts again.

[Ye Wanwan+Ye Bai+Bai Feng+Worriless Nie+Yi Yunmo: Oh, that's fine too. If it's not convenient for you guys to come, I can just hold 12 weddings in the Independent State! My baby and I can hold a wedding with every single one of our identities! Let me count, 12 weddings might not be enough...]

Jiang Lihen was stunned. [D*mn, are you freaking kidding me? I've only heard of concert tours! This is my first time hearing about a wedding tour! Si Yehan, why don't you control your wife?!]

[Si Yehan: 12 weddings isn't suitable.]

[Jiang Lihen: See! You're delusional!]

[Si Yehan: We can round it to a whole number.]

[Jiang Lihen: Whole number...?]

[Si Yehan: 100 weddings.]

All the leaders: ...

[Jiang Lihen: Are you freaking trying to get rich from your weddings and overtake the Shen family???

[Ye Wanwan+Ye Bai+Bai Feng+Worriless Nie+Yi Yunmo:
Wow, baby, you're too clever! Why didn't I think of such a
good way to make money?]

[Jiang Lihen: ...]

2448 Wedding Sidelight 1

In the end, everyone in the group obediently started saying congratulations and ardently insisting the couple didn't need to go through the trouble of holding so many weddings. They'd definitely go to China to attend their wedding and bring their gift money.

What followed was a myriad of preparations for the wedding.

Ye Wanwan was being given away from the Golden Seas mansion in China. She ordered two wedding outfits for the day of the wedding: a red qipao and a white wedding dress.

Her bridesmaids were Jiang Yanran, Autumn Water, Haitang, and Medusa while the groomsmen were Lin Que, Jiang Lihen, Xie Qianchuan, and Xie Zhezhi.

At Golden Seas:

At first light, the bridesmaids accompanied Ye Wanwan to get dressed and have her makeup done. It wasn't long before it was time for the bride to be escorted to the wedding, and the outside of the house bustled with noise and excitement.

Autumn Water turned to look outside the window. "Ahem, are you sure there really won't be a problem inviting all those guys from the Independent State to China, Xiao Feng?"

Ye Wanwan raised her brows. "What problem would there be?"

Autumn Water exasperatedly replied, "Please, Xiao Fengfeng, every single one of those guys have such great martial strength and can overturn the world in China. You've placed so many of them together—who could suppress them if they started making a scene?"

Ye Wanwan mumbled, "They probably won't, right?"

Haitang chuckled. "I'm afraid it won't be so easy for Lord Asura to walk through the door today..."

Medusa winked and teased, “My little junior sister isn’t so easy to marry, so this is just a type of test! Oh right, isn’t there also a custom of hiding the bride’s shoes in China?”

Jiang Yanran hastily said, “That’s right, that’s right! I was just wondering what would be a good place to hide them!”

Haitang mischievously suggested, “I have an idea! I guarantee the groom and his men absolutely won’t find it! I’ve done my homework!”

Jiang Yanran asked curiously, “Where are you putting it?”

Haitang pulled her skirt to the side. “I’m tying it to my thigh! Who will freaking find it now?”

Autumn Water broke into guffaws. “Hahahahaha, you’re too cunning! Give me the other one! I’ll tie it to myself!”

Jiang Yanran was amazed from the sidelines. “Who... who will freaking find that?!”

Ye Wanwan glowered at her own bridesmaids. “Tell me the truth! Do you two not want me to get married at all?”

At the same time, outside the mansion’s gates:

Si Yehan’s escort motorcade had arrived.

Si Yehan wore a custom-made, haute-couture suit with a groom’s boutonniere attached to his lapel. The door opened and his slender leg stretched out of the car.

The second he stepped out and appeared in front of the gates, the people crowded there reflexively gasped.

“F*ck! Aren’t Lord Asura’s looks a bit heaven-defying today?!”

“He’s seriously... stunningly captivating, tsk tsk...”

“No wonder our president is under tight reins!”

“Hey, quiet! Don’t forget our job!”

“That’s right, that’s right! We have an important mission today!”

...

And so, a group of people decisively blocked the front gates.

Next to Si Yehan, Lin Que saw the dense group and gulped. “Ninth Brother, why do I suddenly have an ominous feeling?”

The reality proved that Lin Que’s premonition was fairly accurate.

After Si Yehan led his groomsmen out of the cars, what they faced was:

Ye Mufan: “You’ll have to pass me before you can marry my sister!”

Gong Xu aggressively led Luo Chen, Han Xianyu, Fei Yang, Chu Feng, and the others. “You’ll have to pass us before you can marry my Brother Ye!”

Big Dipper led Second Elder, Fu Mingxi, First Elder, Second Elder, Third Elder, and co. “You’ll have to pass us before you can marry our president!”

Shen Tianchen led a group of mercenary experts he hired. “You’ll have to defeat my people before you can marry my Goddess Woriless!”

Yi Lingjun smiled faintly. “Sigh, I only have one precious daughter, after all, so you’ll have to undergo some tests before you can marry my daughter!”

Si Yehan: “...”

Xie Zhezhi looked at Si Yehan’s gradually darkening face and chuckled aloud. “Ah-Jiu, doesn’t your wife... have a few too many identities?”

Jiang Lihen’s lips twitched. “Just a few too many? It’s probably 100 times more difficult for him to get married this time compared to other people. I must’ve committed some wretched sin to have agreed to be your groomsmen!”

Xie Qianchuan sighed. “What should we do now? They have the advantage in numbers; I don’t think we can defeat them...”

2449 Wedding Sidelight 2

Inside the house, Ye Wanwan, who was secretly watching through the slit in the door, was stupefied.

“D*mn! Are they for real?! They’re freaking trying to make trouble!”

She never ever expected that having so many aliases would lead to such a wretched situation...

...

Si Yehan’s face was devoid of any expression as he looked at the mass of people in front of him.

“Ninth Brother... This is too... I don’t think they plan to allow you and Ninth Sister to get married at all!” Lin Que grumbled. Who could resist this?

“Um... Does that mean I don’t have to give my gift money?” Jiang Lihen chuckled.

As soon as Jiang Lihen said that, he felt Si Yehan’s unfriendly gaze on him.

Jiang Lihen laughed awkwardly. “I’m just joking. I’ll definitely give my gift money.”

“Say, the top priority right now is to think about how we should properly protect the groom and escort him inside!” Lin Que said to the other groomsmen.

“Escort him inside...”

“How? There are so many people guarding the door. It looks pretty hard.”

“If we really can’t, we’ll fight our way inside.”

“You go. We’ll cheer for you back here.”

...

While Si Yehan and his group were blocked, a person suddenly walked out of the house.

Nameless Nie passed through all the people blocking the gates and stopped next to Si Yehan.

“You’ll have to pass me before you can stop my brother-in-law today!”

When everyone saw Nameless Nie actually joining Si Yehan’s side, their eyes shot open.

“D*mn! Nameless Nie!”

“What is he doing?”

Shen Tianchen protested, “Hey, hey, Nameless Nie, isn’t there something off here? You’re part of the bride’s family! You should be standing on the bride’s side!”

Si Yehan nodded at the newcomer and greeted him, “Eldest Brother.”

A jubilant grin spread across Nameless Nie’s face upon hearing that. “Don’t worry, Brother-In-Law. No one can stop you with me here today.”

Lin Que, Xie Zhezhi, Jiang Lihen, and Xie Qianchuan: “...”

No wonder you were so calm! You had a contingency plan!

Lin Que clicked his tongue. “You’re impressive, Ninth Brother!”

The guards at the door instantly became chagrined when they heard Nameless Nie. They couldn’t stop them? The mere groom and groomsmen weren’t enough to even be an appetizer, alright?!

“Fine! Just try if you’re so capable! If we allow you to enter that easily, I’ll write my name backward!” Ye Mufan snorted.

“That’s right! It won’t be so easy for you to enter!” Big Dipper agreed.

“Don’t even think about entering...”

On Si Yehan’s side, Lin Que was instantly riled up. “I have a hot temper! Do you think you’re so scary because you have a lot of people? Let’s fight then! I refuse to believe we can’t escort the groom inside!”

Nameless Nie glanced at Lin Que. “Why do we need to fight for no reason?”

Lin Que was dumbfounded. “How would we enter other than fighting? Do you think they’d let us through that easily? You’re delusional...”

Nameless Nie sighed softly. “Have you heard of a saying?”

“What saying?” Lin Que reflexively replied.

Nameless Nie didn’t answer Lin Que and marched forward instead. His expression was grave as he reached inside his jacket.

“What’s he doing... He isn’t pulling out a gun, right... That’s going too far, too far...” Lin Que jolted in fright. Nameless Nie was acting like he was about to fight to the death with someone!

Nameless Nie stopped in front of Ye Mufan, Big Dipper, and the others, his eyes sweeping over the people.

Then, in front of everyone, Nameless Nie pulled out a stack of red envelopes and smiled faintly, “Everyone, please extend me a courtesy.”

2450 Wedding Sidelight 3

Big Dipper opened the red envelopes. When he saw the five-dollar and two-dollar notes, the corner of his lips twitched.

Gong Xu's expression also contorted while Ye Mufan was dumbfounded.

Wasn't... wasn't he looking down on them too freaking much?!

Out of all these red envelopes, the largest amount was a five-dollar bill while the smallest amount was a one-dollar bill! Plus, one-dollar bills filled at least 90% of the red envelopes!

There were so many red envelopes, but the amount probably didn't even add up to \$200 when you combined them!

"Are you... serious?" Ye Mufan subconsciously blurted out as he clutched the one-dollar bill in his hand.

"Consider this money as my admission fee. Extend us a courtesy," Nameless Nie genially said.

"Extend a courtesy your a**! At least show some sincerity! It doesn't have to be a lot, but at least put \$100 in each red envelope! You put one dollar inside yet you want us to show you some courtesy...?" Ye Mufan felt a fire burning in his chest.

Was he really Wanwan's freaking biological brother?!

"100?"

Nameless Nie furrowed her brows. "If each red envelope had \$100, how much money would I need to fill so many red envelopes? It'd be quicker if you went and robbed someone."

Lin Que: "..."

Jiang Lihen: "..."

Si Yehan: "..."

Everyone: "..."

“D*mn! SpongeBob SquarePants!”

What SpongeBob SquarePants?

Big Dipper dumbfoundedly turned to a spot behind the groomsmen.

There was really a giant SpongeBob SquarePants walking toward them.

“Huh?” Lin Que stared at the SpongeBob SquarePants that had reached him. What the heck was this?

“Who are you?” Jiang Lihen inquired curiously.

Why would someone wear a SpongeBob SquarePants costume and come to this place?

“Me.”

An apathetic voice was heard from inside the SpongeBob SquarePants costume.

When Lin Que heard this extremely distinctive voice, he shuddered. This was... Piece of Sh*t’s voice?!

“Brother Yi, why did you show up here in this outfit?” Jiang Lihen couldn’t understand why the other man was wearing this.

“Mn... I went to the wedding location,” Yi Shuihan replied.

“But... The wedding hasn’t started yet, right...?” Lin Que’s lips twitched.

“I went early,” Yi Shuihan said.

“In other words... you went to the wrong location, right?”

“Mm,” Yi Shuihan answered.

Everyone: “...”

Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan’s wedding was taking place at an animation themed park, which they had reserved completely. Every wedding guest had to wear a cartoon-themed costume to enter.

It appeared Yi Shuihan mistook the time, went to the wedding venue early and wore this costume.

“Why didn’t you take it off?” Jiang Lihen asked.

“SpongeBob SquarePants” contemplated for a moment before replying, “Troublesome.”

Jiang Lihen: “...” It was rather troublesome.

“Lil Sh*t, you came here at the perfect time! Hurry up and take care of these people. They won’t let us enter,” Nameless Nie shouted at SpongeBob SquarePants.

“You think a mere SpongeBob SquarePants will be enough?!”

“Even if it’s Yi Shuihan, we aren’t afraid of him in such a giant costume! Why are you looking at me? I dare you to fight us in that costume!” Big Dipper mocked.

Immediately, First Elder, Third Elder, Seven Star, and the other people tacitly took a step back and ostracized Big Dipper completely.

Big Dipper: “...”

“Calm down, all of you! Isn’t that enough? I’ll bite whoever dares to stop my wedding today to death!”

At this moment, Ye Wanwan charged outside in her wedding dress while holding her skirt up.

“D*mn... Since when did brides come dashing out themselves?” Ye Mufan was dumbstruck. This didn’t match the storyline!

“Sigh, no matter how difficult the test is, it can’t withstand a vehement wish to marry.” Yi Lingjun shook his head.

...

2451 Wedding Sidelight 4

The girl bounded toward him like a ball of sun, illuminating the entire world in his eyes.

Si Yehan's eyes were brimming with a gentle warmth, but when his gaze landed on her bare feet, his brows furrowed. "Why aren't you wearing shoes?"

He hastily leaned over and picked up the girl.

Closely following behind Ye Wanwan were Haitang and Autumn Water's panting voices as each carried a shoe.

Autumn Water: "Sh*t! How could you run out here like this?! What kind of bride acts like this?"

Haitang: "Why can't you follow the formula?"

"If I followed the formula, would I still get married? Do you know how difficult it was for me to abdu—ahem, be able to get married to my baby?"

Ye Wanwan was being carried in Si Yehan's arms, but she didn't forget to relay her commands. "Why are you standing there? Make way!"

"Yes... Yes... Sis Feng..." Big Dipper hastily scrambled to lay out the red carpet.

Gong Xu cowered as soon as he saw Ye Wanwan and also miserably carried the flower basket and scattered rose petals for her.

Shen Tianchen and his mercenaries also feebly shrunk to the back...

In the end, due to direct interference from the bride, Si Yehan successfully entered the house.

...

After carrying out ceremonial components of the wedding, everyone headed to the wedding venue.

“There’s someone else getting married inside today,” Yi
“SpongeBob SquarePants” Shuihan said.

“What? Didn’t we book the whole venue?” Ye Mufan was surprised.

“I don’t know,” Yi Shuihan replied.

When they reached the theme park, the reception staff hastily came out.

“What’s going on? Didn’t we book the whole venue? There’s someone else getting married inside?” Gong Xu was very unhappy.

The manager was soaked with sweat. He was well aware of this group’s background, and they did reserve the whole park...

However, they had no choice. There was also another fearsome figure getting married today, and their background was also powerful. The staff didn’t dare to provoke either of them...

“Sorry, I’m truly sorry, but we had no choice. How about this—all fees will be on the house today... Can you please compromise a little...?” the manager asked.

“On the house...? Do you think I don’t have that money?!” Ye Mufan was instantly enraged. This wasn’t a matter of money!

“Um, can I ask how much the fees will be?” Nameless Nie instantly asked.

After learning the amount, Nameless Nie looked at Ye Mufan and the others. “It’s such a large venue! There’s enough room for 20 couples to get married, so why are you acting so unreasonable?”

Ye Mufan “...” So it’s my fault, huh?

“Return the money to my account later. Does that work?” Nameless Nie suggested to the manager in good humor.

“Yes yes yes! That’s not a problem at all!” The manager nodded vehemently.

...

“Hurry and enter the park!”

Nameless Nie waved his hand and acted like a leader.

Everyone could only follow Nameless Nie inside the wedding venue and changed into the stuffed costumes waiting for them.

Originally, there would've been enough costumes, but since there was another group using some, there weren't enough costumes remaining.

Ye Wanwan's eyes turned. She didn't forcefully demand the other guests to wear costumes but made everyone from the Independent State change into the stuffed costumes so that they wouldn't cause any trouble at the wedding venue. They could at least get a break with the costumes on.

Tut tut, she was seriously too clever! This was the best method to seal someone's martial strength!

Ye Wanwan herself changed into a Little Red Riding Hood outfit while Si Yehan was outfitted as the Big Bad Wolf.

And so, a majestic parade of dolls entered the castle.

2452 Wedding Sidelight 5

However, as soon as everyone entered the castle, they were dumbfounded. It was packed with people and a couple appeared to be getting married inside. The groom was a “Garfield” while the bride was an extremely beautiful girl dressed as a princess.

Aside from the Garfield groom and princess bride, the other wedding guests were all wearing costumes. There was Mickey Mouse... Donald Duck... as well as some weird unrecognizable characters...

“Huh, SpongeBob SquarePants?! It’s you again?! Are you here to cause trouble again?!”

“Donald Duck” stared at “SpongeBob SquarePants” Yi Shuihan and broke into shouts.

Ye Wanwan was dumbfounded. What happened?

“Earlier... Yi Shuihan remembered the time wrong and came here first... I’m guessing... he caused havoc at their wedding...” Lin Que said as he slid to Ye Wanwan’s side.

Ye Wanwan facepalmed. What kind of sin did she commit?!

If she’d known, she shouldn’t have asked Tangtang to invite him.

“But it’s not our fault! We reserved this park ahead of time, but they insisted on cramming in here too,” “Briar[1]” Jiang Lihen said.

“We reserved this place! So we’re already nice for not beating you up when you shamelessly stuffed your way inside!”

“Bramble[2]” Big Dipper ridiculed them.

“What...? Beat us up?” The Garfield groom snorted.

“What? You’re unhappy? You better stifle it even if you’re unhappy! If there wasn’t a wedding today, I would’ve killed you with a punch!” shouted “Bramble.”

Ye Wanwan was exasperated. While that was true... they didn't pay a single cent! Didn't the manager already say that? They were going to return the money to Nameless Nie, so right now, they were actually using the other group's venue.

"Hmph. Today was originally going to be a good day, but this is so irritating."

The Garfield groom had just said that when everyone shockingly watched Garfield stop in front of Bramble (Big Dipper) extremely fast and kick Big Dipper, not giving the other man any time to react.

"That's to teach you a lesson," Garfield said.

"Misunderstanding, it's all a misunderstanding..." Ye Wanwan quickly said.

Today's my big day, alright? Can't they take a break?!

They were dressed like this already but still insisted on fighting!

"Hm, I remember you. Didn't we meet at KFC?" Garfield asked, turning to Ye Wanwan.

Ye Wanwan was startled. When she first came to China with Big Dipper, Seven Star, and Third Elder, they did go eat at KFC once.

Ye Wanwan suddenly remembered that man who was absurdly powerful and more beautiful than a woman...

She also vaguely remembered the man had a girl with him and the girl called him God or something like that...

"You freaking dare to hit me?! I'm gonna kill you!"

Bramble Big Dipper immediately dashed toward Garfield and swung a punch at him.

However, a second later, Bramble was struck back by Garfield with a single move again.

"Why are you standing around? Help me hit him!" Bramble Big Dipper screamed.

Upon hearing that, all the Fearless Alliance experts charged toward Garfield in their cartoon costumes.

What surprised Ye Wanwan was that the Fearless Alliance experts, including the elders, couldn't even get near Garfield and were all sent flying back a few seconds later.

How could this man be so powerful...?

All these people were experts from the Fearless Alliance, yet they turned into soggy pieces of paper in front of him?

“Hm, SpongeBob SquarePants! Get your ass over here and accept your death!” Garfield hooked his pointer finger toward SpongeBob SquarePants Yi Shuihan.

[1] Briar is the first bear brother from the animation Boonie Bears

[2] Bramble is the second bear brother from the animation Boonie Bears

2453 Wedding Sidelight 2

“You’re provoking Piece of Sh*t?”

Everyone couldn’t help but laugh in ridicule. This person was probably suicidal.

SpongeBob SquarePants immediately walked forward.

All the guests watched as Garfield and SpongeBob SquarePants got entangled together.

From Garfield’s side, Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse, and some others all started fighting with Big Dipper, Jiang Lihen, and the others. The scene was rather ugly as a myriad of experts in cartoon costumes had started brawling with each other in utter disarray. Some experts accidentally tumbled to the ground and continued to attack their opponents while rolling around.

Ye Wanwan didn’t know whether to cry or laugh as she watched this.

Bam!

A giant noise sent Ye Wanwan reeling back to reality.

Ye Wanwan watched incredulously as SpongeBob SquarePants Yi Shuihan was forced to retreat several steps.

This was the first time in Ye Wanwan’s life that she saw Yi Shuihan ending up disadvantaged.

“Lil Sh*t, you aren’t doing so hot!” Patrick Star Nameless Nie pointed at Yi Shuihan and laughed.

“Heh, as if you’re doing any better.” Garfield glanced at Patrick Star and swung his soft and fluffy cat paw toward Patrick Star.

“Are you bullying me for not having any hands?!” Nameless Nie seemed to also be riled up after being forced several steps back too.

Ye Wanwan stared closer. It was exactly as he said... The Patrick Star costume really didn’t have any hands. He was just

a pink starfish...

“I’ll beat you to death!”

“Patrick Star” mercilessly headed toward Garfield headfirst.

However, Garfield caught Patrick Star’s head.

Seeing this, “SpongeBob SquarePants” dashed forward and barreled Garfield several steps back.

Soon, SpongeBob SquarePants Yi Shuihan, Patrick Star Nameless Nie, and the Garfield groom rolled into a chaotic scuffle.

“D*mn it... Lil Sh*t, you hit me!”

“I couldn’t see...” SpongeBob SquarePants Yi Shuihan said.

“Hit that Garfield’s head... EH... Why are you hitting my head?! He has a big head, and I have a small head... Are you blind?!”

“Huh? I’m too fat...” Garfield said.

“I don’t have hands!” Patrick Star Nameless Nie said.

“I couldn’t see well...” SpongeBob SquarePants Yi Shuihan said.

Nameless Nie, Yi Shuihan, and Garfield tussled for ages. One would hit the other’s chest and their crotch would be struck in return, resulting in no outcome even after all the fighting.

Instead, it was Bramble Big Dipper and “Donald Duck’s” fight that intensified.

“Eldest Senior Brother! Come and help me! This brat has a lot of helpers!” Donald Duck shouted at Mickey Mouse.

“I’m wearing glasses, so it’s not convenient.” Mickey Mouse heartlessly rejected Donald Duck.

“Eldest Senior Brother, Second Senior Brother... D*mn it, stop fighting! Today’s a joyful day...” a Pikachu shouted.

The speaking Pikachu was a girl and she had an incredibly melodious voice.

“Little Junior Sister, Thunder Bolt! Electrocute this d*mn bear for me!” Donald Duck shouted.

Pikachu yelled, “Do you really freaking think I can release 100,000 Volts?!”

All the dolls present: “...”

The dolls from the Independent State never expected to witness someone this martially strong in China, especially that Garfield. His strength couldn't be described! SpongeBob SquarePants and Patrick Star actually had to team up on him!

2454 Wedding Sidelight 7

“Mommy, I’m scared. Briar’s head was knocked off by Donald Duck...”

Shortly after, a mini version of Pikachu timidly spoke as it grabbed the bigger Pikachu’s tail.

As soon as Pikachu saw the scared mini Pikachu, she was infuriated.

Pikachu patted the little Pikachu on the head before sinking her energy into her dantian and furiously roaring at Garfield. “Stop fighting! If you keep fighting, you don’t have to bother getting married!”

Garfield froze. Instantly, SpongeBob SquarePants grabbed him by the ear and Patrick Star grabbed his nose.

“Mn... I want to get married today. I don’t want to fight... What are you all doing?” Garfield demanded.

“My younger sister is getting married!” Patrick Star Nameless Nie answered.

“My disciple’s mom is getting married,” SpongeBob SquarePants Yi Shuihan replied.

A person, who was actually wearing a bok choy costume, walked over to the big and small Pikachu and shouted, “It’s all a misunderstanding. Everyone, please stop fighting!”

“Enough! Stop fighting!” Ye Wanwan also yelled exasperatedly.

Everyone had no choice but to stop at once.

“You d*mn bear,” Donald Duck cursed at Bramble.

“You d*mn duck!” Bramble Big Dipper also retorted, not to be outdone.

Donald Duck: “...”

Duck? That sounded weird...

Why did he feel like he was the one worse off?

After everyone stopped, Ye Wanwan finally learned the entire story of the matter.

It turned out Yi Shuihan went to the wrong location and thought the princess bride was her while Garfield was Si Yehan.

Then... Not only did he leech food and drinks from them, but he also wrecked their almost concluded wedding and messed up the process, so the other group had to restart...

“Sorry... We’re really sorry. We originally reserved the whole venue... so SpongeBob SquarePants thought we were the only group here.”

Haitang apologized to Pikachu.

“It’s fine. It’s all a misunderstanding, and we were also in the wrong. Hurry on then. Don’t delay yourselves,” Pikachu said.

“Hmph... Handless one and blind one, don’t let me see you again!” Garfield shouted.

The handless Nameless Nie: “D*mn fatso, don’t let me see you again! I’m going to hit you every time I see you!”

The blind Yi Shuihan: “Mm.”

...

After this all-out costume brawl ridiculousness concluded, everyone finally returned to their respective themed castle.

As soon as Ye Wanwan’s group entered their castle, stimulating music started to blast out.

“I walked by myself in the countryside. I’m bringing some sweets for my grandma to taste. She lives somewhere far and remote, so I have to worry if there’s a big bad wolf nearby. When the sun sets over the mountains, I have to hurry home and step into dreamland with my mom.”

“I walked by myself in the countryside. I’m bringing some sweets for my grandma to taste. She lives somewhere far and remote, so I have to worry if there’s a big bad wolf nearby...”

“Sh*t... rock and roll version of Little Red Riding Hood?!”
Lin Que was stunned. “Why does it sound so demonic?!”

“Frigging awesome...” Big Dipper gave a thumbs-up. “How could Sis Feng’s version of Little Red Riding Hood not be demonic? She’s probably a Little Red Riding Hood who carries a backsword on her shoulder while riding a motorcycle and chugging liquor!”

This was a freaking staggering opening!

“Eh, it’s actually nothing. Didn’t you hear it... That Garfield is playing KFC’s theme song at his wedding?”

Everyone: “...”

“Daddy, Mommy, I wish you a joyous marriage and eternal bliss!” a small gray wolf doll said in a childish voice after walking over to Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan.

Ye Wanwan patted the small gray wolf on the head and hugged him. “Thank you, baby. Mommy loves you to death!”

...

2455 Wedding Sidelight 8

Main Story End

“From now on, Tangtang can proudly say he attended his dad and his mom’s wedding.” Ye Mufan chuckled mischievously.

After saying that, Ye Mufan wanted to cry. If he dared to have a child before marrying, his parents would’ve broken his legs eons ago! However, when they learned Wanwan’s child was so old already, not only did they not shout at her, but they even cried from delight and celebrated joyously!

Soon, the rock and roll version of Little Red Riding Hood finished and the solemn Wedding March started playing. Ye Wanwan and Si Yehan, who had switched into a wedding dress and suit respectively, also walked up onto the stage hand in hand and received congratulations all around.

...

When the wedding ceremony was about to conclude, Haitang walked toward Ye Wanwan. “Worriless... It’s time for me to give you an item.”

Ye Wanwan was startled. “What item?”

Haitang pulled out a USB and handed it to Ye Wanwan. “Your marriage still needs congratulations from one person.”

“Who?” Ye Wanwan asked.

“Ji Xiuran,” Haitang replied.

“Ji Xiuran...” Ye Wanwan murmured.

That man still hadn’t appeared to this day.

Ye Wanwan immediately met Si Yehan’s eyes. Si Yehan patted her hair and plugged the USB in.

Under everyone’s watch, the giant screen lit up.

The man appeared to be located inside a warehouse. He was wearing a white shirt with an incredibly familiar and warm

smile hanging on his face.

A mere glance was all it took for Ye Wanwan to recognize the setting as the island that once imprisoned everyone.

“Sister Wanwan, hello.”

When Ye Wanwan heard Ji Xiuran’s form of address for her, she was startled.

Ji Xiuran had always called her Worryless, so why did he call her Wanwan here?

Perhaps because he expected she’d hold her wedding in China, right?

Ye Wanwan kept listening.

Ji Xiuran’s lips turned up. “If I guessed correctly, you’re probably getting married today, right...”

After saying that, the man faced the camera but remained silent for a long time.

“Congratulations on finding your true home. I believe that your other half can guard and protect you for the rest of your life,” the man continued with a smile a moment later.

“I’m very sorry and regretful I might not be able to personally attend your wedding. But thankfully, there’s equipment here that can allow me to leave behind a token to express my congratulations to you.”

“You don’t need to worry about me. In truth, I’ve liked someone for a while. I originally wanted to let her live her life without worries, but unfortunately, I shouldered too many burdens. I couldn’t fulfill my promise to her in the first half of my life... but I’ve decided that I will return to her side in the second half of my life and will never leave or abandon her until death strips me away.”

“The current me has probably left the Independent State to be with her. She likes ordinariness and placidness, free from the conflicts of the world. This is also the life I wish for.”

“Si Yehan, some things are hard-earned. I hope you can treasure it well. If you dare to let down my sister one day, I’ll

turn you into ashes.”

“Wanwan, remember, you must smile no matter what the future holds.”

“Farewell.”

...

Below the stage, Haitang sighed softly.

In the end, Ji Xiuran still wasn't able to let go of his final conviction.

Otherwise, why would he call her Wanwan instead of Worryless in his congratulatory video?

He still couldn't call someone else's bride “Worryless”...

[Main story end]

2456 Side Story: Ji Xiuran 1

[Memory Volume:]

The northern part of the Independent State was nearly devoid of human life.

Standing at a spot was a youth in a snow-white shirt whose long, ink-like hair casually draped to his waist. He resembled a celestial being that belonged in a painting.

“Young Master, there’s news from the southern battlefield.”

A teenager strode toward the youth.

“Mm.” There wasn’t a ripple in the youth’s eyes and there was an almost imperceptible smile hanging from his lips.

“The Ji family achieved an overwhelming victory... on the southern battlefield...” The teenager’s face was brimming with astonishment as he looked at the youth.

He utterly couldn’t imagine how this youth in front of him could command an army and concoct all kinds of brilliant strategies, playing and spinning both of the Ji family’s strong enemy factions in circles. The final stroke of dissension he sowed was practically perfect.

If it weren’t for this youth, the Ji family’s battles would’ve probably lasted at least two more years.

This youth was the eldest son of the Independent State’s Ji family—his name was Ji Xiuran.

When the teenager was Ji Xiuran’s age, he was still wet behind the ears and ignorant about the world’s affairs.

However, Ji Xiuran was exceptional. He possessed an extremely high intellect and profound shrewdness. His martial technique and strategic capabilities had achieved the pinnacle of perfection already.

The youth in front of the teenager...

Was close to being a god...

“Young Master, how should we take care of the Zhou family’s eldest son?”

The youth turned around and surveyed the giant box sitting in the back of the car for a moment.

“Kill him,” Ji Xiuran ordered aloofly.

The teenager was startled.

The Ji family had two mortal enemies: The Zhou family and the Tong family.

Right now, the contents of the box was the eldest son of the Zhou family, whom Ji Xiuran had just captured.

Although the Ji family had won on the southern battlefields, if they killed the Zhou family’s eldest son right now, the Ji family would probably receive ferocious retaliation from the Zhou family. At that point, the Tong family would reap the spoils without doing anything and the gains wouldn’t make up for the Ji family’s losses.

“Young Master, are we really killing him?” the teenager asked hesitantly.

Ji Xiuran was expressionless. “I hired the Tong family’s mercenaries with Ah-Ming’s identity to help me escort this item. The route heads northwest. The Tong family mercenaries won’t suspect anything.”

“What do you mean, Young Master?” The teenager was confused.

“Having been defeated this time, the Zhou family will naturally send a large number of scouts into the northwest front. If the Zhou family discovers their dead eldest son amongst the Tong family’s mercenary team, what would happen?” the youth replied calmly.

The teenager shivered immediately.

The Zhou family and the Tong family... would fight until one perished...

Even if the Tong family wanted to explain, with a seed of doubt planted by Ji Xiuran, the Zhou family wouldn’t believe

the Tong family; they would only believe that it was the Tong family who killed their eldest son.

Moreover, the Ji family had supposedly been preoccupied on the southern battlefield and didn't have the time to attack the Zhou family's eldest son.

“Ah-Ming.”

Ji Xiuran turned to a middle-aged man.

“Stay here and hand this box to the Tong mercenaries and follow behind. Remember, you need to intentionally be detected by the Zhou family's scouts. When the time is right, you can leave,” Ji Xiuran said.

“Understood...” The middle-aged man agreed.

The teenager finally understood his young master's purpose.

This Ah-Ming was a steward of the Tong family who was bribed by Ji Xiuran. Earlier, the teenager was still wondering why Ji Xiuran bribed someone from the Tong family.

Ah-Ming didn't have any status in the Tong family and was merely an ordinary steward. In the teenager's eyes, there was no need to bribe someone like him.

...

The teenager handled the still-unconscious eldest son of the Zhou family inside the box with ease before leaving Ah-Ming and the box behind. He then followed Ji Xiuran and left.

“Young Master, that's brilliant!” Halfway there, the teenager gave Ji Xiuran a thumbs up. “Ah-Ming is a junior steward in the Tong family and isn't connected to the mercenary business in any way. If he's discovered by the Zhou family's spies... the Tong family won't be able to explain themselves!”

2457 Side Story: Ji Xiuran 2

Ji Xiuran had two objectives for bribing Ah-Ming.

He employed mercenaries from the Tong family side branch using the identity of a steward from the Tong family's main branch, which lowered the guard of the Tong mercenaries. Then, the Tong mercenaries wouldn't be suspicious or intentionally open the box to check it.

“Young Master, I didn't expect... everything to be accounted for within your plan. This way, the Tong family will fight to the death with the Zhou family, and the Ji family won't be threatened by these two families anymore... Just when did you make these preparations?” The teenager was brimming with admiration as he stared at the handsome youth.

“While you were sleeping,” Ji Xiuran answered aloofly.

The teenager released an embarrassed chuckle before asking, “But what if Ah-Ming betrays us, Young Master? What would we do?”

Ji Xiuran softly replied, “His whole family is in my possession.”

“Brilliant!” The teenager gave a thumbs-up. “The Zhou family and the Tong family have acted abominably and committed all kinds of evil deeds. Those two b*stard families really thought they were invincible and dared to offend our Ji family. Evil people truly have other evil people tormenting them...”

It wasn't until Ji Xiuran shot him a glance that the teenager realized his words were remiss and he looked embarrassed.

Before the teenager could explain, a girl's blood-curdling scream was heard in the distance.

The teenager furrowed his brows and reflexively turned to the origin of the sound.

A girl in a leisurely outfit was sent crashing to the ground, but her grip around her dagger remained tight.

Next to the girl was a man dressed like a mercenary.

“Whose child are you? You look 11 or 12 at most, but why would you come asking for death for a mercenary fee?” The mercenary apathetically stared at the girl he knocked to the ground. “Tell me who sent you here and I can spare your life.”

...

“Young Master, it looks like a bountied defected mercenary,” the teenager reported to Ji Xiuran.

These defected mercenaries were very common in the Independent State. Most of them had committed some terrible deed then defected from their group, so their group would offer a bounty on their heads.

“Heh, how old is that girl? She looks only 11 or 12, no? But she actually dared to seek trouble from a defected mercenary. How suicidal.” The teenager shook his head. “Young Master, let’s hurry and leave—eh, Young Master... where are you going...?”

The teenager hastily followed when he saw Ji Xiuran walking toward the girl.

“Oh? You have companions? No wonder,” the defected mercenary remarked coldly with a glance at the girl when he saw a youth approaching.

The girl also turned to look at the youth, confusion surfacing in her eyes. She didn’t know this good-looking youth.

“Tell me, who sent you three here? Or perhaps your mind became muddled from the mercenary reward?” The defected mercenary glanced at the youth, his voice glacial.

However, the youth ignored him and stopped next to the girl and knelt down gracefully. His eyes—brilliant as the starry night—met the girl’s eyes.

“Is your name Worryless?” The youth adopted a gentle tone.

“How did you know?” The girl nodded, her expression curious.

“Three years ago, you and Grandfather Nie visited my house.” Ji Xiuran smiled and softly patted her hair. “Have you forgotten?”

“You are... Brother Xiuran?” The girl’s eyes instantly lit up.

“Does it hurt?” The youth touched the girl’s slightly swollen cheek.

“No...” The girl shook her head after a moment of silence.

“Are you three truly suicidal?” A murderous intent arose in the defected mercenary when he saw the youth and girl talking in front of him as if he wasn’t there.

“Noisy.”

The youth frowned and took the girl’s dagger.

Before the defected mercenary could realize what had happened, a cold glint flashed and the dagger pierced a fatal spot in his body as fast as an arrow leaving its dock.

The next second, the defected mercenary’s body dropped to the ground and stopped moving after a brief convulsion.

To his death, incredulous fear was printed on his face.

2458 Side Story: Ji Xiuran 3

“What a blind thing!”

The youth kicked the defected mercenary’s corpse away before looking at the girl.

His Young Master had just said this girl was Worriless—Worriless Nie from the Nie family...

“Eh, Miss Worriless, why are you here by yourself?” The youth was bemused.

The girl remained silent.

Ji Xiuran smiled faintly. That question was superfluous.

With Worriless’ grandpa’s personality, he must’ve intentionally ordered Worriless to come here to train her mental strength.

Speaking of which, Worriless’ grandpa must be nearby, and he would’ve immediately shown up if Worriless was really in any danger.

“Let’s go,” Ji Xiuran said to the girl with a gentle smile.

However, a blush dusted over the girl’s cheeks, and she wouldn’t get up.

From the corner of his eyes, Ji Xiuran discovered that she was wearing only one shoe. The other shoe was probably lost in the scuffle.

“I lost my shoe...” the girl finally replied a long while later, her cheeks red.

“It’s fine. Come, Miss Worriless, I’ll carry you!” the youth offered.

However, the girl still didn’t move.

“Come up,” Ji Xiuran said softly as he knelt down.

The girl’s blush deepened immediately, but she wrapped her arms around the youth’s neck and was carried on his back.

“Brother Xiuran, where are we going?” the girl asked.

“I’m taking you home,” Ji Xiuran replied with a faint smile.

“Okay.” The girl nodded.

...

After walking a moment, the trio stopped to rest next to a stream.

Ji Xiuran sat down next to the stream and used the water to wash his hands before asking the girl, “Are you hungry?”

“Mm, a little...” the girl answered.

“Ji Yue.” Ji Xiuran turned to the teenager next to him.

“But Young Master, this is your lunch...” Ji Yue anxiously protested.

Ji Xiuran wrinkled his brows.

Ji Yue jolted in fright and could only hand Ji Xiuran’s lunch to the girl. It contained taro as well as some vacuum-sealed cooked beef.

Ji Xiuran picked up the taro and peeled off the skin before handing it to her.

“Brother Xiuran, you eat.” The girl drooled as she stared at the taro.

Ji Xiuran smiled at her expression and patted her on the head. “It’s fine, I’m not hungry. You eat it all. Don’t waste it.”

“How can you not be hungry... You haven’t eaten all day,” Ji Yue quietly grumbled not too far away.

When the girl was done eating, Ji Xiuran bent down and carried her on his back again. The trio disappeared into the distance.

...

Whenever Worryless Nie thought about the day she officially met Ji Xiuran, she couldn’t help but get lost in her thoughts.

At the courtyard in the Ji Estate’s back hill:

Many years later, the youth and the girl became a thing of the past.

Worriless Nie stared at the intently-reading Ji Xiuran and pursed her lips. “Great Sage.”

“You’re here.”

Ji Xiuran was snapped out of his concentrated state and set down the book, turning to Worriless Nie with a smile.

“D*mn, it’s a classic. Are you really trying to be a sage?”
Worriless Nie teased.

Ji Xiuran didn’t get angry and merely chuckled. “I have nothing to do, so I can only admire the ancients’ wisdom.”

Worriless Nie approached Ji Xiuran. “Who doesn’t know our Brother Xiuran’s strategic expertise is beyond description? I’m afraid the ancients’ wisdom will soon fall behind you, Brother Xiuran.”

“Worriless, I heard you recently created a group called the Fearless Alliance.” A warm smile hung on Ji Xiuran’s lips.

“Eh... You know?” The girl was startled.

“What? I’m not enough to play with you? You still need the Fearless Alliance?” Ji Xiuran leaned closer to the girl, his eyes exceptionally bewitching and soul-stealing.

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Worriless Nie stared at the man's bewitching eyes which were as vast as the galaxy. For some reason, she felt her heart starting to race and a blush creeping over her cheeks.

How could this man be so good-looking? He was utterly spellbinding...

"Play with what?"

Worriless Nie hastily looked away.

When Ji Xiuran saw Worriless Nie's reaction, he chuckled and dotingly patted her on the head like he did when they were young. "I can do anything you want."

"I'm hungry. Cook a meal for me," Worriless Nie said.

"I don't know how." Ji Xiuran shook his head.

Worriless Nie: "..."

"But I can learn." Ji Xiuran smiled at her. "Follow me."

"Where are we going?" Worriless Nie asked with intrigue.

"The kitchen." Ji Xiuran then walked away.

...

In the kitchen of the Ji Estate:

"Young Master!"

When all the servants bustling around the kitchen saw Ji Xiuran, they were astonished. Why did Young Master come to this kind of place?

"Miss Worriless."

Everyone promptly greeted Worriless Nie as well.

"Are you hungry, Young Master? What do you want to eat? We'll prepare it immediately."

Ji Xiuran replied, "No need. All of you can leave."

“Yes.”

They didn't know why, but no one dared to question or disobey Ji Xiuran's orders.

Soon, Ji Xiuran and Worriless Nie were the only two people left in the enormous kitchen.

After the servants retreated, Ji Xiuran started searching for ingredients in the kitchen.

“I remember... You like to eat sweet-and-sour spare ribs.” Ji Xiuran turned to Worriless Nie.

“You know what I like to eat...?” Worriless Nie found that strange.

Ji Xiuran merely smiled but didn't respond.

Worriless Nie watched the man bustling around the kitchen, acting completely unlike the famous demon of the Ji family who awed the people of the Independent State. He was also acting unlike a man who was about to become the emperor of the entire underground dynasty and didn't have any bit of arrogance. He was akin to a boy-next-door who shone like the sun, both warm and comforting.

In this world... as long as she had him, as long as he was here, all would be fine...

From the beginning, he was the only one she wanted.

“Brother Xiuran, you aren't really cooking, right?”

Worriless Nie stared at Ji Xiuran.

“Why can't I?” Ji Xiuran held an apron in his hand and turned to her.

“But you're Ji Xiuran. If you really cook for me, I'm afraid I couldn't withstand it.” Worriless Nie chuckled.

“There's a condition, of course.” Ji Xiuran's smile—warm as the spring breeze—intoxicated and mesmerized the girl.

“What condition?” she asked.

“Come here,” Ji Xiuran said.

Worriless Nie automatically walked over.

“Help me tie it on.” Ji Xiuran handed the apron to Worriless Nie.

“But I won’t help you get dressed.” Worriless Nie gave him a crooked grin. “If you want me to help you strip though, I can consider that.”

“Okay.” Ji Xiuran wore an inscrutable smile. To the girl, this smile was devoid of all warmth, replaced by wicked seductiveness instead.

The girl originally held an advantageous and offensive position, but when she saw him walking closer to her step by step, she panicked instantly, and her eyes darted everywhere.

When the man approached her, he grasped her hands.

Worriless Nie was fretting over what to do, but Ji Xiuran simply handed the apron to her. “Be good. Help me tie it on.”

“Huh... Oh...”

A blush had subconsciously overtaken Worriless Nie’s face. After the competition just now, she was utterly defeated and could only obediently help him tie on the apron.

...

After much hard work, Ji Xiuran handed a plate of sweet and sour spare ribs to Worriless Nie along with a bowl of rice.

“So delicious...”

“Eat some vegetables too.”

Seeing the trace of warmth in his eyes, the girl felt like she possessed the whole world.

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As the man and the girl made their way from the kitchen back to the courtyard near the rear hill, the sun shone brilliantly and a breeze brushed over them, adding to the content atmosphere.

Ji Xiuran sat down in the courtyard and picked up a classic text again, slowly reading it. On the other hand, Worriless Nie was sitting next to Ji Xiuran, occasionally looking at him.

“Is the book that interesting?” Worriless Nie asked.

“It can’t match up to one ten-thousandth of you,” Ji Xiuran casually responded.

Before the girl could say anything else, Ji Xiuran set the book down. “The proceedings of the Fearless Alliance don’t seem to be going smoothly.”

The girl was silent.

Indeed, the Fearless Alliance was facing a great hurdle and had crossed some long-established major factions, so they were literally surviving in the cracks.

“It’s nothing. Things are going rather smoothly, actually.” The girl forced a smile.

“Mm, as long as things are going well.” Ji Xiuran nodded gently.

...

After Worriless Nie left:

“Skeleton,” Ji Xiuran called.

A thin man appeared.

Ji Xiuran didn’t take his eyes off of his book and kept reading as he ordered, “Eliminate every entity that threatens the Fearless Alliance. Withhold all mercy.”

“Yes.” Skeleton took his leave a second later.

“Young Master...”

Ji Yue looked at Ji Xiuran. “Our situation right now isn’t optimistic either. The Tong family and the remnants of the Zhou family teamed up with the previous leader of the underground empire. We should avoid trouble.”

However, Ji Xiuran didn’t look up and replied detachedly, “Don’t stick your nose where it doesn’t belong.”

“Young Master... Sigh, alright.” Ji Yue was exasperated.

Had his young master gone mad? This next period of time was most vital for the young master. Whether he could rule the entire underground empire or not would depend on this. Furthermore, the Tong and Zhou families were attentively watching Ji Xiuran, wanting to eliminate Ji Xiuran first so the others would collapse. Yet, he was dispatching Skeleton and his group to help that ridiculous Fearless Alliance.

...

Late at night, at the headquarters of a major faction:

Several higher-ups were facing off against a great enemy. These people actually managed to covertly infiltrate their headquarters and successfully avoided all detection, catching them completely off guard. Just how did they do it?!

Skeleton grimly stood next to a man.

The man wore an overcoat and leather gloves.

“I heard you guys schemed and injured Bai Feng of the Fearless Alliance.” The man, Ji Xiuran, had a faint smile on his lips but it sent onlookers shivering.

Skeleton looked at his master. This smile was a true sign that this man was genuinely angry—a rare occasion.

“Bai Feng?”

A higher-up snorted. “I was wondering who you were! So you’re from the Fearless Alliance! What did you think you could do by sneaking inside our headquarters? I’m telling you—we’ve set up an elaborate trap around this place! All of you will die!”

“We’ve disabled your elaborate trap already. How else do you think we entered?” Ji Yue interjected coldly.

“What?!”

The expressions of several managers changed at once. What kind of joke were they playing?

“What should we do with them, Emperor Ji?” Skeleton asked.

“Emperor Ji?!”

Everyone was stunned when they discovered the identity of this man. This man was... E-emperor Ji?!

“Emperor Ji... Could it be you’re... Ji Xiuran... of the Ji family?!”

A manager shuddered. Impossible! How could Ji Xiuran have any connection to the Fearless Alliance and that Bai Feng?! That was absolutely impossible!

Who was Ji Xiuran? Although he rarely made appearances in the Independent State and very few people had ever seen Ji Xiuran’s true appearance, his ferocious name... had reverberated through the Independent State since he was young!

“From now on, you’ll be struck off from the Independent State,” Ji Xiuran aloofly said.

...

Soon, a raging flame started to take over the headquarters, swallowing it whole.

He wouldn’t forgive any entity that harmed her. He would only destroy and erase their existence.

Perhaps feeling a bit chilly, the man wrapped his overcoat around him more tightly. Then he led his group away without looking back.

2461 Side Story: Ji Xiuran 6

The Independent State:

It was winter and heavy snow fluttered from the sky like goose feathers throughout the entire day.

In the rear courtyard of the headquarters of Emperor Ji's faction:

Ji Xiuran was wearing a thick overcoat while his head of long hair was casually draped behind him.

Currently, the man was kneeling down and meticulously caring for the fruits and vegetables he personally planted.

“Brother Xiuran, are you planning to retire and return to civilian life?”

Worriless Nie asked from her seat in the courtyard as she watched Ji Xiuran, who had quite a few splatters of rain and snow on his body.

She didn't understand why this man planted these fruits and vegetables.

“Retire and return to civilian life...?” Ji Xiuran murmured softly, startled.

“Mhm, retire and return to civilian life,” Worriless Nie said jokingly.

“What? Is this the life you want?” Ji Xiuran turned to Worriless Nie.

“The life I want...” Worriless Nie pondered for a moment with her chin propped on her hand. “A few fields, three meals of salted vegetables, working from sunrise to sunset... Ordinary and peaceful.”

Ji Xiuran smiled. “Are you willing to leave it all behind?”

“Why wouldn't I? You though—are you willing to leave it all behind?” Worriless Nie asked Ji Xiuran.

Ji Xiuran was startled. “Your future includes me too?”

“Of course!” Worriless Nie dashed forward and looped her arm around his arm. “I can be without everyone... I just can’t go without you in my life.”

“But I’m not willing.” Ji Xiuran shook his head.

The anticipation in Worriless Nie’s eyes instantly turned into an indescribable emotion.

“I’m not willing to make you eat only pickled vegetables for all three meals, so how about we add some sweet and sour spare ribs?” Ji Xiuran chuckled lightly.

“...” F*ck, what’s going on with this man?!

“Brother Xiuran, are you willing to leave this life and abandon everything...?” Worriless Nie was incredulous.

In the Independent State, he was akin to an emperor who lorded over the world and possessed almost supreme power.

Ji Xiuran shook his head and slowly stood up. He wrapped the girl’s jacket around her more tightly as he said, “I wouldn’t unless I was trading this life for you.”

“Really?” Worriless Nie stood in her spot, watching his movements before meeting his enthralling, gentle eyes. She felt that her heart had been melted by his blazing warmth already.

“What do you think?” The man tapped the tip of her nose with his finger.

“Go in first; it’s cold out here.” Ji Xiuran turned around and picked some of the vegetables and fruits he planted. “I grew these myself since I don’t trust other people’s produce. Come over to eat often. These are all very healthy.”

“You... planted all of this for me?” Worriless Nie was astonished.

The corners of his lips turned up, happiness also surfacing in his eyes. After he finished picking the produce, he walked forward and grasped her hand before leading her toward the kitchen.

Ji Xiuran's culinary skills had been honed more and more exquisitely. His dishes looked and smelled amazing and tasted incredible, especially his sweet and sour spare ribs. Worryless Nie wanted nothing more than to inhale even the plate.

However, the girl didn't like eating vegetables and only consumed meat, aside from Ji Xiuran's vegetables.

That evening, anyone who looked down from the hilltop at Emperor Ji's headquarters would have a panoramic view of the resplendence below.

The man sat at the mountain top, the girl sitting next to him.

"You've worked hard for all of this for a very long time," the girl commented softly.

"That's right. I haven't stopped since I was a youth." Ji Xiuran nodded.

"My Fearless Alliance is also very fearsome right now... it's strange though—the factions that kept oppressing us before have all disappeared..." Worryless Nie said.

"That's good." Ji Xiuran smiled.

The girl turned to him. "Eh... It's not your doing, right?"

"It isn't." The man shook his head.

"Suspicious!" Worryless Nie pursed her lips.

2462 Side Story: Ji Xiuran 7

“If you like it, all of this can be yours,” Ji Xiuran said with a chuckle as he looked at the world below him.

“It can be mine?” The girl also surveyed the land underneath them. This was akin to an empire.

“But you’re Emperor Ji. Are you willing to yield everything to me?” Worriless Nie joked.

“If you want to become Emperor Nie,” Ji Xiuran replied.

“Emperor Nie?” Worriless Nie hastily shook her head. “Forget it, that sounds terrible... I would rather keep being Bai Feng.”

Before the girl could say anything else, the man tugged her into his arms.

Caught off guard, the girl fell against his chest.

When Worriless Nie recovered, a blush instantly covered her face.

She’d never experienced this reddening and heart-racing feeling. Although there were many good-looking men in the world, Ji Xiuran’s uniqueness was irreplaceable.

“Don’t work too hard,” Ji Xiuran softly said.

“You’re the one working hard...” Worriless Nie retorted. “Oh right—lately, the Tong family, the Zhou family, and that Li Chun you defeated have released word that they want your life... You know about that, right?”

“I don’t.” Ji Xiuran shook his head.

“Huh? You don’t know?” Worriless Nie was stunned. “How could you not know? Isn’t that too dangerous?!”

“I don’t care too much about things said by strays.” Ji Xiuran smiled.

“You must protect yourself well, alright?” The girl was filled with worry.

“Mm,” Ji Xiuran agreed.

“Your complexion doesn’t look too good.” The girl carefully examined his face.

“Maybe it’s because of the cold. Let’s go back inside.” Ji Xiuran stood up and naturally took her hand into his before leaving this place.

...

A few days later, inside the study of Emperor Ji’s headquarters:

“Emperor Ji...” Skeleton quickly strode inside.

“Speak,” Ji Xiuran said.

“It’s regarding Miss Worriless.” Skeleton was hesitant.

The man instantly furrowed his brows. “What happened?”

“Miss Worriless... f-fell to the Zhou family, the Tong family, and Li Chun’s ploy... and was captured,” Skeleton reported truthfully.

The always-calm man shot up instantly. Never-seen-before iciness and violent rage erupted from his eyes and veins bulged on his forehead.

He set his hand on his desk as if he was trying to calm himself down.

However, a loud “boom” rang out and wooden pieces scattered everywhere. The desk had been crushed.

“Emperor Ji...”

Skeleton was shocked. This was the first time in his life that he had ever seen his master on the brink of losing all rationality. When had the always-scheming and confident Emperor Ji look the way he did today?!

“Who... leaked it out?” The man was expressionless.

However, Skeleton could sense that the man was restraining the wild beast that was about to shatter its cage and leap outside of him.

“Emperor Ji! No one knows about your relationship with the President of the Fearless Alliance, Bai Feng... I think that someone from our side probably saw Miss Worriless visiting our headquarters... and accidentally divulged it...” Skeleton hastily explained.

“Find them and kill without mercy!” the man commanded.

“Yes...”

“How’s the situation at the Fearless Alliance?” Ji Xiuran asked.

“The Fearless Alliance has no idea Miss Worriless was captured. The Zhou family, the Tong family, and Li Chun paid a huge price this time, but even so, they suffered extensive damage and a dozen or so higher-ups were killed. Miss Worriless fought to the verge of exhaustion, but unfortunately, her opponents were too contemptible and too great in numbers,” Skeleton replied.

The man was frighteningly quiet, but Skeleton could sense the other man’s insuppressible violent undercurrents.

2463 Side Story: Ji Xiuran 8

“Give it to me.” Ji Xiuran extended his hand toward Skeleton.

“Give what to you, Emperor Ji?” Shock flitted through Skeleton’s face, but he quickly concealed it.

“The letter that Li Chun, the Zhou family, and the Tong family left for me,” the man replied.

“Um...” Skeleton frowned deeply. How did Emperor Ji know...

“They have no grievances or grudges against Worriless. Li Chun and his group captured Worriless for no reason other than to force me to show up. Since they did it so covertly, they would’ve naturally left clues and a letter for me. Otherwise, what would be the point of abducting Worriless?” the man added.

“Emperor Ji... But...” Skeleton was hesitant.

“Don’t make me say it a second time.” The man was already on the brink of losing his rationality.

In the end, Skeleton sighed and handed the letter to Ji Xiuran.

After reading the letter, Ji Xiuran ordered, “No one is allowed to act rashly. I’ll keep the appointment.”

“WHAT?!”

Skeleton was aghast. What? He’ll keep the appointment? That’s an absolutely suicidal appointment!

“Emperor Ji, you mustn’t! They went through Herculean efforts to abduct Miss Worriless because they wanted to make you give in! If you really meet with them, you’ll die without a doubt!” Skeleton hastily tried to stop him.

“As long as she’s fine... my life is unimportant...” the man murmured.

This was the only mistake in his life, but one sole mistake could become an unredeemable blunder!

“No, Emperor Ji, if you go, both you and Miss Worryless will probably... If you don’t go, Miss Worryless’s life temporarily won’t be at risk. After all, you’re their only target!” Skeleton said.

“Don’t make me repeat myself,” the man said coldly.

“Emperor Ji...”

“Scram!”

Skeleton could only clench his teeth and retreat.

...

In a secret room:

The girl was covered in blood and had her arms and legs bound, but her energy was still decent and she was icily and darkly staring at everyone in the room.

“I wonder if Ji Xiuran truly cares about your life or not,” a tall man said coldly as he looked at Worryless Nie.

“Heh, I heard Bai Feng and Ji Xiuran had a good relationship. Even if Ji Xiuran doesn’t care about her life, we can strengthen our cause by using this opportunity to subsume the Fearless Alliance,” Patriarch Tong interjected.

“Back then, Ji Xiuran plotted and killed my son. This time, I’ll definitely obliterate him!”

“With just you guys...?” Worryless Nie stared at Li Chun, Patriarch Zhou, and their henchmen and snorted. “You overestimate yourselves!”

“Indeed, if we didn’t have you in our possession, perhaps we really would be overestimating ourselves. But with you here, everything is different.” Li Chun glanced at Worryless Nie.

“Me?” Worryless Nie shook her head. “It appears I’ll really have to disappoint you. Ji Xiuran and I only have a business relationship—the Fearless Alliance has only just recently collaborated with Emperor Ji. It appears you’ve rashly acted without making thorough investigations.”

A shock swept over the occupants of the room.

Ji Xiuran... I prohibit you from coming... You mustn't come... Worryless Nie might've looked composed and placid on the surface but anxiety had drowned her insides.

“Patriarch!”

A middle-aged man suddenly burst in. “Ji Xiuran is here!”

“Really?!” Patriarch Tong's eyes lit up.

“I saw it myself! And he's all by himself!” the middle-aged man replied.

“Good! Wonderful!” Patriarch Zhou was steaming with excitement. “Son... I can finally avenge you!”

Worryless Nie froze. He... still came. Is he an idiot?! Doesn't he know this is a fatal plot with no possibility of survival?! Why would he do this?!

Soon, a round of knocking was heard.

The middle-aged man opened the door.

In his overcoat, the man apathetically stood in front of the door. “Is this a good time?”

“Hahaha, welcome, Emperor Ji! Pardon me for not going out to meet you! You're welcome, you're too welcome! We were all waiting for you!” Patriarch Tong chuckled.

2464 Side Story: Ji Xiuran 9

The man pulled his jacket around himself more tightly before strolling into the room without any hesitation.

Bam!

The door was forcefully slammed shut following Ji Xiuran's entrance.

"Ji Xiuran, why did you come here? Are you stupid?!" A mist enveloped the girl's eyes when she saw Ji Xiuran. He will die!

However, the man didn't respond and swept his eyes over everyone else in the room. "May I ask what everyone intended by employing this type of method to invite me here?"

"It's nothing major. I just missed you dearly after not seeing you for a long time, Emperor Ji. We mainly wanted to see you and chat," Li Chun replied.

"Hmph!" Patriarch Zhou snorted. "Ji Xiuran, back then, you killed my son and framed the Tong family for it, making both of our families suffer immensely... You didn't expect to see this day, right!!!"

Ji Xiuran's lips turned up and he nonchalantly said, "You were merely too stupid."

"Haha, what kind of situation are we in? Your mouth is still so tough... Fine, since you're willing to come and meet your death for this woman, I'll respect you as a real man. You killed my son back then, so I will make this woman die in front of you today!" Patriarch Zhou turned to the middle-aged man standing to the side and ordered, "Pierce her eyes first! That will be my greeting gift for Emperor Ji!"

The middle-aged man nodded and instantly directed his dagger toward Worriless Nie.

Worriless Nie could hear the frightening sound of the dagger breaking the wind.

Reflexively, she closed her eyes.

Pfff!

It was the sound of a blade piercing flesh.

The girl felt several droplets of fiery warmth landing on her face.

Worriless Nie's eyes shot open. The scene that greeted her made her pupils contract.

The man shielded her behind him, his long hair flying in the air. However, his ink-colored hair was tainted with stains of blood.

The dagger had pierced through the man's palm. /Drip, drip./ Droplets of blood followed Ji Xiuran's fingers and fell onto the floor.

“Brother Xiuran!!!”

Worriless Nie couldn't hold back her tears.

The man turned back, his lips curling up into a smile directed at the girl. It was still that familiar smile with immense warmth overflowing from his eyes, as though he was still that sunny boy-next-door from their youth.

“Hahaha, you truly are Emperor Ji! If we didn't belong to different camps, I would really want to befriend you, Emperor Ji... After you die, I'll bury you honorably! You're a true man!” Li Chun praised Ji Xiuran.

This noble man actually used his own hand to block a fatal blow for the girl.

Ji Xiuran sent the middle-aged man flying back with his palm before walking toward Worriless Nie without looking back. He surveyed the girl's wounds and softly asked, “It hurts a lot, right?”

“It doesn't... It doesn't hurt! Hurry and leave! Ji Xiuran, leave!” she screamed at the man with every bit of energy inside of her.

However, a second later, the man embraced her. “Sorry... It's my fault...”

“No... It really isn't...” Tears soaked the man's overcoat and the girl vehemently shook her head in his arms.

“Worriless... Don't be afraid. Regardless of where you are or what you go through... I'll stay with you,” the man reassured her softly.

“I'm not afraid. As long as you're here, I'm not afraid... Brother Xiuran, I'm not afraid, but if the outcome is death, I don't want you to be here...” The girl had never been as relaxed as she was now in the man's embrace. That resilient and strong President of the Fearless Alliance, Bai Feng, was now that small girl from when she was with Ji Xiuran years ago.

She would drool whenever she saw something yummy, she would make the boy carry her when she was tired, she would blush... and she would act like a child.

“Even if you die, I'll be by your side,” the man said.

2465 Side Story: Ji Xiuran 10

Tears welled in the girl's eyes as she stared at the man. "I don't want you to die..."

"Worriless, I won't let you die." The man gave her a comforting smile.

Before Worriless Nie could respond, Ji Xiuran asked, "Tell me, who injured you?"

"That's not important..." The girl shook her head with a smile.

"It's important to me," Ji Xiuran expressionlessly replied.

The girl's gaze landed on the middle-aged man holding a backsword earlier.

"Is that so?"

Ji Xiuran slowly stood up, his gaze landing on the middle-aged man.

"Hahaha, Ji Xiuran, haven't you grasped the situation and circumstances yet?!" The middle-aged man didn't have a trace of fear on his face as he looked at Ji Xiuran.

Ji Xiuran disappeared from his spot and reappeared next to the middle-aged man.

Swish!

Without wasting any words, Ji Xiuran uncoiled his right arm and blood sprayed into the air a second later.

The smile on the middle-aged man's face froze, swiftly replaced by fear.

The middle-aged man clutched his neck with his hands, but the blood couldn't be stopped.

His jugular was slashed by Ji Xiuran, but the middle-aged man had no idea how Ji Xiuran did it up until his death.

Ji Xiuran aloofly said, "My situation has nothing to do with how you harmed her."

“Hahaha, you’re Emperor Ji indeed. They all say Emperor Ji is powerful, and I originally thought they were just rumors. It’s my first time seeing Emperor Ji fight. My horizons have been widened.” Li Chun clapped with a laugh.

Ji Xiuran didn’t respond and turned around to walk toward the girl. He used his dagger to untie her arms and legs.

“Can you walk?” Ji Xiuran inquired quietly.

Worriless Nie shook her head. “No... I can’t walk... right now...”

“Come.” Ji Xiuran bent down.

“No, Brother Xiuran, I’m begging you... Leave! If you don’t take me, I believe... you can leave!” Worriless Nie was unwilling.

Ji Xiuran shook his head and carried the girl on his back.

“Ji Xiuran, this is my first time seeing you lower your head and bowing... Is a woman worth it...? Even if it costs you your life?” Li Chun’s eyes glinted coldly.

The man didn’t answer and slowly walked forward with the girl on his back, step by step.

“Kill him,” Li Chun ordered.

Countless blades shone and gleamed ceaselessly.

The man kicked and sent the people closest to him flying back like a dragon erupting from the sea.

“Idiots! Ji Xiuran’s weakness is Bai Feng!” Li Chun taunted.

Everyone changed their target and started attacking Worriless Nie.

Pfff!

It wasn’t long before the man was covered in blood and his overcoat was dyed red.

The man’s body was trembling slightly, but his face remained devoid of any expression.

“Brother Xiuran... Don’t torment me like this anymore... Don’t block blows for me anymore... I’m begging you...”

Behind the man, the girl's voice was broken with sobs.

The man turned his head, a gentle smile hanging on his face.

"It doesn't hurt."

"You aren't hurting... but I'm hurting!" The girl was hysterical.

"Worriless... I will get you out of here," the man promised after a moment of silence.

"Ji Xiuran, I would like to see how you will be able to walk out of here alive!" Li Chun leaped up, his dagger ferociously directed toward Worriless Nie.

Ji Xiuran instantly spun around.

The dagger pierced into Ji Xiuran's chest.

"Li Chun, do you think... you've won?" the man asked apathetically.

2466 Side Story: Ji Xiuran 11

“Is that not so?” Li Chun snorted. “Your blood is boiling.”

“Attack,” Ji Xiuran ordered expressionlessly.

Li Chun was startled.

Before Li Chun could react, a chilly glint flashed in the eyes of the experts behind Li Chun and their daggers ruthlessly pierced Li Chun’s back at once.

“Y-you!”

Li Chun turned around in shock and stared at his two confidants.

“Apologies. We’ve been Emperor Ji’s men since long ago!” one of the confidants replied coldly.

Swish!

The other man was unwilling to waste his words and stabbed his dagger into Li Chun’s neck.

Upon seeing this, Patriarch Zhou and Patriarch Tong exploded with rage.

This g*dd*mn Ji Xiuran!

Li Chun was extremely strong and was considered among the A+ tier fighting forces in the Independent State. Plus, they had the advantage in numbers, so even if Li Chun’s confidants were Ji Xiuran’s men, Ji Xiuran didn’t dare to act rashly. He waited until Li Chun was relaxed enough before striking the fatal blow!

Ji Xiuran... He had been waiting this whole time! He actually gambled with his own life!

This b*stard had planned everything since the first step he took inside of this place.

Unfortunately, Li Chun thought he’d completely defeated Ji Xiuran but was merely floundering inside Ji Xiuran’s trap this

entire time. Even if this was a dead-end fatal plot, Ji Xiuran gambled with his life... and he won!

Li Chun was dead. The remaining people were nothing!

“Emperor Ji!”

As the two confidants looked at Ji Xiuran’s swaying figure, their expressions revealed their trepidation.

“Ignore me.” Ji Xiuran glanced at Patriarch Zhou and Patriarch Tong. “Make them taste all of the pain in this world.”

After saying that, the man carried the girl and left the place without looking back.

Snow fluttered around them, and every single one of the man’s steps appeared especially strained.

“Brother Xiuran, put me down!” The girl struggled.

Finally, the girl struggled free and the man fell on a pile of snow.

Gratification brimmed from the man’s stunning face. He reached out and patted her long hair. “Are you scared?”

“I am... I’m scared you’ll die. Ji Xiuran, you idiot!” The girl clutched Ji Xiuran in her arms. “If you die... what’s the point in me living... You shouldn’t have come!”

The man turned silent and didn’t respond.

But if... if you died, what’s the point in me living?

...

Half a month later:

“Ji Xiuran, you’re rather fearsome!” Haitang mocked as she watched the man who could leave the bed and walk already.

“What is it?” Ji Xiuran asked.

“You were both nearly killed,” Haitang said.

“It’s fine to just look at the outcome,” Ji Xiuran replied.

“Ji Xiuran, I’m asking you... Just what... what does Worryless mean to you?” Haitang asked a long while later, meeting Ji Xiuran’s eyes.

Ji Xiuran smiled faintly but didn't answer.

He didn't need to share the answer with anyone.

“Sis Haitang!”

At that moment, Worryless Nie walked inside with a pile of lunch boxes.

“Your true love is here. I'm leaving.” Haitang smiled and turned to leave.

“You're here.” Ji Xiuran looked at Worryless Nie.

“Hurry and eat. I made delicious food for you!” Worryless Nie exclaimed cheerfully.

Ji Xiuran placidly sat back down on the bed and watched the girl open all the lunch boxes for him.

“This is soup brewed with an old hen to help you recuperate your blood... Here are some stir-fry dishes too...” Worryless Nie said.

She then picked up a spoon and ordered him: “Open your mouth.”

Ji Xiuran: “...”

“Does it taste good?” The girl was eager.

“Mm... I lost my sense of taste looking at you and I can't taste the deliciousness of food anymore,” Ji Xiuran said with a smile.

2467 Side Story: Ji Xiuran

End

Time flew by.

She journeyed across the world with her grandfather while he accomplished his dreams and ceaselessly expanded the Ji family's territory.

The girl was still young and was still naive and clueless about romance, but he wasn't worried. Life was a long journey, and he still had a lot of time with her. He was also confident that his Little Worryless wouldn't easily take a liking to other men.

However...

He made calculations for everything but forgot to include heaven's will.

"Emperor Ji, your body is probably..."

The elderly man next to Haitang was staring at the man with deeply locked brows.

After learning about his body's condition, the man didn't say anything. It felt like all of this had been predetermined in the unseen world.

"Sigh, extreme intelligence comes at a cost..." the elderly man lamented with a soft sigh and a regretful shake of his head sometime later.

"Mm, I understand." The man was also quiet for a long time before turning to leave with a bitter smile.

A swordsman had a sword, a scholar had a pen, but from now on, Ji Xiuran wouldn't have Worryless Nie anymore.

It appeared the heavens didn't permit him to be in her future.

"Ji Xiuran!"

Haitang hastily chased after the leaving man. "You must recover well..."

The man paused and his gaze landed on Haitang. “But I still have many things to do.”

“Many things? Could they be more important than your life?!” Haitang pressed worriedly.

“Then you think lying in bed will stop him from taking my life?” Ji Xiuran pointed at the sky.

“I’ll tell Worriless...” Haitang pulled out her phone.

Ji Xiuran shook his head. “No need.”

“Ji Xiuran, what do you mean? Doesn’t Worriless have a right to know about such a big thing?” Haitang frowned deeply.

“It’d just add to her worries,” Ji Xiuran replied softly.

“Just what are you saying? Do you plan to keep it a secret from Worriless then push Worriless away?!” Haitang asked.

Ji Xiuran remained silent.

“Heh, Ji Xiuran... You’re so heroic. Just who do you think you are? Are you really treating yourself like the male lead in a tragic romance? You’d shoulder all the big problems yourself and completely disappear from this world all by yourself?!” Haitang demanded furiously.

“Every person has the power to make their own choices. It has nothing to do with heroism.” After saying that, the man turned to leave without looking back.

...

On the island, inside the dilapidated storehouse, the man slowly opened his eyes, his complexion pale. He seemed to have had a dream. He dreamed about a first meeting, he dreamed about mutual companionship, he dreamed about loneliness and despair.

Soon, the man fixed his white shirt with difficulty and faced the camera with a warm smile.

“I wish you a happy new marriage.”

As the man spoke, a ripple of emotion surfaced in his eyes. He lowered his head, not wanting the camera to capture any of his

emotions.

It was a long time before the man faced the camera again.

“Farewell.”

...

Next to the ocean, the man repositioned himself into a more comfortable position. He remembered that he and that girl had also sat next to the ocean like this many years ago and talked about their future as they ate a boxed lunch.

Feeling the breeze from the ocean, the scene of their first meeting started playing again in his mind.

At the Ji Estate:

The sun was blazing high in the sky.

The girl was walking while carrying a giant pot, already soaked in sweat.

She used a tree branch to prop the giant metal pot up and threw a lot of the food she stole from the Ji family’s kitchen under the pot as bait.

A moment later, having set up the bait, the girl hid behind a giant tree.

She held the rope tied to the tree branch in her hand. She originally wanted to use this giant pot to capture the birds living in the Ji Estate’s rear mountain, but not a single bird took the bait after waiting for a long time.

The girl was starting to drift to sleep when a boy holding a book appeared and stopped in front of the pot. He was startled and looked around him but didn’t see a single person. All he saw was the pile of food sitting under the pot.

What is this doing here...?

The boy knelt down and curiously trudged forward with his head sticking out curiously, looking underneath the pot.

The drowsy girl felt movement from the rope in her hand and reflexively pulled it to the left.

A loud “bang” rang out and the pot dropped down. Before the boy could react, he was stuck inside the pot.

The girl excitedly sprinted out from behind the tree and stopped in front of the pot. She shouted with exhilaration, “Wow! Hahaha, I’ve caught it, I’ve caught it!”

“Who’s there?”

When the girl heard a voice coming from inside the pot, she jolted in fright. “Wow, the bird has honed a spirit! Are you a goblin? You can speak?!”

“Who are you?”

“Hm? Me? My name is Worriless Nie, what about you?”

“ ... ”

Worriless Nie...

Worriless...

At that time, he never would’ve guessed that he would be trapped by such a clumsy trap.

And this trap lasted his entire life.

2468 Side Story; Nameless Nie 1

“Learning a skill?” The boy put down the abacus he was holding and looked at his parents with a tilt of his head before promptly shaking his head. “What’s there to learn? I won’t go.”

The young master of the Nie family carried some fame to his name, and it wasn’t simply because of the Nie family.

Nameless Nie was extremely talented in martial arts but favored his abacus and frequently conducted trades with other people.

“Dad, Mom, how much money does the Nie family have? After you die, won’t I have to take over the management of the Nie family’s finances? What’s the use of learning martial arts? Just look at the Shen family...” Nameless Nie expressed his objections to his parents’ decision to send him to learn martial arts.

Father Nie exploded with wrath. “You scoundrel! Send! Immediately send him away!”

...

Within three days, Nameless Nie was sent out of the Independent State.

At a village in a small country neighboring the Independent State:

Nameless Nie looked at the mansion sitting in the center of the village then looked at the owner of this mansion. He couldn’t understand why his parents would send him to this lousy place in the middle of nowhere.

Also, what was the deal with this woman who liked to smoke cigarettes next to him? His parents wanted him to learn martial arts from her?

Nameless Nie couldn't tell what was unusual about this woman? She didn't seem to be that big of a deal. If he had to name a strength of hers, there was something.

Whether it was this woman's appearance or her figure, they were both top-notch. However, she dressed very casually. She wore a pair of shabby jeans and a loose top, appearing rather unruly and free. If she put some effort into her looks, she would probably be a rare beauty.

"Nameless, my ancestors had some connections to your ancestors. Your parents sent you to me to learn. I hope you can listen well in the future, okay?" the woman asked Nameless Nie with a light chuckle.

Nameless Nie blinked and blinked. "D*mn hag. Even my parents can't manage me, so what right do you have to control me? Blah!"

Nameless Nie snorted and turned to leave.

However, he didn't take more than a few steps before the woman grabbed him by his collar and picked him up.

"Punk, you're rather uncouth! How do your parents discipline you?"

The woman snorted.

"I'm warning you—release me immediately! A good man doesn't fight a woman, and this young master has never beaten a woman, but I don't mind breaking this rule... I'm telling you—I'm very strong..." Nameless Nie started brandishing his claws in mid-air.

The woman was amused by Nameless Nie's appearance and gently put him back on the ground. She stuck her hands into her jeans pockets, intrigued. "Are you very strong? I really couldn't tell. If you can defeat me, I will send you back to the Independent State. How about that?"

"Alright, you were the one who said it! Don't blame your Grandfather Nameless for ruining a flower and not knowing how to be tender to a woman!" Nameless Nie harrumphed.

“Ruining a flower... Being tender to a woman... Who did you learn these words from, little imp?” the woman asked curiously.

She really couldn't figure out how a seven-or-eight-year-old child could say something like this.

“I learned without a teacher! Please call me a genius!” Nameless Nie replied.

“Don't tell me you learned it from your father,” the woman said, humored.

Nameless Nie was startled. “How did you know?”

Before the woman could say anything else, Nameless Nie suddenly looked behind the woman in astonishment. “Mom, why did you come here?”

The woman reflexively looked behind her.

2469 Side Story; Nameless Nie 2

Nameless Nie guffawed and swung his fist, charging toward the woman. “The world is dangerous and human intentions are unpredictable! Let me teach you a lesson!”

However, a “plop” resounded and Nameless Nie tripped and crashed next to her feet.

The woman turned around and looked at Nameless Nie, baffled. “What did you say?”

Nameless Nie replied, “Oh... I missed my mom too much, so I was probably having hallucinations...”

“Who did you say you were teaching a lesson to?” The woman stared at Nameless Nie.

“Didn’t I come here to learn martial arts? Teach me a lesson then,” Nameless Nie said.

The woman instantly picked up Nameless Nie and strode toward the mansion up ahead.

...

“To be my student, you have to abide by three rules,” the woman said to Nameless Nie in the living room.

“Which three rules?” Nameless Nie asked curiously.

“First, from today onward, you’re responsible for the cleaning the house as well as buying groceries and cooking.”

“Second, from now on, you’ll do whatever I say without any objections.”

“Third, you’re now a member of our family and the only man in the house, so you must work and train harder so that you can at least protect us in the future.”

Nameless Nie sat on the sofa with one leg crossed over his knee and snorted when the woman finished speaking. “What

do you mean I'm the only man? Is your husband dead? Are you a widow? Don't even think about making me buy groceries, cook, and clean! I want to learn the monkey fists, so how about you give me a monkey show?"

Before the woman could respond, an apathetic girl walked downstairs from the second floor with a white dress.

"Mom... so noisy..." the girl softly said to the woman. Her gaze toward Nameless Nie was aloof but was mixed with a trace of curiosity.

"Who are you?" Nameless Nie asked the girl.

"You're in my house. Why are you asking who I am?" the girl retorted calmly.

"Nameless Nie, she's my daughter. In terms of family hierarchy, you should call her aunt," the woman said.

"Aunt?" Nameless Nie stared at the girl. "Why should I call her aunt? Why isn't she calling me Grandfather instead? If she calls me Grandfather, I'll call her Aunt. If we address each other like this, then I can accept that."

Before the woman could respond, a realization dawned on Nameless Nie. "She's your daughter... Which means you really have a husband, but you just said I was the only man in the house. Your husband really is dead, and you're a widow!"

"Imp, don't take a mile when I've given you an inch. I never hit children," the woman responded coldly.

"Hag, don't bare your fangs at me! I never hit women!" Nameless Nie wasn't to be outdone.

"Ling Miao, help Mommy teach this imp a hard lesson," the woman said to the girl.

The girl shook her head though. "It'd dirty my hands."

"It appears I have no choice but to personally teach you a lesson, imp." The woman snorted.

"Come! Do you think I'd be scared of you, a widow?" Nameless Nie pursed his lips.

...

About half an hour passed.

Nameless Nie, who was beaten black and blue, looked at the woman with a grin on his face. “Auntie Ling, Great Aunt, give me some money. I’ll go buy some groceries...”

“Are you giving in?” Auntie Ling asked Nameless Nie.

“How could I give in... It’s just that I’m the only man in the house, so I have to yield to you and Aunt Ling Miao. This is just a basic form of respect...”

Nameless Nie, who was basically beaten to submission, could only start shouldering all the chores in this house. He did all the cleaning and cooking every day. Thankfully, Auntie Ling treated him decently and left the laundry to Ling Miao.

2470 Side Story; Nameless Nie 3

“Ling Miao, why’s your surname Ling?”

Nameless Nie curiously stared at the girl.

“Why is your surname Nie?” the girl retorted.

“My dad’s surname is Nie,” Nameless Nie replied.

“But isn’t your father’s surname Ling?” Ling Miao glanced at him.

“Eh, my dad’s situation is a bit special... You can take it as I took my mom’s surname.” Nameless Nie’s expression was a bit awkward.

“I also took my mom’s surname. Is there a problem?” Ling Miao said detachedly.

“What I meant was... where did your dad go?” Nameless Nie was blunt.

Ling Miao pondered over it for a moment and didn’t evade the question. “My dad abandoned my mom and me and ran off with another woman.”

“Huh?”

Nameless Nie was astonished. “I thought your dad died, your mom was a widow, and you were an orphan...”

Ling Miao: “...”

“However, Great Aunt Ling is so pretty! Why would your dad run off with another woman? Could it be that woman is prettier than Great Aunt Ling?” Nameless Nie inquired nosily.

“If you don’t know how to talk, you’re best off staying quiet.” Ling Miao furrowed her brows.

“Fine fine fine, I won’t talk... Oh right, when I came, I saw a small ferris wheel in town. Let’s go out and play a bit,”

Nameless Nie suggested with a grin.

Ling Miao shook her head. “My mom doesn’t allow me to go out and play.”

“Great Aunt Ling doesn’t allow you to go out and play?”

Nameless Nie was shocked. “Isn’t that smothering our true nature? That’s unforgivably wicked!”

“And I’m not that interested,” Ling Miao continued.

Nameless Nie pursed his lips. “How could you not be interested... I’m telling you—it’s because you haven’t tried. Come, I’ll take you.”

Nameless Nie grasped Ling Miao’s hand and tried to move.

However, two seconds later, a “plop” was heard. Nameless Nie suddenly lost balance and was thrown to the ground by Ling Miao.

“AHHH!” Nameless Nie fell on the ground with a wail.

“Are you okay...”

A shadow of worry flickered through Ling Miao’s eyes when she heard how awful Nameless Nie was howling. She didn’t use any force.

“How could I be okay? I’m going to tell Great Aunt Ling that you actually hit me!” Nameless Nie was full of grievances.

“Where does it hurt?” Ling Miao gently knelt down, her bright eyes examining Nameless Nie.

“My head! There’s a giant bump! Feel it!” Nameless Nie snorted from his spot on the ground.

Ling Miao softly touched Nameless Nie’s head and said, “It’ll be fine... It’ll go away soon.”

“What do you mean fine? I’m telling you—I was going easy on you earlier and suppressing my instincts or else you’d definitely be seriously injured right now. You might even be dead...” Nameless Nie grumbled grumpily.

Ling Miao had no choice but to nod. “Alright, I’ll apologize to you. I won’t hit you next time. If you still aren’t happy with

that, you can also hit me once.”

“Who wants to hit you? I have no interest in hitting you,”
Nameless Nie responded.

“Then... what do you want?” Ling Miao asked.

Nameless Nie dusted off his bum and stood up, grasping Ling Miao’s hand again. “Let’s go on the ferris wheel...”

He’d just finished speaking when he lost his balance again and was knocked to the ground by Ling Miao instinctively.

“You... you liar! Didn’t you say... you wouldn’t hit me again?! Why did you hit me again? Is it because you think I can’t beat you?!” Nameless Nie furiously stared at Ling Miao, his eyes wide open.

Ling Miao was quiet for a moment before answering, “It was instinct.”

2471 Side Story; Nameless Nie 4

“I don’t care! You have to take me out today or else we’ll be strangers our whole lives! It’ll be a struggle to the death and only one of us will come out alive! I will put poison in your food and poison you to death!” Nameless Nie screamed.

Ling Miao: “...”

“You can go out to play yourself. Why do you need me to take you?” Ling Miao didn’t understand.

“Nonsense... I’ve just arrived in this place that’s in the middle of nowhere. If I go out, I won’t be able to find my way back... Anyway, aren’t you my aunt? You’re one generation older than me, so what’s wrong with you taking me out to have fun? Isn’t that within your duties and responsibilities? Am I calling you ‘Aunt’ for no reason...? If you won’t take me out, then you have to call me Grandfather! You have to pay me back!” Nameless Nie exclaimed.

In the end, Ling Miao could only agree to Nameless Nie’s request and take him out to have fun.

The two of them walked for about half an hour before arriving at an abandoned ferris wheel in the middle of town.

Ling Miao unwaveringly stared at the ferris wheel, seemingly deep in thought.

“Don’t tell me you’ve never gone on one!” Nameless Nie questioned.

Ling Miao shook her head. Since she was born, she’d never even gone to an amusement park.

“Are you done looking at it? Let’s go home,” Ling Miao said.

“Are you joking? I haven’t gone on it yet.” Nameless Nie shook his head.

“This place has been abandoned for a long time. Entry isn’t allowed.” Ling Miao looked at Nameless Nie.

“So what? We can just secretly sneak inside.” He laughed mischievously.

Ling Miao swore that this was the first time in her life she’d done something this crazy. She snuck onto the ferris wheel with Nameless Nie.

However, due to the ferris wheel being dilapidated, it couldn’t move, so the duo could only climb to the middle level. And since the ferris wheel wasn’t that high, it wasn’t too dangerous.

“What do you think? Nice and cool, right?” Nameless Nie grinned.

“Mm.” Ling Miao nodded lightly.

“Sigh, you’re so sad. You haven’t even been on a ferris wheel before.” Nameless Nie shook his head.

“I heard... your parents are also very strict. Do you go out to play often?” Ling Miao was inquisitive.

“They are strict and my parents also never let me go out to play... But thankfully, I have a younger sister. Her name is Worryless Nie, and she frequently secretly takes me out to play. If my parents get angry, I can say it was my sister who forcefully dragged me out. It’s not like I can beat her anyway,” Nameless Nie replied after a moment of thought.

“Is that so...” Ling Miao was pensive. “Worryless Nie... That’s a nice name.”

“Nice sounding? How? It means thoughtless and heartless.” Nameless Nie stared into the distance.

“I really envy you for having a sister.” Ling Miao peered at him.

“Envy me?” Nameless Nie was startled briefly before bursting into laughter. “What’s there to envy? My sister was taken away by my grandpa since she was young and rarely comes home. My grandpa has a conflict with my parents and prohibits my sister from coming into contact with my parents.

My grandpa is seriously fearsome and taught my sister really well—to the point that I still can't beat her and she bullies me often.”

“Hm... Isn't being bullied by a sister also a very blessed thing?” Ling Miao asked.

“Mm, you're very right. Did you also want to be blessed? You can achieve it too. In terms of family position, I call you my aunt. Why did you hit me today?” Nameless Nie shot her a glance.

Ling Miao: “...”

“My mom's really fearsome. You can study well by her side. My mom said that you have a rare talent and she's the only one qualified to teach you... When you grow up, you can return to the Independent State and properly protect your sister,” Ling Miao eventually replied softly.

2472 Side Story; Nameless Nie 5

“Protect her?” Nameless Nie snorted. “When I’m strong, I’ll beat her to death and show her how mighty her brother is!”

Nameless Nie and Ling Miao lingered on the Ferris Wheel until night time—until a world-shaking furious scream was heard from below them.

“You two little brats, hurry and get your a*s*s down here! If I don’t beat you to death today, I’ll take your surnames!”

Ling Miao’s expression changed immediately. “It’s over... Mommy discovered us.”

“What are you scared of? Let me do it!” Nameless Nie then yelled down, “Come here, you vicious woman! Come up and catch us if you can!”

“Fine, you little brat!”

Under Nameless Nie’s incredulous gaze, the provoked Auntie Ling climbed up in an extremely short amount of time like a gecko.

“Great Aunt Ling, it had nothing to do with me! It’s all her... It was Aunt Ling! She beat me and insisted on taking me out to play! I was forced... Ah... Don’t hit my face...”

...

In the living room of the mansion:

Nameless Nie and Ling Miao were both holding water buckets. They were both punished by Auntie Ling.

“Say, I’m at least the only man in this family, but Great Aunt Ling doesn’t respect me at all or show me any face. Is that appropriate? I want to rebel! She’s crueller than my mom!” Nameless Nie grumbled, brimming with disgruntlement.

“We deserved this punishment,” Ling Miao replied aloofly.

“I think you’re just used to being slaved around! Your kind of thinking is too frightening! What do you mean we deserve this punishment? I’m telling you, you have to rebel! Like when my parents made me go to school when I was in the Independent State, I didn’t go! What could they have done to me?!”

Nameless Nie declared proudly.

“Hm... And then?” Ling Miao was brimming with curiosity. A concept like resistance was much too foreign to her.

“And then... they hired a private tutor for me at home... Sigh...” Nameless Nie wanted to cry.

“Oh, then it’s better to not rebel.” Ling Miao shook her head.

“Wrong! Rebelling is a type of attitude.” Nameless Nie had an enigmatic expression.

“You want to rebel, huh?!”

Auntie Ling’s shouting was suddenly heard from upstairs.

“Great Auntie Ling, it’s Aunt Ling who wanted to rebel! You mustn’t be angry; I’m trying to correct Aunt’s thinking! I promise I can accomplish it and I’ll make her repent sincerely!”

Nameless Nie yelled back hastily.

Ling Miao: “...”

When Auntie Ling was quiet again, Nameless Nie couldn’t help but look at Ling Miao. “Say, do you really not know how to rebel?! I was already doing you wrong like that, but you still didn’t fight back?”

Ling Miao turned to him. “Didn’t you say I’m your aunt? There’s nothing wrong with me protecting you a little.”

...

The next morning at dawn, Nameless Nie was arranged to study together with Ling Miao.

“You have your culture lessons today, personally taught by me, your most heroic and well-esteemed mother and great aunt,” Ling Miao announced to Nameless Nie and Ling Miao, who were currently eating breakfast.

“Aunt, what level of education do you have, huh? You’re teaching us?” Nameless Nie questioned Auntie Ling.

Auntie Ling was startled for a moment before she turned contemplative. “I had two years of private school when I was young...”

“In today’s terms... that would be... a kindergarten education?” Nameless Nie was dumbfounded.

“What? You have objections?” Auntie Ling viciously glared at Nameless Nie.

“Great Aunt Ling, that’s great! Your education level suits me perfectly! I’ll listen to your lessons well...”

Nameless Nie swore that this was the easiest culture class he’d ever attended. He never knew culture classes could be this uncultured...

2473 Side Story; Nameless Nie 6

“Little brat, you’re quite good at math.”

Auntie Ling stared at Nameless Nie.

Nameless Nie’s lips turned up as he actually pulled out an archaic abacus from his jacket. “Great Aunt Ling, just poke around the Independent State. Who doesn’t know that I, Nameless Nie, am the king of math, the supreme leader amongst prodigies? You know the Shen family of the Independent State, right? They’re the wealthiest clan in the Independent State. But just watch—one day, I’ll knock them down using my unparalleled math skills and business-gear-ed brain!”

Auntie Ling’s lips twitched. “I finally understand why your parents sent you here... You have such superb talent, but you won’t do something proper and want to run off to do business?”

“Great Aunt Ling, you’re too stupid.” Nameless Nie sighed, his expression serious. “Doing business is great! What’s the point of learning martial arts as a boss? When I become a boss, I can hire countless martial arts experts for my usage and I can establish my own mercenary team. I’m rich and I would be the boss, so those experts would all have to listen to me!”

“True.” Auntie Ling nodded. “However... I’m afraid this reasoning doesn’t suit the Independent State, no?”

Nameless Nie’s thoughts would be completely valid in the outside world, but what kind of place was the Independent State? The Shen family was simply an exception; not everyone could become the next Shen family.

“Anyway, does the Nie family lack money? The clan is prosperous and its business is flourishing, but they simply lack an expert to hold down the clan. Your parents are hoping you

will come out successful, so stop thinking about these useless things. I'm confiscating the abacus." Auntie Ling immediately took away his abacus.

"That's fine." Nameless Nie smirked as he pulled another item out of his pocket. "I still have a calculator!"

"Also confiscated." Auntie Ling snatched the calculator.

"You...!" Nameless Nie turned furious at once.

"If you dare to curse, I'll slap your dirty mouth!" Auntie Ling threatened viciously.

"You... you did wonderfully..." Nameless Nie immediately deflated like a leaking balloon.

On the side, a rare faint smile actually appeared on Ling Miao's eternally glacial face. She also didn't know why this boy made her inexplicably happy but watching him was like watching a comedy movie.

"Great Aunt, you confiscated my most valuable possessions! There's no meaning to my life anymore! That's super unfair!" Nameless Nie appeared to be unable to take this lying down.

"What do you want then? You can snatch them back if you're capable!" Auntie Ling pursed her lips.

"I'm a civilized and upright person, so you must trade them with something of equal value." Nameless Nie displayed his businessman nature.

Not waiting for her to respond, Nameless Nie continued, "What's your most valuable possession, Auntie Ling?"

"My daughter," Auntie Ling blurted out.

"Then I will trade my calculator and my abacus for Aunt Ling Miao," Nameless Nie quickly said.

"Am I only worth a calculator and an abacus?" Ling Miao looked at Nameless Nie with slightly furrowed brows.

Auntie Ling was intrigued. "Why do you want Ling Miao?"

"Why do you want my calculator and abacus?" Nameless Nie retorted.

“How should I know?” Auntie Ling replied.

“Then how should I know? Anyway, they’re both our most valuable possessions, so it’s fine as long as I’m not taking a loss,” Nameless Nie said.

Auntie Ling: “...”

“Alright, then we’ve come to a happy decision. Great Aunt Ling, Aunt Ling Miao will be mine from now on, so if you ever want to punish me, it’ll be directed toward Aunt Ling Miao and she’ll take the punishment for me,” Nameless Nie added after a moment of thought.

2474 Side Story; Nameless Nie 7

“I don’t agree,” Ling Miao interjected.

“That won’t work. This is a trade between Great Aunt Ling and I, unless you make her return my calculator and abacus to me,” Nameless Nie rebutted with a pout.

Auntie Ling stared at Nameless Nie like he was an alien, unable to help herself from giving him a thumbs-up. “You’re the most thick-faced and shameless person I’ve ever seen in my life. You’re still young right now, but when you grow up... just how thick will your face become?”

“Thick-faced?” Nameless Nie looked at her in astonishment. “Great Aunt Ling, how could you talk about me like that? How am I thick-faced? Please watch your words and don’t hurt my fragile heart, alright?”

Auntie Ling: “...”

After Auntie Ling left, Nameless Nie glanced at Ling Miao and grinned. “From now on, you’ll be my attendant. Great Aunt Ling already sold you to me—wait no, she traded you to me. You have to listen to me and can’t object to what I say or do anything different than what I tell you!”

Ling Miao didn’t even look at Nameless Nie and turned around, heading upstairs to her bedroom.

Nameless Nie hastily shouted, “Hey... Don’t run away! I have to negotiate with the fatty nearby later! You need to come to bolster my courage!”

“No.” Ling Miao’s voice drifted from upstairs. “That fatty is the local tyrant around here. Don’t provoke him.”

“Hmph, fine! I’ll go myself if you don’t go!” Nameless Nie snorted before leaving the house while swaggering.

...

“Nameless Nie, you b*stard, you actually dared to deceive me?” In the forest, the youth revealed a vicious expression as he stared at Nameless Nie.

“F*ck you, who deceived you?” Nameless Nie retorted.

“You took my money and said you’d get your elder sister to go on a date with me, didn’t you?” the short and fat kid shouted.

“What you said is correct, but I also didn’t break my word.” Nameless Nie nodded without denying it.

Some time ago, Nameless Nie got to know the famous fat local tyrant, and the two of them made a trade. The roly-poly kid would give Nameless Nie a certain amount of compensation and Nameless Nie would introduce his elder sister to him.

However, day after day passed, but Nameless Nie still didn’t fulfill his promise and the roly-poly kid, who still hadn’t seen Ling Miao, finally became impatient.

“Since you admit it, great. Tell me how we should resolve this matter?” The roly-poly kid irritably looked at Nameless Nie.

“Resolve what... I’ll definitely keep my promise and bring my sister here,” Nameless Nie said.

“Give me a timeframe. Just when will you bring Ling Miao to me?” The roly-poly kid questioned him.

Nameless Nie was “startled” and exclaimed with a “surprised” expression, “What Ling Miao? Who said I’ll bring Ling Miao to you?”

“Nameless Nie, I’ve given you the money already. Are you playing with me, huh?!” The roly-poly kid looked ferocious. “You promised you’d bring your sister to me yourself!”

Nameless Nie shook his head though. “D*mn fatso, I did say that, but Ling Miao is my aunt, not my sister. I said I would bring my sister to you; I didn’t say I’d bring my aunt to you, correct?”

“What did you say?” The fatso was dumbfounded. Ling Miao’s age was very similar to Nameless Nie, so how was she an entire generation above him? His aunt?

“Nameless Nie... you b*stard! Alright then! Didn't you ask about my reputation around here? You dare to trick me? You're dead!” The roly-poly kid had a menacing expression.

2475 Side Story; Nameless

Nie 8

Nameless Nie glared at the fatty. “Blah! Come here if you’re so great! Your Grandfather Nameless will knock out your front teeth! I’ll own you!”

“Nameless Nie, you piece of sh*t. You dare to act so arrogant with me?!” The roly-poly kid was furious.

“Hold on...” Nameless Nie called out when he saw the fatty ferociously charging toward him. “How about this? Give me a little more money, and I’ll bring my aunt here and introduce her to you. What do you think?”

“It’s useless even if you bring your mom here!” The fatty picked up a rock from the ground. “You’ll be my father if I don’t kill you today.”

“Huh? They all say you’re the famous tyrant around here, but how come I can’t tell at all? What era is it? You want to do a 1v1 with me?” Nameless Nie hastily said when he saw the fatty’s intentions.

The roly-poly kid paused, not understanding Nameless Nie’s meaning. He demanded frankly, “Nameless Nie, you piece of sh*t. What do you mean?”

“What do I mean?” Nameless Nie snorted. “Let’s set up a fight if you have the balls! What’s so great about 1v1? We can’t show off our positions or statuses with that at all! How about this—we’ll decide on a time and place and each find our own people if we can. Whoever can bring more people is mightier. Whoever wins will be the new tyrant in this town. How about that?”

The fatty was quiet for a moment, as though he was considering it.

“Hahaha, d*mn fatso! I bet you can’t summon anyone, so you must be terrified to death right now! How about you give me a

kowtow and we'll leave this matter behind us!" Nameless Nie mocked.

"Bullsh*t!" The roly-poly kid viciously glared at Nameless Nie. "I'm afraid? Haha, what a funny joke! I've never cried once since I was born! The word 'afraid' doesn't exist in my dictionary! I don't even know how to write it!"

"Then let's set up a fight time!" Nameless Nie taunted.

"Alright! Let's do it. I'm telling you, I have 20 brothers. We'll meet up here again tomorrow afternoon! Whoever doesn't come is a runt!" the fatty declared.

"Sure! Whoever doesn't come is a runt." Nameless Nie nodded.

...

Nearby, Ling Miao frowned lightly. Nameless Nie actually used her to conduct business and offended this little tyrant.

She was originally a little worried about Nameless Nie's safety, but after following him, she discovered her worries were unfounded. It wouldn't be a loss even if he was beaten to death by this fatty.

Not only did he bargain with her but he also solicited a fight. He barely knew anyone here. Even if he did, no one would be willing to provoke that little tyrant. Who could Nameless Nie find to help him?

When Ling Miao got home, she thought Nameless Nie would seek help from her or her mom, but he didn't mention a word.

...

The next day, at the agreed-upon time:

They were in the same small forest as yesterday.

The roly-poly kid really did bring a dozen or so youths.

Soon, Nameless Nie appeared in the roly-poly kid's line of sight.

"Hahaha, Nameless Nie, you piece of sh*t, how many people did you bring?" The fatty was gloating.

“Oh, I brought only one person,” Nameless Nie replied.

“One person?” The fatty was startled briefly before bursting into laughter. “You’re really suicidal! Come on, call out the wimpy b*stard you brought here!”

“You can’t talk like that... What wimpy b*stard? How could you curse like that?!” Nameless Nie declared, “You mustn’t curse. Be civilized!”

2476 Side Story; Nameless Nie 9

“So what if I cursed? You did bring a wimpy b*stard! Coward! Piece of trash!” the fatty mocked.

“Sigh...” Nameless Nie sighed and turned to the woods behind him. “Come out, Uncle!”

A second later, a man holding a leather belt marched out from the trees.

When the fatty saw the man, he jolted and his expression dropped.

The fatty never expected the person Nameless Nie brought... would actually be his dad...

As Nameless Nie watched the fatty chased around by the man holding the whip, he dug out a bag of seeds from his pocket. “You’re welcome, Uncle. Children have to be disciplined from a young age. He’s so young but he’s already learned how to arrange fights, so what will he do when he grows up? You should just beat him to death now.”

“Little mongrel; you already know how to arrange fights, huh? You don’t know anything or have any skills and I sent you to school, but you actually ditched class?!”

The man mercilessly whipped the fatty with his belt.

“Ahh... Dad, I won’t do it again... AHH, I really won’t do it again...” Scream after scream tore out of the fatty’s mouth. He’d been struck several times by the belt already.

“I’ll show you how I’m going to clean house today! I’ll make you learn your lesson!” The man sounded disappointed.

The companions brought by the fatty were all stupefied and dazed. No one could’ve expected the boy who proposed the fight to be this thick-faced! He actually summoned the parents and called the father!

It was clearly him who proposed the fight, alright? How could he possibly be this shameless?!

Nearby, Nameless Nie cracked a seed open before smacking his lips. “Sigh, that’s right. He’s misbehaved at such a young age, learned from bad apples and looks at bad people as models. When he grows up, he’ll definitely become a pest for society. Uncle, your son was forcing me to introduce my aunt to him to befriend her. When I wasn’t willing, he cursed me out and hit me...”

The fatty wanted to say something but immediately suffered another whiplash. He could only cradle his head and burrow to avoid the pain.

“Eh, that’s not all. He steals all the pocket money my great aunt gives me every day, saying it’s a protection fee I owe him... If I don’t give him the money, he sbeat me and has beaten me to tears a few times.” Nameless Nie sighed.

As the fatty wailed, he viciously glared at Nameless Nie. Freaking... It was obviously this piece of sh*t who conned his money...

“Dad, he’s the one who tricked me out of my money...” the fatty yelled.

However, the man immediately cracked a whip onto his son’s back again. “You’ve learned how to lie, huh? Look at how old he is and how old you are, yet you’re saying he tricked you out of your money? I’m gonna kill you today!”

The fatty had nowhere to shed his tears, despair written all over his face.

“And you were forcing Nameless to bring his aunt out, huh? Wimpy b*stard! What do you want to do? Do you want to take off into space?! How old are you, huh?!” The more the man spoke, the angrier he got. He raised his belt and kept chasing his son.

After beating the fatty for half an hour, the man tossed aside the belt—ripped from its use—and walked over to Nameless Nie. “How much money did my plump kid steal from you?”

“Eh... it wasn't that much actually. It's just grocery money my great aunt gives me every day... It's about... this much...”
Nameless Nie pointed a few fingers up.

“What a good child. You know to help your family out at such a young age and know how to buy groceries.” The man exasperatedly shook his head as he glanced at his own kid.

“Here's the money back, Uncle will return it to you. If he bullies you again, come and tell Uncle,” the man said.

“Alright, Uncle! Thank you, Uncle!” Nameless Nie frantically nodded.

2477 Side Story; Nameless Nie 10

“I earned a lot of money on the side of the road, no one stop me, let me earn more...”

Nameless Nie seemed to be in quite a good mood after watching the fatty suffer a round of fierce beating from his father. He carried the money the fatty’s father gave him and skipped his way home while humming a song.

Far away, Ling Miao, who secretly followed Nameless Nie to the forest, didn’t know what to say as she watched this scene in front of her. Nameless Nie’s appearance had introduced her to a whole new world.

From now on, all the youths within ten miles of this town would know of Nameless Nie, and no one would be willing to provoke him.

...

“Great Aunt Ling, do you think I run fast?”

Inside the mansion, Nameless Nie was running swiftly.

“Fast.” Auntie Ling placed down a plate of fruit on the coffee table.

“My martial arts skills are already at the peak! I’m invincible!” Nameless Nie declared with mirth.

Auntie Ling and Ling Miao were both dumbfounded. How was this weakling invincible?

“Aren’t you just running a little fast?” Auntie Ling replied.

Nameless Nie smiled faintly at Auntie Ling, his expression enigmatic. “Only speed can’t be beaten in the world of martial arts!”

Auntie Ling: “...”

Ling Miao: “...”

Nameless Nie didn't know how long he maintained this sort of lifestyle. But the longer he kept it up, the more he became used to it, and he even enjoyed it incredibly.

Many years passed.

At a desolate area outside of a town.

There was a tall and handsome man in a sports outfit.

Next to him was a girl with a cool expression not prone to speech nor smiles; she had a glacial aura. She resembled an aloof saintess who stood above the mass and kept people from approaching easily.

“Ling Miao, what do you think Old Ling was thinking? Why did she make us become some bullsh*t mercenaries? Being a mercenary is fine, but what's the deal with not getting paid? Is she treating us like free labor?” Nameless Nie complained.

Ling Miao glanced at Nameless Nie. “If you don't like it, you can go back.”

“That won't do. Old Ling would beat me to death if I went back. Forget it. After we get this job done, I'll definitely make Old Ling pay me a salary,” Nameless Nie replied after a moment of thought.

...

“That man and woman can't be the mercenaries hired by that woman, right?”

Far away, two pretty-looking men evaluated Nameless Nie and Ling Miao.

“Merciful Buddha, this poor monk thinks they should be the mercenaries,” the pretty man dressed in Daoist attire answered.

“Who cares if they are or not? We'll kill them first. That man is quite good-looking... Sigh, look at that woman next to him—it's obvious she's a vixen, a hussy, a sl*t who specializes in seducing men! I'll make her beg for death!” the other pretty man dressed in bright red robes declared.

“Merciful Buddha, you just think she’s beautiful,” the Taoist devotee retorted.

“Bullsh*t! How is she pretty? She can’t compare to one ten-thousandth of me!” the red-robed man ridiculed.

After saying that, the red-robed man swiftly dashed over and arrived next to Nameless Nie and Ling Miao.

“I developed this road and I planted this tree, so if you want to pass, leave your life behind,” the red-robed man said gravely.

“Who are you?”

Nameless Nie glanced at the red-robed man.

“You haven’t even heard of my name before? I’m the pine tree standing above thousands of bushes!” the red-robed man replied.

“Your surname is Bushes... and your name is Pine Tree Standing Above Thousands of?” Nameless Nie asked curiously.

“This madam is called Spray of Flowers!” the red-robed man shouted.

“Oh, Spray of Flowers, what do you want?” Nameless Nie inquired.

“I developed this road and I planted this tree, so if you want to pass, leave your life behind,” the red-robed man repeated.

Nameless Nie immediately scrutinized the surroundings.

“There aren’t any trees here though.”

2478 Side Story; Nameless Nie 11

“Are you freaking pretending to be stupid or are you really stupid...?” Spray of Flowers was dumbfounded. Was the problem whether there was a tree or not?!

“Plus there isn’t any earth here; it’s all sand and dust. Could you be a road repairer?” Nameless Nie inquired further.

“Merciful Buddha.” At this moment, a man dressed in a Taoist devotee outfit walked over with a smile on his face.

“Patron, your ophryon is looking black. I want to read your fortune for you,” the little Daoist devotee continued.

When Ling Miao saw this duo, her brows furrowed.

Spray of Flowers...

Taoist Devotee...

Perhaps other people didn’t know these two people, but Ling Miao had heard about them in recent years.

Vicious and merciless, slaughtering countless people.

“Merciful Buddha, patron, I’ve looked at your face... I think you’ll definitely have an injury of some sort in your upcoming days. If you’re willing to spend some money, patron, this poor monk is willing to break this blood curse for you.” The Taoist Devotee looked grim.

“Are you actually a Taoist devotee or a monk?” Nameless Nie examined the Taoist Devotee.

“Patron, are you blind?” The Taoist Devotee spun in a circle.

“This poor monk is a Taoist Devotee, of course.”

“Ah... I see.” Nameless Nie appeared pensive. “Merciful Buddha isn’t suitable. You should say Heavenly Venerate Immeasurable. ‘This poor monk’ also isn’t suitable.”

“Heh, that’s unimportant,” Taoist Devotee replied with a chuckle. “If I’m correct, you two are the mercenaries hired by Ling Yun, correct?”

“What? You know Auntie Ling?” Nameless Nie inquired curiously.

“Heh, when Ling Yun was young, she swept across the land, so of course I’ve heard of her name. Since that was your response, it appears you really are Ling Yun’s mercenaries,” the Taoist Devotee said.

“What a coincidence. Your target this time is Zhao Yechao while the two of us were hired by Zhao Yechao... So look, are you going to return the way you came, or are you going to set home here permanently?”

Nameless Nie smiled and raised his right arm. With a giant boom, he punched the red-robed man several meters back.

Attacked by Nameless Nie without warning, Spray of Flowers wailed ceaselessly, trying to clutch his head.

“Don’t you think you’re too arrogant?” Nameless Nie questioned.

Spray of Flowers protested, “He’s arrogant... so why the heck did you hit me?! Hit him! Why did you hit me, huh?!”

Nameless Nie was startled.

Bam!

A second later, before Taoist Devotee could react, he was sent flying back with a punch from Nameless Nie.

“Sissy, you’re right,” Nameless Nie said.

Ling Miao: “...”

Ling Miao couldn’t help but take a few looks at him.

Since the day Nameless Nie came to her home, Mother said Nameless Nie was extremely talented.

However, Ling Miao never would’ve expected Nameless Nie to have gotten to his current state in martial arts despite lacking perseverance and continuity in his studies.

It wouldn't be an overstatement to call him a genius.

"D*mn Taoist, let's kill this adulterous couple!" Spray of Flowers stood up with clenched teeth.

"Don't spout nonsense." Ling Miao frowned. "I'm his aunt."

"Huh? Aunt?"

Spray of Flowers and Taoist Devotee looked at each other, bewildered. This woman took good care of herself!

"What brand of skincare products do you use?" Spray of Flowers blurted out almost reflexively.

Ling Miao: "..."

"You're so arrogant that you won't even answer? You trampy vixen!" Spray of Flowers turned to Taoist Devotee. "Don't waste time with them! Let's kill this adulterous couple!"

Ling Miao: "..."

Seven to eight minutes later, Nameless Nie was sitting on top of Taoist Devotee and Spray of Flowers. "Eh, even though you're quite martially strong, you ran into Grandfather Nameless, so you still have a ways to go."

2479 Side Story; Nameless Nie 12

“Ling Miao, how do you think we should deal with them?” Nameless Nie asked Ling Miao cheerily.

“However you please,” Ling Miao replied expressionlessly.

Nameless Nie thought over it. “How about killing them?”

“Mm.” Ling Miao nodded.

“Wait... you said your name is Nameless?” Taoist Devotee hastily cried.

“Your Grandfather Nameless doesn’t change his name whether he travels or stays at home,” Nameless Nie said.

“Don’t tell me your surname is Nie?” Taoist Devotee continued.

Nameless Nie and Ling Miao were both surprised. How did this Taoist Devotee know?

“How do you know my surname?” Nameless Nie was curious.

“D*mn, your surname is really freaking Nie! It’s not a coincidence, right?!” Taoist Devotee was more astonished than Nameless Nie.

Before Nameless Nie could respond, Taoist Devotee said, “Don’t tell me you’re Nameless Nie of the Nie family... from Yun City... in the Independent State.”

“D*mn, you know that too? Did you look into me?” Nameless Nie was startled.

“D*mn quack, you know him?” Spray of Flowers quickly asked from his spot underneath Nameless Nie.

“Captain, it really is you! I thought you had died!” Taoist Devotee hugged Nameless Nie’s thigh.

“Don’t try to play close with me. What captain? I’ve never seen you before,” Nameless Nie said.

“It’s me... Baldy! Back then, in the Independent State, I was a member of the Nameless Caravan! There was only the two of us in the caravan. You were the captain and I was a member. Have you forgotten?!” Taoist Devotee looked worked up.

“Huh?!” Nameless Nie was stunned as he looked at Taoist Devotee. “You’re Baldy?”

Taoist Devotee nodded frantically. “That’s right, I’m Baldy! You’ve tricked money out of me when I was young. You said it was my tuition fee, made me follow you and join the Nameless Caravan then we got rich together! You’d take me to feast on liquor and meat!”

“Sh*t, it really is you, b*stard!” Nameless Nie lifted Taoist Devotee up. “Then you ran to the Nie residence and told my mom I tricked money from you. My dad and my mom both gave me a beating together...”

“Huh? That happened? Why didn’t I know? No, that absolutely didn’t happen!” Taoist Devotee vehemently shook his head. “Eh... I’m guessing it was someone else tricked by you who tattled on you! I definitely didn’t do it!”

“Bullsh*t! My mom said it was a little shady-looking badly who tattled on me while licking his snot! Who else could it be but you? You freaking loved to lick your snot the most when you were young!” Nameless Nie said.

Taoist Devotee: “...”

Spray of Flowers: “D*mn quack, you were actually that disgusting?!”

“Captain... A real man doesn’t boast about his past achievements. I didn’t see you ever since that, so I thought you had been beaten to death by your mom.” Taoist Devotee sighed. “I originally planned to learn trade and business from you but then you were gone, so I could only learn martial arts... I’m working for someone now. I was out of money recently, so I became a mercenary for Zhao Yechao. You

mustn't seek out Zhao Yechao. He's laid down a foolproof trap already and he's just waiting for you!"

"D*mn quack, you betrayed us this fast?!" Spray of Flowers exclaimed.

"Nonsense, we grew up playing in the mud together since we were kids." Nameless Nie glanced at Spray of Flowers.

Spray of Flowers: "..."

Nameless Nie glanced at Taoist Devotee. "Why are you a mercenary? Work for me from now on! My Nameless Caravan will blossom brilliantly from now on and replace the Shen family..."

"I believe you, Captain. It absolutely won't be a problem with your shamelessness. We have to carry out our promise from when we were kids: we'll eat whatever we want and make the Shen family serve tea and water for us. We'll eat swallow's nest and shark fin and toss away a bowl for every bowl we drink!" Taoist Devotee nodded eagerly.

"Baldy, you're right! You know me best!" Nameless Nie said.

"Captain, how much starting funds do you have?" Taoist Devotee asked curiously.

"I don't have any right now," Nameless Nie replied after a moment of thought.

Taoist Devotee: "..."

2480 Side Story; Nameless Nie 13

Taoist Devotee stared at Nameless Nie, grumbles flaring up inside of him.

Based on his understanding of Nameless Nie, it wasn't probable for him to not have any money...

Putting aside the fact that Nameless Nie was a master of trickery and had been swindling since he was young, with his personality of being able to use 10 cents like it was 10 dollars, he should be able to save up quite a bit of money. How could he be out of money?

"Captain, if you don't have money, you must have something else, right?" Taoist Devotee furtively asked him.

The corners of Nameless Nie's lips turned up, and his expression was confident. "You're right."

"Just what do you have, Captain?" Taoist Devotee was invigorated instantly.

Nameless Nie was silent for a moment before responding, "I have a dream."

"Captain, see how it's getting late? We still have something to take care of... How about this—we'll get together another time. I'll buy you a meal next time," Taoist Devotee said.

Nameless Nie immediately sent Taoist Devotee a few glances. "I understand. You're hinting at me... to buy you a meal."

Taoist Devotee: "... When did I make a hint?

"The town is nearby." Ling Miao spoke up quietly. "I happen to have a few questions to ask you two too."

"Gorgeous has spoken. Let's go!" Nameless Nie picked up Spray of Flowers.

"Eh, isn't she your aunt?" Spray of Flowers was curious.

“So what if she’s my aunt?” Nameless Nie asked.

“She’s your aunt but you don’t call her ‘Aunt’, you call her ‘gorgeous’?” Spray of Flowers asked.

“Isn’t my aunt gorgeous?” Nameless Nie retorted.

“She is gorgeous...”

“Then that’s enough.”

Spray of Flowers: “...” While that was true, he still felt like something was off.

...

Near evening, the four of them finally arrived at the nearby town.

“Alright, tell me—what do you want to eat? I’m paying today,” Nameless Nie announced generously.

“Captain, how about we go eat...”

Before Taoist Devotee could finish, Nameless Nie suddenly pointed at a food stall on the side of the road. “I’ll buy you guys some egg fried rice? We’ll add an extra egg for everyone and ask the owner to give us some appetizers on the house.”

Taoist Devotee: “...”

Spray of Flowers glanced at Nameless Nie. “Aren’t you too stingy? Even if we’re willing to eat egg fried rice, your beautiful aunt might not want to eat it.”

“What is it about egg fried rice, huh? My beautiful aunt is never picky.” Nameless Nie snorted and turned to Ling Miao. “Beautiful aunt, do you want to eat some egg fried rice paired with some salted vegetables?”

Ling Miao shook her head. “You’ve already taken me to eat four days of egg fried rice and dumplings. Let’s eat something else.”

Eaten four days of egg fried rice and dumplings?

Spray of Flowers and Taoist Devotee stared at each other, bewildered.

“Hey, captain, how about we go eat a western meal? Worse comes to worst, Spray of Flowers will pay.” Taoist Devotee turned to Nameless Nie.

“Huh?” Spray of Flowers’ eyes shot open. “Why should I have to pay? You guys were the ones who grew up playing in the mud together. You’ve finally met up again after so many years, so aren’t you guys too shameless to make me, an outsider, pay? Where’s your face?”

“Look at what you’re saying. We’re all children of vagrants, so we don’t care about those unnecessary cordialities. The most important thing is being happy. It doesn’t matter who pays. I don’t care,” Nameless Nie said.

“I care,” Spray of Flowers rebutted bluntly.

“Forget it. I will pay,” Ling Miao interjected after some time.

“Are you joking? Do you think I can’t pay? Why do you need to pay?” Nameless Nie frowned and shot a glance at Taoist Devotee and Spray of Flowers with a snort. “Those two are seriously too stingy.”

Spray of Flowers: “...”

Taoist Devotee: “...”

It was clearly Nameless Nie himself who suggested he would pay, but now, he was calling them stingy?

2481 Side Story; Nameless Nie 14

Soon, they found a mid-tier western restaurant.

After the group was seated, the server handed several menus to them.

“Captain, I’ll have a steak... and some foie gras, a cream soup, and also a salad,” Taoist Devotee said.

“Same for me,” Spray of Flowers said.

“What? Steak? Foie gras? Don’t you know those are unhealthy? Us martial arts practitioners live our lives on the edge of a blade, so we must eat healthily. What if we ate something bad before fighting with an enemy and got a stomach ache?!” Nameless Nie frowned and turned to the server. “Um, give them both a bowl of egg fried rice with some salted vegetables.”

Spray of Flowers: “...”

Taoist Devotee: “...”

Ling Miao: “...”

The server looked troubled. “Sir, this is a western restaurant. We don’t have egg fried rice and salted vegetables. Our steak is quite nice though. How about you give it a try?”

“Then give them a salad each,” Nameless Nie said.

“Sir, are you sure you only want two salads?” the server asked after shooting Taoist Devotee and Spray of Flowers a glance.

“I’m sure,” Nameless Nie said.

“Alright, then what would you and this ma’am like to order?” the server inquired.

“Give this beautiful miss a steak, foie gras, salad, cream soup, and also a dessert. I would like a steak for myself,” Nameless Nie replied.

Taoist Devotee: "..."

Spray of Flowers: "..."

What happened to how those things were unhealthy? What happened to not wanting to get a stomachache?

"Um, what about liquor? Do you want any?" the server asked.

"Captain, we haven't seen each other for so many years. We can forget about the other stuff, but we must have a few drinks together!" Taoist Devotee hastily said.

Nameless Nie nodded. "Mm, you're right. How about this—we'll order the best liquor they have—the highest grade and the most expensive."

"Sir, we have a lot of top-grade liquor here. What would you like?" the server responded with a smile.

"Give us two jars of Moutai! I want the best and most expensive one!" Nameless Nie waved his hand.

The server's lip twitched. "Sorry, sir, we don't have Moutai here."

"You don't have Moutai?" Nameless Nie sighed. "You guys don't have this or that. You don't know how to earn money... how are you conducting your business?"

"My sincerest apologies, sir, but we are a western restaurant... Will a red wine be alright?" the server suggested.

"Hold on." Nameless Nie picked up the menu and flipped to the liquor page. "Alright, alright. Red wine then. Give me a bottle of Louis XIII 1876."

The server's smile was awkward. "Sir, we don't have that."

"Then give me a bottle of Chateau Lafite 1787," Nameless Nie said.

The server's smile disappeared. "Sir, the wine you're ordering is probably more expensive than our restaurant. We really can't provide it."

"If you don't have anything, what shitty business are you doing?!" Nameless Nie was displeased. "Give me four glasses

of plain water!”

“Sir, we’re truly sorry.” The server sighed.

“What use is saying sorry? How about this—just give us two dishes on the house and we’ll consider it an apology,” Nameless Nie said.

“Captain, how about I pay…” Taoist Devotee looked at Nameless Nie, dumbfounded.

“Are you kidding? I already said I’d pay. Of course, if you really want to pay, you can.” Nameless Nie turned to the server. “Give us the best bottles of wine your restaurant has. Also, give me another order of steak, an order of foie gras, a dessert, and a bowl of cream soup. He’s paying.”

2482 Side Story; Nameless Nie 15

“Um, what’s-your-face.” Nameless Nie turned to Spray of Flowers. “Spray of Pine.”

Spray of Flowers’ lips twitched. “It’s Spray of Flowers!”

“Spray of Flowers, do you want to join the group?” Nameless Nie asked with a smile.

“Heh, even if this madam dies and doesn’t have a home to return to, I won’t collude with you, a criminal!” Spray of Flowers snorted.

Nameless Nie eerily said, “Of course, you can choose to decline, but I’d have to kill you. After all, you’re a mercenary sent by Zhao Yechao.”

“Actually, I think it’d be fine if I joined too... After all, you’re so good at business, so I think I can live in the lap of luxury by following you.” Spray of Flowers’ expression changed, and he hastily corrected himself with a smile.

“You’ve finally said something right. Living in the lap of luxury is the most basic standard,” Nameless Nie said.

...

After learning about Taoist Devotee and Spray of Flowers’ price for hire, Nameless Nie’s eyes shone. He clicked with the two of them easily and formed a mercenary team.

“What’s the mercenary group called?” Taoist Devotee looked at Nameless Nie.

Nameless Nie mulled over it for a moment. “It’s called Lots of Money Mercenary Team!”

Taoist Devotee: “...”

Spray of Flowers: “...”

Ling Miao: “...”

“Um, Captain, Lots of Money Mercenary Team doesn’t sound fierce at all! I think we should be called the World Go Round Mercenary Team!”

“Huh? No way! I think the name Wealthiest Mercenary Group is fiercer!” Taoist Devotee interjected.

Nameless Nie: “That’s worse than my Lots of Money!”

“I still think World Goes Around is better; money will make the world go round! It’s so meaningful!”

Nameless Nie looked at Ling Miao shortly after. “Beautiful aunt, how about you think of a name for us?”

Ling Miao didn’t say anything and picked up a pen from the table, writing a line of words on a piece of white paper.

“God Killing Mercenary Team”

...

After filling their stomachs, Nameless Nie told Taoist Devotee and Spray of Flowers to head home first.

Nameless Nie got a lot of intelligence from them.

Including how Zhao Yechao was sending many experts to ambush him and Ling Miao and how he also possessed firearms.

Nameless Nie instructed Taoist Devotee to go back and take care of the firearms first.

In the woods:

Nameless Nie caught Ling Miao, who fell down from a tree, and seized the opportunity to carry her in his arms.

“Release... me!” A light blush crept over Ling Miao’s cheeks.

“Okay.” Nameless Nie reflexively let go, and Ling Miao crashed onto the ground with a bang.

“You!” Ling Miao’s face was as black as the bottom of a pan.

“What? I told you not to go on that tree to pick the fruit, but you wouldn’t listen. So you fell, no?” Nameless Nie shrugged.

Ling Miao ignored Nameless Nie in the end and worriedly sat down at the base of the tree. “Are those two people trustworthy?”

“If they weren’t trustworthy, I wouldn’t have let them go back,” Nameless Nie replied aloofly, his smile fading.

Nameless Nie paused briefly. “Nameless Nie is the killer of your father. Since Old Ling asked us to do this task, we must accomplish it.”

“But I’m worried...” Ling Miao knitted her brows.

“No need to worry.” Nameless Nie looked at her and gently grasped both of her hands. “I’m here.”

Ling Miao shuddered and reflexively pulled back her hands.

Nameless Nie pursed his lips. “What is this? You held my hand every day when you were young! How come you can hold it, but I can’t?”

Ling Miao exasperatedly glanced at him and was quiet for a moment before stretching her hand out. “Here.”

Nameless Nie was just mouthing off and didn’t expect Ling Miao to really extend her hand. The tips of his ears reddened inexplicably as he slowly reached out and gently clasped the girl’s soft hands...

...

2483 Side Story; Nameless Nie 16

Several days later, inside a forest:

Thanks to Taoist Devotee and Spray of Flowers acting as spies, all of Zhao Yechao's plans collapsed within three days and he was killed with a punch from Nameless Nie.

"God Killing Mercenaries" was officially established.

...

Every other year, Nameless Nie would make a two-month trip to the Independent State. Two months later, he'd return to that little town and endure Auntie Ling's boundless nagging and occasional beating.

Many years later, as Nameless Nie looked at this incredibly familiar town, an indescribable tenderness surfaced in his eyes.

The Ferris Wheel had been torn down and the mansion looked much older. However, those two people didn't change much in his memories.

"Old Ling, open the door!"

Nameless Nie shouted.

Auntie Ling instantly opened the door.

"Eh, my little ancestor, when did you come back?"

Auntie Ling was still as beautiful as the day they first met. It was as if time hadn't left any marks on her face.

"I just came back. I wanted to surprise you." Nameless Nie strode into the living room with a traveling bag on his back.

"Good job, you little brat. You took two years to come back and you didn't even call us!" Auntie Ling quickly pulled out some fruits.

“Old Ling, what delicious food are you barbecuing?”

Nameless Nie sniffed the air.

“You came back at a good time. Ling Miao’s boyfriend also came over today and brought a lot of game,” Auntie Ling answered happily.

The smile on Nameless Nie’s face froze instantly and disappeared.

“Boyfriend... is that so? When did that happen?” Nameless Nie was absent-minded.

“They had a matchmaking session a few days ago,” Auntie Ling said.

“Matchmaking?” Nameless Nie furrowed his brows. “Old Ling, that’s too careless! They don’t know each other. Do you know who the other person is, what their character is like, what their family background is? Even if you wanted to find someone, you should find someone whose background you know well and everyone is familiar with, right?”

“What nonsense are you saying? You don’t need to worry about your aunt’s business. I’ve watched over that boy for a very long time. If he wasn’t suitable, I definitely wouldn’t have arranged for him and your aunt to be together.” Auntie Ling sliced an apple for Nameless Nie. “Eat it. When it’s dinner time, I’ll cook a few dishes for you.”

When Auntie Ling went to the kitchen, Nameless Nie set down the apple and stood up immediately, heading toward the study.

The study door was shut fully, a man’s laughter occasionally drifting out.

For some reason, an inexplicable, insuppressible fury surged inside of Nameless Nie.

Bam!

Nameless Nie kicked open the door.

Inside the study, the girl’s gaze landed on the entering Nameless Nie. The man wore glasses and had a chubby physique. He jolted in fright from Nameless Nie’s actions.

“Who are you?!” The man was displeased as he looked at Nameless Nie.

Nameless Nie ignored the man and stopped next to Ling Miao.
“Who’s he?”

“Boyfriend,” Ling Miao replied.

“Boyfriend? How come I didn’t know?” Nameless Nie questioned apathetically.

“Ling Miao, he is...?” the man asked with a frown.

“My nephew,” Ling Miao answered.

“Nephew...” The man was startled. He never expected this handsome and fit youth to actually be Ling Miao’s nephew. Moreover, wasn’t this nephew similar in age to Ling Miao?

“Heh... So you’re her nephew. Then there might be some misunderstanding,” the man said with a clap on Nameless Nie’s shoulder and a smile that he thought was cordial.

However, for some reason, when the man’s hand touched Nameless Nie’s shoulder, his whole body shuddered and he staggered backward clumsily.

2484 Side Story; Nameless Nie 17

“What did you call me?” Nameless Nie turned his head, his bright eyes filled with a terrifying shadow.

“Um... Ling Miao...” The man trembled in fright from Nameless Nie’s gaze. He’d never seen such a frightening gaze before. Even a ferocious beast from the zoo... couldn’t compare to one ten-thousandth of this.

“Nameless Nie, don’t make trouble.” Ling Miao shot Nameless Nie a displeased glance.

“Oh? Did I disturb you?”

Nameless Nie turned around and slammed the study door shut, splintering the wood in several places.

Ling Miao didn’t say anything to this, appearing to be deep in thought.

...

Back in the living room, Nameless Nie tossed his traveling bag on his back again and attempted to leave.

However, when he reached the door, he spun around and went back, throwing his traveling bag on the sofa again and sitting down on it as well.

“Little brat, what are you doing? What’s up with the big commotion?”

Auntie Ling asked Nameless Nie as she served the dishes on the dining table soon after.

“Nothing, I was just a little hungry. You took so long to finish, Old Ling—did you want to starve me to death?” Nameless Nie asked Auntie Ling.

“Look at you. It’s been so many years, but you’re still so impatient... Call your aunt and her boyfriend to come out for

dinner.” Auntie Ling took off her apron.

“Okay.” Nameless Nie stood up and walked to the study, kicking the door open.

After saying that, Nameless Nie turned and left...

“Ling Miao... does your nephew... have some misunderstanding about me? Why do I feel like something is off?” the man asked Ling Miao.

Ling Miao smiled and shook her head. “It doesn’t have anything to do with you.”

Ling Miao stood up and straightened up the books on the desk before walking to the dining room, shoulder to shoulder with the man.

The man wanted to hold Ling Miao’s right hand but was dodged by her.

Aren’t you going to be mine eventually... The man thought bitterly.

At the dining table, Auntie Ling sat at the head of the table while Nameless Nie sat next to the man.

“Auntie Ling, thank you for your hard work in making this table of delicious food,” the man praised Auntie Ling with a polite smile.

“It’s nothing. Eat more,” Auntie Ling replied.

“Little brat, here’s some hare.” Auntie Ling picked up a piece of hare meat and placed it in Nameless Nie’s bowl.

“I won’t eat it. I’m friends with rabbits,” Nameless Nie replied aloofly.

“...” Aunt Ling said, “Then eat this. It’s boar.”

“No, boars are my brothers,” Nameless Nie said.

“Is your nephew’s head alright?” the man whispered, leaning close to Ling Miao.

Ling Miao: “...”

“Li Chun, how are your parents doing?” Auntie Ling asked the man.

“Thank you for your concern, Auntie Ling. My parents are doing rather well. You know how my family has too many companies, so many things require my father’s personal attention... My father said he’ll definitely personally pay a visit when he has time,” Li Chun said.

“Auntie Ling, it’s a bit hot. Can we increase the AC?”
Nameless Nie suddenly interjected.

Before Auntie Ling could answer, Li Chun said, “I think the temperature is perfect.”

“Are you hot?” Nameless Nie turned to Ling Miao.

“A little,” Ling Miao replied.

“Mm, break up. You guys are unsuitable,” Nameless Nie said.

“What?!”

Both Auntie Ling and Li Chun were startled.

“How are we unsuitable for each other?” Li Chun questioned.

“The temperature’s unsuitable,” Nameless Nie answered.

“Heh, you really know how to joke, nephew,” Li Chun said.

2485 Side Story; Nameless Nie 18

“Should you... be calling me... nephew?” A bone-chilling glint surfaced in Nameless Nie’s eyes.

“Your aunt and I will eventually get married, so aren’t you going to eventually be my nephew?” Li Chun replied.

“You’ll eventually die, so why don’t you go die now?” Nameless Nie retorted.

“Little brat, what are you doing?!” Ling Miao frowned at Nameless Nie. “What trouble are you making here?”

“Fine, I won’t cause trouble. Keep eating.” Nameless Nie shrugged.

...

Seven days later, Li Chun led his parents to the Ling family’s mansion.

At the dining table, Li Chun’s parents officially proposed marriage.

“Then it’s decided. Let’s set a date,” Li Chun’s father said calmly.

“Let’s do the 3rd of February on the lunar calendar,” Li Chun suggested.

“That day is unlucky.”

Nameless Nie suddenly interjected.

“Unlucky?” Li Chun was startled. “Then 3rd of March on the lunar calendar. That’s an auspicious date.”

“Unlucky,” Nameless Nie said.

“Heh, then I’d like to hear what date is auspicious.” Li Chun snorted.

Nameless Nie glanced at Li Chun. “If it’s you, every day is unlucky.”

“What did you say?!”

Li Chun’s father shot up to his feet instantly as he asked harshly.

“Do I need to repeat myself?” Nameless Nie asked aloofly.

“Punk, I’ll overlook your behavior since you’re Ling Miao’s nephew, but don’t act insolently here! Otherwise, no one can save you!” Li Chun warned darkly.

“I’ve looked into you.” Nameless Nie apathetically picked up some food from a dish on the table. “Your family does have some power here. Many factions have relationships with your family, and you’re no stranger to murder and arson. To put it plainly, it wouldn’t be an overstatement to call you a local tyrant.”

Nameless Nie’s lips curled up, and his appearance was harmless. “However, keep in mind who you’re talking to... If I wasn’t taking Old Ling into consideration, based on the attitude you took with me just now... you would be dead already.”

“Little brat, what mischief are you making?!” Auntie Ling admonished him quickly.

However, Nameless Nie walked to Ling Miao instead. “You like him.”

“It isn’t a matter of like or dislike,” Ling Miao replied.

Nameless Nie snorted. “Heh, so you’re still like that. You’re fine as long as Old Ling wants it.”

Ling Miao looked up and examined Nameless Nie, their eyes meeting.

“However, perhaps there’s one thing you’ve forgotten,” Nameless Nie said aloofly. “I got you by trading my abacus and calculator. You already belong to me.”

Before Ling Miao could speak, Nameless Nie grasped Ling Miao by her chin and ruthlessly kissed her lips.

Nameless Nie was claiming his territory.

This scene dumbfounded Li Chun, Auntie Ling, and the others, disbelief filling them.

When Ling Miao finally regained her senses and attempted to struggle, it was useless. She didn't know whether she was unable to break free or didn't want to break free.

“Since the day you met me more than 10 years ago, you weren't allowed to escape. You can only be mine. I'll slaughter the entire family of anyone who dares to hold any ulterior motives toward you and prevent you from getting married to anyone your whole life, unless it's me.” Nameless Nie's lips curled into a smirk as he stared at Ling Miao.

“Little brat...” Auntie Ling's whole face was red as she stood up.

“Old Ling, you mustn't hit me. You can't beat me now anyway... I might not dare to retaliate, but we should talk reason.” Nameless Nie continued with a smile, “You broke off my path of being a business genius back then and took away my most precious abacus and calculator, so naturally, your most precious daughter could only become mine. We had a gentleman's agreement.”

2486 Side Story; Nameless Nie 19

“B*stard, you actually dared to kiss Ling Miao?!”

Li Chun suddenly drew a gun from his pocket.

However, before Li Chun could aim the gun at Nameless Nie, he was kicked several meters back by Nameless Nie and his gun was also snatched.

“You!”

Li Chun’s father reached inside his jacket.

“Sit down. I’ll only say it once.”

Nameless Nie popped up behind Li Chun’s father and pressed his right hand on the man’s shoulder.

An enormous force caused Li Chun’s father to immediately sit back down in his seat.

Nameless Nie used the opportunity to pull out the gun from Li Chun’s father’s jacket too.

“Heh, you’ve seriously gotten used to running amok. Both father and son carry this kind of toy with them?” Nameless Nie threw the guns onto the dining table.

“Little brat, you’ve gone too far!” Auntie Ling appeared to be truly angry.

“Old Ling, I’ll say it bluntly—I want to marry your daughter,” Nameless Nie declared to Auntie Ling.

“Does your opinion matter?!” Auntie Ling was furious.

“Fine, we’ll let Ling Miao decide then.” Nameless Nie’s eyes landed on Ling Miao. “If you’re not willing...”

“I...”—Ling Miao stared at Nameless Nie—“am willing.”

Ling Miao exploded. “You wretch, what did you say?!”

“This will be the first and last time in my life I’ll resist you.”
Ling Miao looked at Auntie Ling. “I want to be with him.”

Auntie Ling wilted. Just when did these two...

Nameless Nie had grown up in her home since he was young, so Auntie Ling considered him her own child. How could she accept these two children being together?

Nameless Nie’s gaze shot toward Ling Miao instantly.

What did she just say? She wants to be with me?

Really?

It felt like a dream.

“Old Ling, you can’t go back on your word. Don’t tell me you’ve forgotten our trade,” Nameless Nie cheerfully reminded Auntie Ling.

Auntie Ling was at a loss for words. The thing she regretted most in her life was confiscating Nameless Nie’s calculator and abacus.

“Sorry, Mom...” Ling Miao said.

“You’re out of my control!” Auntie Ling harrumphed and went upstairs.

“You played us?!” Li Chun’s father’s eyes glinted chillingly.

No one in this continent dared to treat the Li family like this.

“What? Your skin’s itching again?” Nameless Nie glanced at Li Chun and his family.

“Young man, don’t overestimate yourself. Have you heard of Ji Xiuran?” Li Chun demanded coldly.

“Ji Xiuran?” Nameless Nie scratched his head. “I’ve heard of him. What about it?”

“Heh, you’ve heard of him?” Li Chun snorted. “The Li Corporation is a company under the Ji Clan, which means we’re part of the Ji Clan. Do you understand what I’m saying?”

“I see.” Nameless Nie was pensive and pulled out his phone in front of everyone.

A moment later, a girl appeared on Nameless Nie's phone screen.

"Brother, what's up?" Worriess Nie, the girl on the screen, asked.

"Why do you have his phone? Where's Ji Xiuran?" Nameless Nie asked.

"He's peeling garlic next to me," Worriess Nie replied.

"Give the phone to Ji Xiuran. I have something to ask him," Nameless Nie requested.

Soon, Ji Xiuran appeared with an apron on. "What is it?"

"A grown man wearing an apron and cooking in the kitchen—what a disappointment," Nameless Nie teased.

Ji Xiuran smiled faintly. "Let's talk business."

"Do you know these people?" Nameless Nie aimed the camera at Li Chun and his family.

2487 Side Story; Nameless Nie 20

When Li Chun's father saw the man in the video, his pupils contracted.

This man was really Ji Xiuran!

"Ah, I probably saw him once. I think he's responsible for a real estate company under the Ji family." Ji Xiuran detachedly asked, "Did they offend you?"

"They didn't just offend me! They pulled a gun at me and want to steal my wife! What do you think I should do?" Nameless Nie snorted.

"Mm, you can handle it as you wish. An executive can be replaced at any time. We'll talk later; I have dishes to finish cooking here."

After the video call ended, Li Chun and his family looked at Nameless Nie, sweat drenching their whole bodies. Just what was this man's background...? He was actually this close with Ji Xiuran and even...

"Misunderstanding, it's all a misunderstanding..." Li Chun's father sensed the impending doom and hastily said, "You should've told me you knew Emperor Ji!"

"Do you know now?" Nameless Nie questioned with a smile.

"I know, I know. Don't worry, the fault of this matter lies with us. It absolutely won't happen again!" Li Chun's father promised.

"How about this? I'm too lazy to waste my words with you. Your behavior has caused a certain amount of damage and trauma to my psychological well-being. You have to give me compensation," Nameless Nie ordered.

"Sure sure. We'll do whatever you say!" Li Chun's father nodded vehemently.

On the side, Li Chun was akin to a withered cucumber and didn't dare to even breathe too loudly.

...

Several days later, Nameless Nie bade farewell to Old Ling and brought Ling Miao back to the Independent State.

At a certain café:

"Aunt, you're so good-looking," Worriless Nie praised as she stared at Ling Miao.

Ling Miao blushed, not knowing what to say.

"Don't you know how to talk? Aunt? Call her sister-in-law," Nameless Nie corrected.

Worriless Nie: "..."

They got along pretty well the past few days in the Independent State. However, what Nameless Nie didn't anticipate was that some things were destined from the moment Ling Miao stepped into the Independent State.

...

Snow scattered down like raindrops, illuminating both the sky and ground as if it wanted to extinguish the darkness brought by the night.

The man held a toothpick in his mouth as he nonchalantly picked up the phone and sent a few messages.

However, after waiting for a long time, he still didn't see any reply on his phone.

"Eldest Young Master, it's time for dinner," the steward said to Nameless Nie with a smile after entering the room.

"Eat eat eat. All you know is eating all day long. Are you guys rice buckets?"

Nameless Nie felt distracted and anxious for some reason.

"Eh, Eldest Young Master, it was Madam who told me to call you..."

"I understand."

Nameless Nie yawned and slowly stood up, following the steward to the living room.

In the Nie dining room:

“Brother, what’s going on with you recently? You make Dad and Mom call you every time,” Nie Linglong said to Nameless Nie.

“None of your business. Eat your dinner.” Nameless Nie sat down in front of the dining table.

“You’ve been getting more and more insolent recently!”

Madam Nie rebuked her son.

“Mom, I’m not lecturing you, but what the heck are you doing? Ling Miao came to find me, so why the heck did you kick her out?” Nameless Nie stood up from his seat suddenly.

“Sit down!” Patriarch Nie frowned deeply.

“Sit down?” Nameless Nie chortled, his eyes sweeping over Patriarch Nie and Madam Nie. “Fine.”

Nameless Nie sat back down in his chair.

“D*mn punk, don’t think your mom and I don’t understand the situation between you and Ling Miao!” Patriarch Ling said.

“The situation? What could the situation be... Come, tell me—I’ll see if you actually know or not.” Nameless Nie’s face was devoid of any emotion.

2488 Side Story; Nameless Nie 21

“Are you two in a secret relationship together?” Madam Nie was displeased.

“Ah... No way, right? Ling Miao is our aunt though...” Nie Linglong was shocked.

“Shoo shoo shoo, what business is it of yours? Isn't rice enough to stuff your mouth shut?” Nameless Nie glanced at Nie Linglong.

Then Nameless Nie unhappily replied, “I'm not in a secret relationship with Ling Miao at all. We're in an open and honorable relationship together. Plus, Mom, since you knew, why did you kick Ling Miao out?”

“Why?”

Patriarch Nie snorted. “Nameless Nie, where do you get the face to ask me why? You don't care about face, but the Nie family still wants to preserve their face!”

“How do I not care about face?” Nameless Nie was discontent.

“Ling Miao is your aunt. What's the connection between you two, huh? Yet you're dating Ling Miao?!” Madam Nie appeared worked up.

“Mom, aren't you taking it too seriously? Ling Miao might be my aunt in name, but in truth, we don't have any direct blood ties, alright? If we look back, the last 18 generations of our ancestors don't have any blood ties with Ling Miao's last 18 generations of ancestors! It's merely a polite form of address. It's not like you and Dad are unaware,” Nameless Nie explained.

“We know, but do outsiders know?” Patriarch Nie demanded.

“Who do you represent? You represent the Nie family. It doesn't matter how other people look at us, but it's

unpermissible for you to defame the Nie family!” Madam Nie reproached.

Nameless Nie was riled up and turned to Patriarch Nie. “Dad, tell me—is your son more important, or is an outsider’s opinion more important?!”

“I think your family is more important...” After saying that, Patriarch Nie quietly started eating dinner.

“Moreover, Ling Miao isn’t a member of the Independent State. Don’t tell me you don’t know about the Independent State’s rules?!” Madam Nie continued.

“What a joke. This is my own business. Since when could the Independent State’s supposed rules control me?” Nameless Nie snorted.

“You’re simply insolent!” Madam Nie shot up from her seat.

“Sit down... Why are you also standing up? Calm down...” Patriarch Nie set down his chopsticks and looked at Madam Nie.

“Dad, Mom, it’s true that our Nie family is ranked number one amongst the four great clans, but have you thought about this? Without me, Nameless Nie, how could you compete with the Ji family? The Ji family has Ji Xiuran, so without me, do you think you’d still take the number one position from the Ji family?”

“Nonsense, Ji Xiuran was just taking your Sister Worryless into consideration. Do you really think he’d lose to you?” Madam Nie said. “Anyway, your dad and I absolutely won’t permit you to keep contacting Ling Miao. It’s for your own good!”

Nameless Nie stood up silently in front of the table.

A while later, the corner of Nameless Nie’s lips twitched.

“Is that so... For my own good...?”

A second later, Nameless Nie flipped over the table.

Bowls and chopsticks were scattered all over the floor.

Nameless Nie’s behavior caused his parents to jolt in fright.

“D*mn punk, you’ve gone mad!” Patriarch Nie shouted.

Madam Nie was trembling uncontrollably with rage.

“Dad, Mom... It’s because you’re too selfish...” Nameless Nie turned around and didn’t look back. “You didn’t do it for me or for the Nie family... In truth, you only did it for yourself. Including Worriless... In order to compromise with Grandpa, you allowed Grandpa to take Worriless away at a young age, causing Worriless to lose out on her parents’ companionship since she was little... However, you might’ve mistaken one thing... I’m Nameless Nie. My fate won’t be manipulated by anyone, even if that person is the Heavenly Emperor himself!”

2489 Side Story; Nameless Nie End

In the night, Nameless Nie allowed the snow to land on his body without care as he gradually disappeared from sight.

Patriarch Nie and Madam Nie stared at each other, speechless.

Several days passed.

“Old Ji, why did you call me?” Nameless Nie asked into the phone.

“I received news that the Arbitration Council is about to take action against Ling Miao,” Ji Xiuran said.

Nameless Nie furrowed his brows. “What do you mean?”

“I don’t know the situation yet. Keep a closer eye on things.”

After the call ended, Nameless Nie fell into contemplation.

Could it be because of that ring?

Ling Miao’s ring symbolized the most supreme power in the Rose of Death.

Nameless Nie even crafted a nearly identical lovers ring using it as a model.

...

High in the mountain, a woman was at her last gasp.

“Isn’t Nameless Nie here?” Ling Miao surveyed her surroundings.

So the President of the Martial Arts Union deceived her? He used Nameless Nie’s life as bait only to trick her here.

Things would be okay as long as he was fine...

“Aunt!”

Worriless Nie didn’t know what to do as she watched Ling Miao.

“Here...”

Ling Miao used her last trace of energy to hand her ring to the girl.

“Don’t... let other people see it... Help me... watch over your brother...”

...

It was several days later before Nameless Nie found out Ling Miao encountered a mishap.

This was a strike of lightning for Nameless Nie.

He lost track of the number of times he got absolutely smashed. He didn’t know whether it was a dream or reality.

He couldn’t even protect his own woman.

Even more, he wasn’t by her side when she needed him the most.

Just how lonely and hopeless had she felt?

The Independent State...

The Arbitration Council...

The Martial Arts Union!

None of them would be spared! They all had to perish!!!

...

Nameless Nie’s entire body melted into the night. His black robes covered all of him, his face indistinguishable.

In Tianshui City:

It felt as if the black-robed man was an Asura who traversed through the abyss, his darkness so oppressive it made it hard to breathe.

The next day, the current president of the Arbitration Council was assassinated, and the killer left no evidence behind.

The day after that, the head of the department responsible for encircling and annihilating the Rose of Death was assassinated.

Suddenly, trepidation grasped every resident of Tianshui City. The Arbitration Council spared no efforts in searching for traces of the culprit, but it proved futile. The assassin never appeared again as if they vanished into thin air.

At the headquarters of the Martial Arts Union:

The black-robed man looked at the elderly man under his feet. He just needed to apply a little force and he would crush the elderly man's organs.

However, for some reason, the black-robed man didn't do that. Instead, he kicked the elderly man into the air before shrinking back into the darkness and disappearing.

"From now on, I am a demon with his wings cut off. I walk in this world solely for revenge!"

——Nameless Nie

...

Many years later:

In the hospital:

"Ling Miao, Worriless got married. Her husband is Lord Asura and is super rich. She actually made us wear cartoon costumes..."

Nameless Nie's face was brimming with gentleness as he looked at Ling Miao in the hospital bed and gently described things to her.

"When we get married, let's also make them wear cartoon costumes." Nameless Nie lightly clasped Ling Miao's hand. "But when will you finally wake up...? I'm too lonely..."

Suddenly, Nameless Nie's phone started ringing.

"Captain, hurry over here! There's a big job! I guarantee you won't believe how high the salary is! Hurry hurry hurry!" Spray of Flowers hastily said.

"Okay."

Nameless Nie hung up and patted Ling Miao's forehead.

After Nameless Nie left, in the empty hospital room shielded from sight, the girl's eyelashes twitched minutely.

2490 Mini scene: Shameless Competition

The sun shone as far as the eye could see. Everyone was gathered in the center of the plaza.

The referee's eyes roamed across the entire plaza. There wasn't a single empty seat, and the plaza was almost completely filled.

"The annual shameless competition is about to begin. Everyone here is a selected contestant."

"Hahaha, I'll definitely be the champion of shamelessness!" Lin Que looked at Si Yehan.

"I forfeit," Si Yehan nonchalantly said immediately.

"I also admit defeat." The white-dressed Ji Xiuran also spoke up with a smile.

Ye Wanwan sat with her ankle on her knee and examined her surroundings. The only true threat here was probably her own brother.

"We'll now invite the President of the Fearless Alliance to speak!" The referee looked at Ye Wanwan.

Ye Wanwan immediately stood up and smiled confidently.

"When I was fighting with Si Wutian in China, we were outnumbered, but so what? I simply called a number and it was perfectly resolved!"

The host asked, "What number did you call?"

"110," Ye Wanwan replied.

Everyone: "..."

"Tch!" Nameless Nie was unconvinced. "When I set up a fight with the local bully when I was young, he brought 10 people, but I was different. I just brought one person."

"Who did you bring?" the referee asked curiously.

“Oh, I brought his dad with me,” Nameless Nie answered.

Everyone: “...”

“I tricked my baby into my possession with a single shaobing. My baby is the leader of Asura,” Ye Wanwan said.

Nameless Nie: “I made a trade for my gorgeous using a single abacus! It was also my mother-in-law who did the trade with me. My gorgeous is the leader of the Rose of Death!”

“I love money as much as my life.” Ye Wanwan sneered.

“I earned money from you,” Nameless Nie said.

Ye Wanwan’s lips twitched and she took a deep breath before continuing, “On the deserted island, a certain leader said there wasn’t anything he didn’t dare to do, so I made a bet with him using his White Tiger Seal as the price, and I won in the end!”

The referee said, “I know that leader. He’s a ruthless character. How did you win the bet?”

Ye Wanwan: “I bet that he didn’t dare to eat sh*t!”

The referee: “...”

Nameless Nie: “I participated in all kinds of competitions in China and won who knows how many fridges and TVs and washing machines. They had no choice but to stop broadcasting the show and I was eventually blacklisted by all the challenge shows in China and became a competitor permanently on the ban list.”

Everyone: “Just what in the world is worth being proud of?!?!”

Ye Wanwan: “...”

Nameless Nie: “In my WeChat groups, I never talk. The only way to get my attention is to send red envelopes.”

Ye Wanwan: “I got your attention with a single cent!”

Nameless Nie: “One cent is still money!”

Ye Wanwan: “...”

“Of course, I also have an ace in the hole.” Nameless Nie turned to his mercenary quartet.

Immediately, a shameful slogan reverberated in the plaza.

“Godly Captain, free-spirited and talented!”

“Handsome handsome handsome handsome!”

“Strong strong strong strong!”

Everyone: “...”

That’s too shameful...

Can we get our tickets refunded?

“FML” was written all over Ye Wanwan’s face. “I admit defeat.”

“That’s nothing! One time, a door was only worth several thousand dollars, but I said the original price was \$200,000 and was giving them a 50% off discount, so I managed to sell it at the astronomical price of \$100,000! And the buyer was Piece of Sh*t! He was utterly grateful to me too!”

When the referee was about to announce the results, Big Dipper suddenly stood up.

Immediately, Yi Shuihan, who was sitting in the audience, shot Big Dipper a glance.

Big Dipper died.

The referee wiped his sweat. “I announce that the winner of the most Shameless Award in Perfect Secret Love is: Nameless Nie!”

“Godly Captain, free-spirited and talented!”

“Handsome handsome handsome handsome!”

“Strong strong strong strong!”

Ye Wanwan cupped her fists. “I’ve disrupted you. I’ll be taking my leave now!”

—— [End] ——