

Celebrity Girl Is My Wife Chapter 241

It was seven o'clock in the morning when Ning Ran woke up.

She wasn't drunk enough to the point of experiencing a blackout. She vaguely remembered two female staff helping her into the hotel room last night and she'd been sleeping until now after she collapsed.

Instead of feeling a headache of a hangover, she felt refreshed and decompressed.

It seemed that her alcohol tolerance had improved. She wasn't drunk to a point where she couldn't get up.

Above all, she could still remember that she talked a lot with Nan Chen, about borrowing money and the past.

She probably didn't commit any mistakes. Otherwise, Nan Chen wouldn't have sent her to a hotel.

As soon as she washed up, her phone rang. It was Cheng Xiangyun, asking for her whereabouts.

Ning Ran initially wanted to say that she was at a hotel, but because she was worried Cheng Xiangyun would inquire into the root of the matter, she simply lied and said she was at a friend's house.

Unexpectedly, it wasn't a brilliant lie at all, and she was immediately seen through by the experienced Cheng Xiangyun. "A friend's house? Which friend? Do you have any friends in Flower City whom you can stay overnight with?"

"You don't need to ask about that. Anyway, I'm fine. I'll take a cab to the studio myself," Ning Ran said.

"Hey, you haven't answered me. Which friend's house are you at?" Cheng Xiangyun was surely relentless.

"You don't need to know about that. Just know I'll be there in a bit."

"You're getting more and more ridiculous, do you know that? Don't tell me you were with Mr. BMW last night."

"No, I wasn't. It's been a few days since I last met him. Okay, I'm hanging up now."

Ning Ran hung up without hesitation.

She then took her room card to the restaurant, had a free breakfast, and surprisingly ran into someone. It was Nan Chen.

It turned out that he had spent the night at the hotel as well and didn't go home.

Ning Ran naturally didn't know that Nan Chen stayed next door to her last night.

"Hi, good morning," Ning Ran greeted enthusiastically.

Nan Chen nodded slightly as a response and then continued eating.

Ning Ran felt a little embarrassed, but she sat beside Nan Chen shamelessly.

As if he felt a little uncomfortable with her sitting next to him, he ate hastily and left.

Once Ning Ran finished eating, Nan Chen was long gone.

...

It was twelve noon.

Ning Ziqiang and Luo Yi were about to have their lunch when there was a sudden knock on the door.

The two immediately put down their chopsticks and glanced at each other vigilantly.

As they owed a lot of foreign debts, they often grew jittery when a knock sounded on the door.

"You go," Luo Yi said to Ning Ziqiang.

Ning Ziqiang rose to his feet, walked to the door, and looked outside through the peephole.

It was the security of the building.

Only then did Ning Ziqiang feel relieved enough to open the door. *What's the matter?*

"You're Ning Ziqiang?" the security asked.

"I am. Are you new here? How could you not know me and call my name in full?" Ning Ziqiang was a little displeased.

Although he was now bankrupt, he still had the temper of a boss and was still a little angry to be called by his name in a contemptuous manner by a security guard.

“Your relative is here to see you,” the security replied, pointing behind him.

Thereupon, another person appeared from the stairs. He was tall and sturdy, and not easy to mess with at first glance.

Ning Ziqiang’s initial thought was that the debt collectors had arrived.

He turned around to hide in his house, but Qiao Zhan was quick to grab him.

“What are you running for? Don’t you recognize me, Mr. Ning?” Qiao Zhan asked.

“You are?”

“I was in the sales department before this. Don’t you remember me?”

Ning Ziqiang pondered for a while, but he really couldn’t recall who he was.

“Do you need me for something? I don’t owe you any salary, did I?”

“No, you don’t. I just want to thank you for taking good care of me before, so I’m inviting you and the lady boss to a meal,” Qiao Zhan replied.

Ning Ziqiang was wild with joy upon hearing this. He didn’t think anyone would remember him and want to invite him to a meal after he went bankrupt.

“Sure, just a sec. I need to change my clothes,” Ning Ziqiang said.

Half an hour later, in a private room of a restaurant nearby, Qiao Zhan urged the former to drink, but he didn’t drink a drop.

Ning Ziqiang drank happily and kept talking about the past.

People who didn’t have a bright future could only talk about his glory in the past, and that was Ning Ziqiang.

“Well, I just wanna ask, are you two still in contact with Miss?”

Qiao Zhan changed the topic and got to the point.

According to Nan Chen’s intention, he wanted him to grab hold of Ning Ziqiang and his wife and interrogate them.

But Qiao Zhan didn’t think it was right. He was Ning Ran’s father, after all. What if he offended Ning Ran if their relationship wasn’t as bad as they expected?

Ning Ran was Young Master Xing's fiancée, but she was found drunk in Master Chen's car. Qiao Zhan didn't know what was going on now, and he didn't dare to ask.

However, one thing was certain. Ning Ran's relationship with the Nan family wasn't simple, and she couldn't be offended.

Since he couldn't take the risk of offending her, Qiao Zhan came up with the idea to treat them to a meal and sound them out first.

Upon hearing that 'Miss' title, Ning Ziqiang and Luo Yi exchanged glances.

"You mean Ran?" Ning Ziqiang asked.

"Yeah, is she not with you two?"

As soon as Qiao Zhan said that, his phone rang. It was Nan Chen who called to ask about the situation.

Naturally, it would be uncomfortable to pick up his phone in front of them, so he got up and went outside.

Coincidentally, Luo Yi's phone also rang at this time, and it was Feng Minsheng.

"Aunt Luo, I saw you at the entrance of your neighborhood just now. How come you and Uncle Ning are with people from the Nan family?" Feng Minsheng asked anxiously.

"What do you mean by people from the Nan family?" Luo Yi questioned.

"That big guy is from the Nan family. He hit me before. You two have to be careful," Feng Minsheng answered.

"Huh?" Luo Yi was shocked to hear that. "Didn't he say he's a former employee from the company?"

"No, he's from the Nan family. He's lying to you and it must be the Nan family who sent him here to fish for information!"

"I got it."

Luo Yi hung up and whispered to Ning Ziqiang, "That big guy was sent by the Nan family to deceive us! He's with that little bitch!"

"What?" Ning Ziqiang was appalled.

"You fool. We almost fell for it because you were tempted when he said he'll treat us to a meal!" Luo Yi chastised.

“How did you know that?”

“Feng Minsheng saw him. That big guy beat him up before and he remembers clearly!”

Just then, the private room door opened with Qiao Zhan coming in after answering the phone.

Ning Ziqiang and Luo Yi were both despicable people, and their acting skills were still commendable.

Although they knew what was going on, they didn't show it on their faces.

“I'm sorry. I had to answer this call. Let's continue.” Qiao Zhan refilled Ning Ziqiang's glass again.

“You drink a little too. By the way, you said you were in the sales department? When did you join the company and in which area were you responsible for sales?” Ning Ziqiang asked.

Qiao Zhan faked laughter and replied, “I forgot cause it's been so long. Right, how is Miss? Are you in contact with her?”

Luo Yi glanced at Ning Ziqiang, who understood tacitly.

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“Of course,” Ning Ziqiang answered. “Oh, then how is she?” Qiao Zhan asked again. “She's pretty good. She's working as an actress,” Ning Ziqiang said.

It seemed that they understood her very well, as what he said was right. “Why are you even mentioning her? You were nice to her, but how did she treat you?” Luo Yi chipped in abruptly.

Ning Ziqiang cooperatively sighed. And that was how they worked together to deceive Ning Ran's mother back then. After so many years of acting, their acting skills had been brought to the point of perfection. A warrior like Qiao Zhan couldn't see any flaws at all.

Engaging in conspiracy was not his forte. “What is it?” Qiao Zhan looked at Luo Yi. “Ning is too embarrassed to talk. After all, we can't wash our dirty linen in public,” Luo Yi sighed. “What exactly happened?”

“Actually...” Luo Yi looked hesitant. “Just let it go. She's just a child, so don't blame her.” Ning Ziqiang pretended to stop Luo Yi from talking.

“It seems that you two are hiding something. If it's inconvenient for you to say, then forget it.” Qiao Zhan tried to step back.

“It’s actually nothing much, it’s just that my health is not in good shape. I went to the hospital for a checkup a while ago, and the result was a little discouraging. The company is experiencing a downturn these few years and we’re not exactly living a comfortable life now, so medical visits have become a problem. Later, Luo Yi asked me to look for the child to see if she could find a way to help me borrow some money and help me get past this hurdle first.”

Qiao Zhan nodded. “Yeah, you should.”

“It took me a great deal of effort to find her. I told her about my situation and asked her to help borrow one hundred thousand, but... Let’s not go there,” Ning Ziqiang sighed and didn’t talk further.

Of course, Qiao Zhan wanted him to keep talking. How could he stop right at the key point?

“Ms. Ning didn’t agree afterwards?”

Luo Yi continued instead, “How could she agree? She said that Ning Ziqiang’s life and death were none of her business, and she wouldn’t give a single cent. It’s fine if she refused to give us the money, but she even spread rumors outside saying that we asked for a huge chunk of money and that we blackmailed her! Those old friends in the past are now calling us a beast. This girl is too cruel. So she doesn’t want to give us money, but how could she slander her father like this? I’m just her stepmother. She can say whatever she wants about me, but Ning is her biological father. How disappointing it is for her to spread rumors like this!”

At that, Luo Yi squeezed her eyes, forcing tears out of them.

Qiao Zhan pondered, *This statement is exactly the same as what Feng Minsheng had said. Is Ning Ran really a cruel person? She doesn’t seem like one though.*

“Didn’t you two communicate nicely with her?” Qiao Zhan asked.

“How are we supposed to communicate with her? She refused to help us and spread rumors about us. We can’t even bring ourselves to meet anyone now, but I don’t blame her. She had always misunderstood us, thinking that her mother’s death was related to us. But in all honesty, it’s really not our fault.”

Ning Ziqiang plastered on a sad face and wanted to squeeze out a few drops of tears, but failed to do so.

In terms of acting skills, he was a far cry from Luo Yi.

Qiao Zhan felt speechless. This result surprised him, as it wasn’t the result he wanted.

After entertaining them with few more words, Qiao Zhan paid the bill and left.

When he arrived at Nanshi Corporation, Nan Chen was in a meeting again.

In a year, Nan Chen probably spent more than ninety percent of his time in meetings.

Meetings seemed easy, but they were not.

Corporate meetings weren't just a formality. Most of the meetings came with a concrete topic.

Nan Chen often had to make judgements and conclusion accordingly after a meeting and these conclusions determined the future of the company.

Especially for important meetings, Nan Chen had to make preparations himself and study the meeting materials handed over from the secretarial office. Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to understand fully when someone spoke during the meeting.

Therefore, the influential Master Chen had been running at high speed and carrying many weights on his shoulders.

What other people saw was glamour, but only a few people knew his burden and pressure.

Qiao Zhan waited for an hour before Nan Chen finished the meeting.

Perhaps the meeting didn't go well, as Nan Chen's complexion didn't look good.

This added to the pressure on Qiao Zhan because what he brought wasn't good news in the first place either.

Will he be even angrier if I tell him about that?

Nan Chen habitually removed his outerwear and hung it on the side. He then picked up a glass of water and took a sip.

Thereafter, he walked to the side, picked up a golf club and swung a few strokes to move his muscles.

The meeting lasted for over two hours; it was really back-breaking.

When the office was renovated, Nan Xing had installed a mini-golf course here. At that time, Nan Chen thought it was useless, but now it seemed that it was actually necessary.

"Sir Chen." Qiao Zhan stood aside, watching Nan Chen swinging his club.

“Shoot.”

“I met Ning Ziqiang.”

Nan Chen didn't reply because he thought Qiao Zhan's words were nonsense.

The fact that he would come to the office to see him naturally meant that he met Ning Ziqiang. Otherwise, why was he here?

“He said he's seriously ill and needed one hundred thousand to pay the hospital first, so he asked Ms. Ding...”

Qiao Zhan told Nan Chen everything he had heard from Ning Ziqiang.

As expected, Nan Chen's face grew uglier, and the cold air emitting from his body made Qiao Zhan feel a little flustered.

“Is there a possibility Ning Ziqiang lied to you because he found out about your identity?” Nan Chen questioned.

Qiao Zhan gave it a thought and felt that it was impossible.

“I don't know.” He could only answer that.

Nan Chen was silent again.

“You can go now,” Nan Chen said brusquely after a long while.

Qiao Zhan felt relieved because the atmosphere was too tense; it was safer for him to leave early.

“Then what should I do next?” Qiao Zhan asked gingerly.

“No hurry for action,” Nan Chen replied.

“Yes, Sir Chen. I'll go first then.”

Qiao Zhan exited the office with a long sigh of relief as he saw Jiang Zhe walking over.

They were both familiar with each other. One was the person Nan Chen trusted most in business matters, and one was the person Nan Chen trusted most in private matters.

One with the brains and one with the brawn, but they didn't seem to acknowledge each other.

Jiang Zhe thought Qiao Zhan was just a warrior who only did menial work instead of accomplishing anything big. The only muscle he didn't use was his brain.

Qiao Zhan, on the other hand, thought Jiang Zhe was like a eunuch who was defenseless and only knew how to butter up to Nan Chen to get a promotion.

They both believed that the role of the other party was very limited and the one who could really get things done was themselves.

"Well, isn't it Captain Qiao? Isn't Captain Qiao's area of activities in the backyard? Why did you come to the company?" Jiang Zhe started.

Qiao Zhan immediately retaliated, "Oh, it's Assistant Jiang. I'm not here to see you, Assistant Jiang. I'm here to report to Master Chen. I mean, seriously, he's got you by his side, but he insisted on having me over. It seems that you're not cut out for this task. Oh, forget it. Your task is to copy documents and pass messages. I know that. I'm off then, see ya."

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After finishing filming one scene at the studio, Ning Ran took a look at her mobile phone and saw that there were a dozen missed calls. Most of them were from Ning Ziqiang. How annoying.

The crew had ordered lunch boxes, but despite having no appetite, she had to buck up and take a few bites. Acting was a physical job. If she didn't replenish her energy in time, she would have no strength to continue working in the afternoon.

After taking two bites, Ning Ran's phone vibrated, and it turned out to be Ning Ziqiang calling again. Ning Ran had no choice but to answer her phone. "Can you knock it off? I'm still working. What have you been calling for?" Ning Ran asked angrily.

She didn't expect Ning Ziqiang to be even more aggressive than her. "How dare you yell at me? You let the Nan family investigate me! Do you think you can deceive me? Since you're not benevolent, don't blame us for being unrighteous. You have until today to bring the money, or I'll stir the ashes of that damned woman in dog's blood!"

Ning Ran was a little confused. *What did he mean by the Nan family investigated him?*

"What on earth are you talking about?"

"I'm coming for you now. You must give us the money today or you can forget about getting your mother's ashes!" Ning Ziqiang warned.

"Don't come! I'm working now and I don't have the time for you if you come. We'll talk about it later after I finish filming!" Ning Ran hung up after speaking.

Ning Ziqiang called again, but she didn't answer.

After swallowing the rest of her lunch, she was pumped up again and went back to work.

The director, Wang Yan, took better care of Ning Ran as he scheduled her scenes during the day. So at seven o'clock, she was ready to go.

Unexpectedly, Ning Ziqiang was waiting outside.

Although they had been filming in a studio, it wasn't fixed, and they often changed scenes and locations.

However, it was strange that Feng Minsheng and Ning Ziqiang could always find the place where Ning Ran was shooting in time.

It was really quite a headache for Ning Ran.

"You ungrateful brat! Just say so if you don't want to give us the money. How dare you tell the Nan family and have them investigate us?! You think I can't do anything about you because you have the Nan family backing you up?" Ning Ziqiang roared.

"I have no idea what you're talking about. I'm still borrowing the money from people, but I haven't got it. Just give me a little more time." Ning Ran didn't want to argue with him.

"By today! Luo Yi has already bought the dog blood. If you don't give us the money today, your mother will go to hell! I was going to give you more time, but who knew you would be so disobedient. Since that's the case, don't blame us for not being lenient!" Ning Ziqiang shouted.

At this moment, Cheng Xiangyun came over. "What's going on?"

Ning Ran gestured Cheng Xiangyun to leave as she didn't want her to get involved in this.

It was humiliating to have a father like this, and Ning Ran didn't want too many people to know about this.

"I'm her father and we're dealing with family affairs. You go away!" Ning Ziqiang huffed.

Cheng Xiangyun glanced at Ning Ran and questioned her with her eyes.

Ning Ran waved her hands helplessly and said, "I'll settle this on my own. You go first."

Feeling that it was inappropriate to meddle in other's family matters, Cheng Xiangyun stepped aside.

“When are you giving us the money? What time?” Ning Ziqiang asked Ning Ran.

“It’s late now. The bank is already closed and many things can’t be done. You gave me three days, so I’ll give it to you tomorrow. As for what the Nan family did to investigate you, they didn’t investigate you, but me. You and the old witch can act so well. How could you not fool them?”

Ning Ran was calm. She knew Ning Ziqiang’s purpose was to ask for money, and it was Luo Yi who had taught him to say such harsh words with the purpose of pressuring her to come up with the money as soon as possible.

As expected, Ning Ziqiang didn’t know what to say at Ning Ran’s ruthless retort.

“Also, how much money do you think you will get once I give you that ten million?” Ning Ran asked.

Ning Ziqiang’s expression was unnatural. “Why are you asking that? You’re my daughter and it’s your duty to honor me! Isn’t it right for you to give me some money after so many years of upbringing?”

“Answer me. How much can you get?”

“This is between Luo Yi and me. It’s none of your business.” Ning Ziqiang was obviously diffident.

“I bet you don’t get a single cent. Luo Yi was with you back then because of my mother’s company. Now that you’re old, do you think she’ll still love you?”

Seeing that Ning Ziqiang was quiet, Ning Ran continued, “What does she love about you? Does she love that you’re old and grey, or that you’re a heartless bastard who killed his ex-wife? So once you get the money, I guess you won’t get any of it. Isn’t that right?”

“Luo Yi will dump you and take the money to find a younger man to live a happy life. Then you will get older and wimpier, and finally, leave this world in remorse.”

Ning Ziqiang’s complexion turned for the worst the more Ning Ran spoke.

“You’re talking nonsense! Luo Yi and I are very much in love. She’s much better than that deadbeat mother of yours!” Ning Ziqiang was reluctant to admit Ning Ran’s statement.

“Are you lying to me or are you lying to yourself? Luo Yi just wants your money! When my mother was rich, she asked you to screw with my mother’s money. Now that my mother is gone, and the company is destroyed by both of you, she asked you to force

me to ask around for money! Ning Ziqiang, are you really clueless, or are you deluding yourself?" Ning Ran screamed.

Ning Ziqiang was about to say something when his phone rang. It was a video call.

"Put that little bitch on the line," Luo Yi said.

Ning Ziqiang quickly turned the screen to Ning Ran. "She's here."

"Ning Ran, you see that? That's your mother's ashes, and this is your grandfather's. If you don't give us the money and use the power of the Nan family to deal with us instead, I'll mix them all up in dog blood."

"And, don't you wanna know what's inside the USB your damned mother left behind? If you wanna know what's inside, then don't let the Nan family hear about the truth. They will question you soon, and you have to admit what we said was the truth."

"All the words your father and I said were the truth and you have to admit to every single one of them. Otherwise, you will never get your mother's and grandfather's ashes, and I will destroy that USB flash drive! I mean what I said. I have informants from the Nan family. If you dare mess around, you'll surely regret it!"

Before Luo Yi could finish speaking, Ning Ran hung up.

Ning Ran was surely anxious because she knew Luo Yi was brutal and capable of any misconduct.

"Ning Ziqiang, I'll give you the money. I'm just reminding you, don't do evil with Luo Yi, or you'll reap what you sow!" Ning Ran warned.

Ning Ziqiang's lips twitched, but he remained quiet.

"You go retrieve my grandfather's and my mother's ashes quietly for me, and that USB as well. Once I get the items, I'll transfer ten million to your account. That way, you can get ten million alone and leave this city. Stay away from that vicious woman, and don't be at her mercy anymore! If you don't listen to me, she'll abandon you once she gets the money and your end of the deal will be terrible!" Ning Ran said.

Ning Ziqiang's mouth opened again, but he still didn't say a word. It was obvious he was hesitating.

After spending so many years with Luo Yi, he would naturally know what kind of person Luo Yi was.

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"I'm not listening to you! I'm not listening!" shouted Ning Ziqiang as he was still trying to tough things out.

"You are just trying to escape from reality. It would be best for you to take some time to figure it out. You have already made a lot of mistakes in your life, but this is the mistake that you couldn't afford to make. Return mother's and grandfather's urn to me and I'll give you the money. You can do whatever you want by then," said Ning Ran.

After giving him a piece of her mind, Ning Ran left Ning Ziqiang standing there in a daze.

Ning Ran grabbed a few snacks to eat and began to revise her script as soon as she got home.

When the clock struck nine, Ning Ran's phone began to ring. It was Ning Ziqiang.

"What do you want?!" yelled Ning Ran angrily.

"Little bastard, how dare you sabotage our relationship! I can't believe he actually attempted to steal from me. Did he think that I was stupid? Fortunately, I have already made precautions for that. Now that he is in my hands, you'll have to make a choice. Hand over the money to me tomorrow or I'll reunite your dad with your dead mother!"

Ning Ran was surprised. It never crossed her mind that her words would actually move Ning Ziqiang. But she was more astonished at how cunning Luo Yi was, secretly keeping an eye on Ning Ziqiang.

"That's none of my business. I have nothing to do with it," said Ning Ran as she tried to lie with a straight face.

"None of your business? Who do you think you're lying to? He wouldn't have betrayed me if it wasn't for you! Well, it doesn't matter anyway, I didn't intend to stay with that trash any longer. Listen, if you don't bring me the money tomorrow I'll have everything burnt. Don't you have any funny ideas or I'll make sure that you'll regret it! Remember, your father and the urns are in my hands."

"Do whatever you want with Ning Ziqiang, that's none of my concern. It would be even better if you had him killed," said Ning Ran as she let out a cold laugh.

"You can't hide it from me. You may be acting tough now, but I know well that you are worried about Ning Ziqiang. No matter how much you hate him, he is still your biological father. Your mother is already dead so I'm sure you wouldn't be too happy if your father died too, would you? Now, do you think you want to live with your guilt for the rest of your life?" Luo Yi sneered.

Ning Ran couldn't help but admit that Luo Yi was indeed terrifying.

There had to be a reason for her to be able to come so far, and it wasn't by chance.

To go after a woman like Luo Yi, it would be wise to be cautious.

"Have him killed then," said Ning Ran coldly.

"There is no need for you to put up a farce. I know perfectly well that you cared for him."

"You think I would care just because you said so? How laughable."

"You are the same as your dead mother, tough on the outside but soft on the inside. If your mother wasn't such a softie, I wouldn't be here now. Hahahaha!" responded Luo Yi in kind.

"You shameless b***h! I hope you die a horrible death!"

"Bark as much as you want, I don't really care. Just remember to hand over the money to me tomorrow." "Don't you forget, the urns aren't the only thing I'm holding hostage... I have your father as well."

"If you don't comply, I might have three urns in my hands soon. Figure it out."

"I'll remind you once more. Should the Nan family ask you anything about this, it would be in your best interest to not tell them anything." "Or else..."

Just as Ning Ran wanted to tell her off, she suddenly received a call. It was Qiao Zhan.

After hanging up on Luo Yi, she immediately answered his call.

"Ms. Ding, Sir Chen has ordered me to give you a ride. I'm in front of your house now," said Qiao Zhan.

"What? Right now?"

"Yes, right now. Sir Chen has something he wants to talk about," answered Qiao Zhan.

"Fine, give me a few minutes. I'm in the midst of changing my clothes."

Ning Ran hurriedly put on her clothes and prepared to leave.

Cheng Xiangyun walked out of her bedroom as she heard the commotion outside.

"Where are you going at this hour? The hotel again?"

"No, Nan Chen wanted to see me. He said that there's something that he wanted to discuss," answered Ning Ran.

Cheng Xiangyun then proceeded to bombard Ning Ran with a series of questions. “He wanted to see you? Aren’t you in a relationship with Nan Xing? Why would Nan Chen suddenly want to see you? How did he get into the picture? Having fun with the brothers of Nan Family, are you? Are you sure you want to play with fire?”

“It isn’t what you are thinking. We are discussing some business matters. Rest assured I’m not that type of person, there is nothing between us.”

“Then why would you stay out all night?”

“It would take a long time to explain it to you, so I’ll tell you all about it afterwards. Step aside, Qiao Zhan is waiting for me now.”

“Well just be careful and don’t overdo it. It wouldn’t be fair for me if I were to be dragged into it right? I still haven’t made any money yet.”

“So that was what you are worried about. Don’t worry I’m not an ungrateful person, I wouldn’t get you involved.”

Ning Ran gave Xiangyun’s shoulder a tap before she left.

Qiao Zhan was leaning on his black-colored Jeep while smoking. He was waiting for her in front of her gates.

As soon as he saw Ning Ran walking towards him, Qiao Zhan immediately ceased smoking.

Qiao Zhan’s impression of Ning Ran in the past was quite good, as she was considered to be quite a beauty.

But after listening to the words of Ning Ziqiang and Luo Yi, Qiao Zhan couldn’t help but feel a bit awkward when looking at her.

After all, it’s quite difficult to figure out a person’s true nature. Qiao Zhan didn’t really know what type of person Ning Ran was.

Still, Qiao Zhan displayed the basic level of respect and politeness by opening the door for her. “Please enter, Ms. Ding.”

“Thank you, Captain Qiao,” said Ning Ran as she got into the back seat.

Qiao Zhan then got into the car and drove away.

“What did Sir Chen want from me?” inquired Ning Ran as she wanted to gauge the situation.

"I don't know." Qiao Zhan isn't a dumbass, of course, he wouldn't have told her.

"Fine."

Am I stupid or what? There's no way he could have told me anything. Ning Ran thought to herself.

As they both stopped talking to one another, they were engulfed in deep silence.

There were a couple of times where Qiao Zhan wanted to ask Ning Ran about her parents, but he resisted the thought.

He thought that it was best for him to not inquire about her parents before Sir Chen did. Qiao Zhan couldn't possibly bear the responsibility that comes with it.

"Qian Zhan, are you married?" Ning Ran broke the silence, not liking the silent atmosphere.

"Not yet, I don't even have a girlfriend," answered Qiao Zhan.

"Why not? Someone as tall and handsome as you ought to have a woman or two," joked Ning Ran as she laughed.

"Not at all, I'm an amateur when it comes to love. Besides I'm a boring man, who would actually have an interest in me? Unlike Young Master Xing who has a tons of beauties by his side..."

Qiao Zhan suddenly stopped talking once he realized he had spoken too much.

Ning Ran let out a laugh, before saying, "Rest assured, I don't really mind what you have just said. Besides, I know Nan Xing's character perfectly well. Whatever style or belief he has is none of my business. But I'm certain that someone as responsible as you would be able to find a good companion and happiness in life."

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As talked along the way, the atmosphere became less stiff. Qiao Zhan felt that Ning Ran wasn't as bad as what he had heard. He just couldn't believe it. While people might regard him as a brute, he actually had a lot of life experience.

His intuition had told him that there was something odd with Mr. and Mrs. Ning. But he didn't have the evidence to justify his claim, so he could only report the results of the investigation based on the facts at hand.

It seemed Nan Chen had set the appointment at that restaurant, the one that required a reservation and was famous for its grilled steak.

Ning Ran really liked that place. The last time around when she came here with Feng Minsheng, she didn't even have the chance to enter. But you could say that her wish was fulfilled today. If only it wasn't for what had happened, I would have enjoyed this steak thoroughly...

What is she worried about? Nan Chen thought to himself as he could sense Ning Ran's anxiousness in her eyes. Well, it doesn't matter, I'll have her speak after she had finished eating. I wouldn't want to put such a good steak to waste.

"I apologize, I might have drunk a little too much yesterday. Did I say anything weird?" said Ning Ran as she chuckled. "You did." Nan Chen replied coldly.

Do you know how to read the room? How could you just answer that straight to my face? Ning Ran thought to herself, feeling a little awkward.

"Then why didn't you stop me from drinking? I'm not a good drinker, to begin with." Ning Ran attempted to shift the blame.

Nan Chen didn't bother to refute. He merely pointed to the red wine sitting on the table and asked, "Would you like to have some?"

Ning Ran shook her head, before saying "No thank you. I wouldn't want alcohol to get in the way of business."

"I'll give you the money tomorrow," said Nan Chen.

"Really?" Ning Ran cried out, delighted.

His words put her into a good mood and she finally gained her appetite.

Nan Chen took a sip from his glass of wine and remained silent.

"On second thought, I think I would like to have some."

Ning Ran handed Nan Chen her glass and drank the wine in one go.

The wine was marvelous and Ning Ran knew it, but she couldn't put a finger to what was so special about it.

Such an exquisite wine, you ought to savor it as much as you can. Nan Chen thought to himself as he furrowed his brows.

Little did she know that a mouthful of wine she had swallowed actually cost thousands. She had drunk it as if it was just some plain water, oblivious to its value.

Given her position and hierarchy in society, what more could you expect from her?

"This wine is not bad at all. It should have cost quite a lot right?" Ning Ran smiled, trying to gain favor from Nan Chen.

Nan Chen paid her no heed and gestured her to eat.

He didn't want to affect her mood prior to her meal, he would only talk about it afterwards.

Ning Ran was finally able to relax a little. She had been stressed out due to what had happened to his father.

The steak was delicious, to begin with, so Ning Ran ate heartily.

It didn't take her long to finish the whole steak.

"Do you want another serving?" asked Nan Chen.

Ning Ran was a little embarrassed as she said, "Thank you, but that's enough. I apologize for my unladylike behavior... I've been quite busy recently and had no choice but to get used to eating faster."

Nan Chen didn't bother to refute. This wasn't the first time he saw her wolf down her food.

"Let's get right to the topic."

"What did you want to talk about?" asked Ning Ran with a solemn face.

"I just want you to tell me the truth. No matter how bad it is, don't worry, I'll still give you the money," said Nan Chen.

"Alright. What do you want to know?"

"Is your dad sick?"

Ning Ran was stunned. So that was what he wanted to ask me?

She was caught off-guard as she didn't think he would be asking her about that.

Luo Yi had already told her to not spill anything to the Nan family. If she were to tell him the truth, her father's life might be in peril. Not to mention that Luo Yi also had her grandfather's and mother's urn in her hands.

It was still uncertain whether Luo Yi would actually murder Ning Ziqiang, but to destroy her grandfather's and mother's urn, that would be an easy thing for her to do.

Ning Ran couldn't afford to take the risk as she could not possibly live with the guilt.

"I don't know." Ning Ran could only give him a vague answer.

"Has your dad ever asked for any money from you?"

"Yes." This time her answer was resolute, after all, it was the truth.

"Then are you willing to give some to him?"

"Yes," answered Ning Ran once again.

"Then regarding what you have told me yesterday, was everything a lie?" asked Nan Chen, his face appearing icy cold.

Ning Ran hesitated for a bit; she didn't know what to do.

If she did not admit to it, there was a chance Nan Chen might confront Luo Yi.

Knowing how cruel Luo Yi was, it was a gamble Ning Ran couldn't take.

"I have my circumstances," answered Ning Ran vaguely.

"You lied to me, and you lied to everyone," said Nan Chen coldly.

"You promised you would hand over the money to me."

"You think I would give the money to a liar?"

"I have my own circumstances. You'll understand sooner or later that I'm not that kind of person."

"Then what kind of person are you?"

Ning Ran remained silent, not knowing what else she could say.

She had told Nan Chen everything yesterday, thinking he would believe her. But Luo Yi had been cunning enough to manipulate the Nan family, causing Ning Ran to be in quite a tough spot now.

"Give me the money, I'll explain it to you once this is all over."

"Do you think your words have credibility when you can even lie when you are drunk?"

The thought of being lied to by a drunk wounded his pride.

I had even sympathized with her for a moment. It never crossed my mind that she was such a vile woman!

There was nothing Ning Ran could say. It was the first time she had felt so helpless; beads of tears had formed at the edge of her eyes.

“Quit your act.”

“I’m not acting. I really do have my own circumstances.”

“Then is it true that your father was ill? And that you were unwilling to help even after he had asked you for some money?”

Ning Ran didn’t dare to answer. She couldn’t bear the responsibility for the consequences that would come after answering Nan Chen.

Nan Chen stood up from his chair and pointed at Ning Ran, before saying, “I already gave you a chance.”

“Listen to me, Sir Chen...” Ning Ran cried out in a panic as she tried to block his way.

“I’ve had enough! Step aside!” yelled Nan Chen angrily.

If it wasn’t for the fact that she had given birth to two of his children, he would have chased her out of Flower City for her lies.

“It doesn’t matter what you think of me. Just give me the money as you promised,” said Ning Ran.

“Are you actually playing me for a fool?”

“I...”

Nan Chen strode out of the room before Ning Ran could finish her sentence.

She chased after him immediately and blocked the entrance to the lift. “Give me the money. I’ll return it to you one day. You have already signed the contract, you can’t just go against your words at this stage.”

“The contract says that I will be giving you five hundred thousand annually. You have already taken your share,” reminded Nan Chen coldly.

Ning Ran was at a loss of words.

“Please, I beg you, I’m really in need of that money. I’ll return you the money next week by hook or by crook,” said Ning Ran.

Nan Chen looked at the woman before him. So you still intend to act at this stage? Nan Chen thought to himself.

“Why did you chase after me?”

“Sir Chen, think about it! I have rejected your offer of a billion to hand over the custody of my children. So why would I be thirsting over a mere ten million? If money is the only thing I wanted, I would have asked it from you long ago. What’s the point of begging you to lend me some money now?”

Her words certainly seemed convincing. Nan Chen didn’t interrupt her, he was obviously listening to her plea.

“Please, just trust me once more. If I couldn’t return the ten million, I’ll hand over the custody of the kids to Nan family.”

“Then why don’t we sign another agreement? I’ll even give you the money if you hand over the custody.”

“That won’t do. I’ll never sacrifice my kids,” said Ning Ran firmly.

Nan Chen’s eyes darkened. He couldn’t fathom the woman before him.

If money was the only thing in her mind, why did she decline the offer then?

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Nan Chen left anyway. Ning Ran did not gain anything other than a nice meal. Nonetheless, his decision was understandable. After all, if the roles were exchanged, she would not have forked out the money either.

Even though the Nan family is rich, it was still hard-earned money and not something that could be given just like that. Moreover, as a prideful person, Nan Chen would be more concerned about getting conned.

Seems like I’ll have to come up with another plan. Despite his anger, Nan Chen allowed Qiao Zhan to send Ning Ran back to her living quarters. In the morning, Luo Yi called before Ning Ran had even woken up.

“Today will be the last day. Get the money ready or be prepared for the consequences.”

“I have the money, but I can’t make the transfer. You’ll have to collect the cash in person,” Ning Ran responded. “What tricks do you have up your sleeves?” Luo Yi responded.

"I don't have any tricks. If you run away with the money I transferred without returning my mother's ashes, what should I do? I can't trust you. You'll have to bring my grandfather and my mother's ash over to collect the cash. As for Ning Ziqiang, you can do whatever you want with him. We're not related," Ning Ran reasoned.

Luo Yi was silent as though she was contemplating the woman's words. Ning Ran had to convince her and had to do so fast, to ensure that she would get a favorable answer.

"If you don't want the money, I'll keep it for myself. My mother is no longer with me and there's no longer any meaning to what I do for her. At least with the money, I can lead a better life. She would be happy for me."

She then continued, "I'm sending the location to Feng Minsheng's phone so that he can send you over. Bring the item over. If you don't, you can forget about the money."

With that, Ning Ran hung up the phone before Luo Yi had the time to digress the information.

After a while, Feng Minsheng called.

Indeed, they were in cahoots. It's likely that he had spoken to Luo Yi.

"Luo Yi said you wanted to pass her the money and for me to bring her over. However, I have not received a location from you," Feng Minsheng informed.

"I'll send it over once I've arrived."

Ning Ran hung up quickly, leaving no room for second thoughts.

She then called Qiao Zhan.

...

Two hours later. Honghua Hotel, Room 506.

Luo Yi did not ring the doorbell as she stood at the doorstep. Instead, she checked her surroundings.

She was carrying a huge bag that seemed to contain a heavy object.

After much inspection and concluding that everything was normal, she pressed the doorbell.

It is undoubtedly Ning Ran's room.

She had deliberately opened the door wide to assure Luo Yi that there was no one else inside, so she could enter at ease.

The room was small and one could easily tell that there was no one inside.

Only then did Luo Yi enter and ask, "Where's the money?"

Ning Ran pointed to a large suitcase, "It's right here. Ten million is a lot of money. I can't even shift it."

"Open it up and show it to me," Luo Yi answered.

"As agreed, let me have my mother's ashes first," Ning Ran countered.

"I haven't even seen the money yet. How would I know if you're telling the truth?" Luo Yi queried.

"I didn't see my mother's ashes either. How would I know if you're telling the truth?" Ning Ran rebutted.

Luo Yi bent down, ready to verify the cash in the suitcase only to realize that it was rather sturdy and required a password to be opened.

"Open it up and let me verify the cash. I'll hand over the ashes once you do that."

"We've spoken about this before. I'm not giving it to you if you don't give it to me!" Ning Ran retorted.

"I have the ashes in my bag. If I smash it up right now, your grandfather and your mother's ashes will get mixed up. By then, you wouldn't even be able to tell them apart. Open up the suitcase or I'll throw the ashes out the window," Luo Yi replied agitatedly.

"Luo Yi, let's talk peacefully and not act rash. The money is definitely here but I doubt you have the ashes with you. The initiative is still in your hands. What's there to be agitated about?" Ning Ran calmly responded.

Luo Yi shut the door.

As long as I have the door shut, no one can barge in. Dealing with Ning Ran will be a piece of cake.

Ning Ran motioned for Luo Yi to have a seat, but Luo Yi was being vigilant and refused.

"What do you want to talk about? There's nothing for us to discuss. You just have to hand over the money and I'll pass you your mother's ashes. It's as simple as that," Luo Yi said.

“You don’t even have the ashes with you. Luo Yi, you’re trying to be funny. Don’t you know you’ve made life a living hell for me?” Ning Ran asked.

“How did I make life a living hell? Your father brought you up. What’s wrong with asking you for a bit of money?”

“You’re clearing ripping me off under the pretense that my father has no money for treatment. It’s clear that you wanted ten million but you’re only asking for a hundred thousand. If my father had really been sick and needed the hundred thousand, I would have given it no matter what it takes. “ Ning Ran scowled.

She then continued, “But what you’re really after is ten million. I don’t have that much to offer even if I tried. What could I do? I could only borrow money from the rich. Who else would fork out ten million? I had initially obtained that sum but you guys lied to the Nan family and declared that I was a heartless person. As it is, the master of the Nan family got angry and refused to lend me their money. So it’s all on you!”

Luo Yi got anxious, “Are you trying to tell me that you don’t have the money? Did you lie to me about the money in the suitcase?”

“I could have borrowed it. But it was all ruined because of you guys!” Ning Ran elaborated.

“So then you decided to con me with this big suitcase?”

“It’s not empty. It contains an explosive device that I bought from the black market. With the press of a button, the device would blow up. We can both say hi to my mother and you can personally explain to her how you’ve caused her death!” Ning Ran snapped.

Luo Yi didn’t get the chance to react. However, she had noticed the remote controller that Ning Ran was wielding.

“You’re trying to scare me. It isn’t like you to do this!” Luo Yi panicked.

“I wouldn’t. But as long as it involves money, many would! Luo Yi, would you like to visit my mother? Since you guys are pushing me to the brink, let’s all die together!” Ning Ran roared.

“Don’t be rash! Don’t be rash...We can talk about it!”

Luo Yi said that as she prepared to take a break for the exit.

“Stand there. If you dare to move, I’ll hit the button. We will all die!” Ning Ran raised the remote controller she was holding.

“Calm down. I won’t go. I won’t go,” Luo Yi motioned for Ning Ran to relax.

“Can you hear it? Dah dah dah. It’s the sound of the device!” Ning Ran commented.

Luo Yi listened hard. Sure enough, she heard it. This made her feel even more anxious.

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“Ran, cool down. Don’t ever hit that button,” Luo Yi shuddered. “Tell me where my mother and my grandfather’s ashes are. If you don’t, we can all die!”

“It’s at home. Don’t worry, I didn’t touch it!” Luo Yi assured. Ning Ran already had an inkling that the woman wouldn’t have brought it along. “Does Feng Minsheng know where it is?” Ning Ran queried.

“He knows. I was going to return the ashes to you anyway. There’s no point for me to keep them as it only gives me nightmares. I lied only because I was worried you wouldn’t give me the money. I don’t want the money anymore. You can have the ashes,” Luo Yi explained.

“Call Feng Minsheng now and get him to deliver the ashes. Otherwise, this will be the end of us!”

“Ok, I’ll make the call immediately,” Luo Yi fished out her phone. Ning Ran took the phone from Luo Yi, “I’ll make the call and you can do the talking.” “This child…”

“Don’t even try to make the connection. I’m not your child,” Ning Ran cut her off coldly. “Ok, I won’t. Go ahead and call,” Luo Yi hurriedly supplied.

Ning Ran’s call to Feng Minsheng went through as she beckoned for Luo Yi to speak up. “Minsheng, are you still out?” Luo Yi asked. “Yes, Aunt Luo. Have you gotten the money?” It was Feng Minsheng’s voice.

Ning Ran gritted her teeth with hatred. *This a**hole claims that he liked me but was actually in cahoots with this old witch to blackmail me!*

“I don’t have the money. She wants the ashes to make the exchange. Make a trip for me and get those two boxes of ashes here,” Luo Yi replied.

“Right now?”

“Yes, right now. I’ll be here waiting,” Luo Yi affirmed.

“Ok. Take care, Aunt Luo.”

Ning Ran ended the call but did not return her the phone for fear that she would try anything funny.

The wait felt like ages and the atmosphere in the room was depressing. Nobody spoke.

“Ran, we are at our wits’ end too,” Luo Yi’s voice was gentle.

Ning Ran did not reply.

“We’re living a hard life. The debtors are after us and we have to hide all the time. If it weren’t for that, there would have been no need for us to do this to you.”

“That makes it alright for you to make life difficult for me? So what if I’m not having a great time either?” Ning Ran retorted.

“Aren’t you doing well? You’ve borne two kids for the Nan family. They’d be more than willing to give you any sum of money if you asked for it. With so many assets to their name, this bit of money is nothing.”

“You guys shouldn’t have spread rumors about me. Nan Chen thinks I’m a heartless person and refuses to lend me any money. Would you like to make a call and clarify it for yourself?”

Luo Yi immediately waved her hands, “No, no, no. I’m not calling. We’re not close at all. What do I have to say to him?”

“That’s weird. Your daughter was Nan Chen’s ex-girlfriend, right? You’ve never met your future son-in-law?” Ning Ran probed.

“On the surface, Luo Fei was Nan Chen’s girlfriend. The Nan family had never acknowledged that relationship. The company was in a fix back then. I had asked Luo Fei to seek Nan Chen for help. He did help out a couple of times but we still couldn’t tide over and he gave up eventually.”

“The Nan family are cruel. They pay no heed to people like us. Given your contribution, you should seize the opportunity to make a fortune, Ran. Or else, you would lose the chance to do so should they take your kids away. If it’s hard for you to ask for the money, we could team up and split the earnings by half.” Luo Yi said.

Ning Ran scoffed silently. *To think of splitting money at a time like this. Isn’t she something?*

“Is that so? What do you think I should do then?” Ning Ran feigned interest.

Luo Yi looked at Ning Ran, “If you’re really willing to listen to me, getting away with fifty million wouldn’t be a problem.

When the time comes, you can take thirty million and I can have twenty million. We’ll be able to live a comfortable life and never return to Flower City!”

Ning Ran pretended to consider the proposal, "You still haven't shared your plan."

"Don't you have two kids? We'll bring them somewhere secluded and demand a ransom from the Nan family. If they refuse, we'll kidnap them. That said, I'm certain that the Nan family would pay up."

Luo Yi's plan wasn't brilliant; Ning Ran had already guessed it.

"That's my own flesh and blood. Making use of them to extort for money? I'm not as shameless as you," Ning Ran chided.

"We don't have to reveal ourselves. We can hide the kids and make-believe that they were kidnapped by someone else. We could get the Nan family to transfer the money to someone else's bank account. Nobody would ever find out. The kids wouldn't be hurt either. Where's the harm in that?"

Luo Yi seemed pleased with her ingenious plan as the sense of pride was written all over her face.

"That's not a bad idea. Let me mull over it," Ning Ran lied.

"What is there to mull over? Just listen to me. We can do whatever we want when we're rich."

This woman is too wicked.

"In the event that the Nan family refuse to pay up, do I have to end up hurting my own kids?" Ning Ran challenged.

"They won't. The Nan family would give in. Trust me."

"What if they don't?"

"If they don't, it means that they don't care about the kids. We can then lower our demands till they accede. If you agree with me, let's kick into action. I guarantee that you'll strike it rich!"

Luo Yi then continued, "Even though there's a lot of misunderstanding between us, we're still a family. As long as we are rich, those misunderstandings won't mean a thing, right?"

Luo Yi observed Ning Ran as she spoke.

Of course, Ning Ran wouldn't be moved by her words. She only intended to find out how vicious Luo Yi could be.

“We’ll talk again when I receive my mother’s ashes. Oh yes, I have a question. My mother was doing just fine. Why did she suddenly pass away? Did you bribe the doctor or hire someone to kill her?”

Luo Yi’s eyes glinted at her question and she instantly became alert.

There were things that could be shared and some that should never be said. Luo Yi was well aware of that.

“I didn’t hurt your mother. I was truly upset about her death too. Although, I have no idea if your father knew of the situation. I was playing mahjong with my friends when your mother died. I’m really clueless.”

Luo Yi’s eyes shone, an indication that wasn’t telling the truth.

“There’s no need for us to be on bad terms. Why don’t you put the remote controller down? You’re still young. We don’t have to die over such a small matter,” Luo Yi advised Ning Ran.

As soon as she said that, Luo Yi’s phone rang. It was Feng Minsheng.

Ning Ran gestured Luo Yi to answer and behave herself.

“Luo Yi, I have it with me. I’m in the hotel lobby. Do I bring it over?” Feng Minsheng questioned.

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Two minutes later, the doorbell rang. “There, Minsheng has brought the things you wanted. Can I go open the door now?” Luo Yi said. This time, Ning Ran had no objection.

When the door opened, a tall and muscular man stood there in the place of Feng Minsheng. He was no stranger to Luo Yi, as he was the one who had claimed to be Ning Ziqiang’s former subordinate. He had even treated them to a meal.

Luo Yi later found out through Feng Minsheng that he was from the Nan family. His name was Qiao Zhan, and he oversaw all the security duties for the Nan family.

The moment Luo Yi saw Qiao Zhan, she knew something was wrong. “How can you be here?” Luo Yi looked at Qiao Zhan. “Why can’t it be me?”

Qiao Zhan shot a retort at Luo Yi before handing a plastic bag containing an urn to Ning Ran. Ning Ran’s tears fell the moment she held the urn in her hands.

"I seized this from Feng Minsheng who is under our control right now." Qiao Zhan said. "Thank you, Captain Qiao. Where is he now?"

Ning Ran was asking about Ning Ziqiang. Even though he was a scoundrel, he was her biological father after all, and she still wanted to know whether he was dead or alive.

"He has been tied up and is quite weak, probably because he didn't eat. I've had him sent to the hospital." Qiao Zhan said.

"Ning Ran, you said there were explosives in this box. You were lying weren't you?" Luo Yi said.

Ning Ran placed the urn down properly and wiped her tears away.

"It's just a television remote control. What explosives are you talking about?"

"What is in your box then?"

"A voice transmitter and some high-tech thing that my son made. Our conversations can be sent to the cloud drive, and once you open that software, you can hear our conversations. These conversations are saved, so we can listen to them anytime. However, I don't know the name of this newfangled toy. I have never quite understood the high-tech things my son makes," said Ning Ran.

"So you were lying to me? You weren't planning to give me the money at all?"

"I was about to give it to you, but since you badmouthed me and I couldn't borrow any money, what do I have to give you? Captain Qiao, let the police handle this person too." Ning Ran said.

"You can't use a secret recording as evidence! The police have no way of catching me!" Luo Yi was still very arrogant.

"The fact that you tied Ning Ziqiang up can already be considered as unlawful imprisonment. Of course, you can be charged under this offence," Ning Ran said coldly.

"You..."

"Also, didn't you say my grandfather's ashes were in your hands too? What about that USB?" Ning Ran picked up the urn carefully.

"Let me go, and I'll tell you where your grandfather's ashes are." Luo Yi seemed to see a light at the end of the tunnel again.

Qiao Zhan gave her one tight slap on her face. "Are you trying to lie to Ms. Ding again? Ms. Ding, don't listen to her. Feng Minsheng has said that there is only an urn there. Your grandfather's ashes have already been buried."

Ning Ran finally heaved a sigh of relief.

After they left the hotel, Qiao Zhan arranged for Luo Yi to be sent to the police station while he drove Ning Ran back to her home for her to find a resting spot for the urn.

Ning Ran hugged the urn tightly and occasionally wiped away her tears as the past came rushing to her mind again.

There was a time when Luo Yi had not yet appeared, and Ning Ran was the only child in the Ning family.

Her mother was very busy but had never once missed any of Ning Ran's important activities.

Be it Parents' Day or the school's musical performances, as long as there were activities in Ning Ran's school, her mother would make arrangements to personally attend these events.

Therefore, the Ning Ran then was as blissful as a princess.

Later, Luo Yi came into the scene without Ning Ran's knowledge.

This was because her mother did not want Ning Ran to be affected by her home affairs. Therefore, she only found out about it when things finally got out of control.

However, she was too inexperienced and too weak then and did not know how to help her mother at all.

Ning Ran had always thought if she hadn't been so weak, she could have helped her mother and perhaps her mother wouldn't have died.

"Ms. Ding, we have misunderstood you this time. Please forgive us," Qiao Zhan said cautiously.

He thought Ning Ran was crying because she felt she had been wronged.

Ning Ran wiped away her tears and said, "No, it's all right. I didn't handle this matter properly either. The whole issue could only be settled thanks to your help, Captain Qiao. Otherwise, there was no way I could complete it."

"Now that everything is settled, I hope you will be able to forgive my foolishness, Ms. Ding. Actually, I've met Luo Yi and gang before. They lied to me and I conveyed the

same message to Young Master Chen, indirectly causing his misunderstanding towards you...”

“All right, let’s not talk about this anymore. You were just doing your job, I understand that,” Ning Ran said.

“Actually, you should communicate directly with Sir Chen if anything comes up. He’s a very intelligent person. He had actually privately instructed me to monitor your movements closely, as he had a feeling that something was not right. Indeed, just as he had predicted, you gave me a call,” Qiao Zhan said.

“In that case, should I be thanking him?” Ning Ran replied.

“I don’t mean it in that way. What I meant was, things that seem complicated can be simplified with Master Chen’s involvement.”

Ning Ran remained silent.

Of course, Qiao Zhan was right. Nan Chen definitely wielded that kind of power and influence.

However, Nan Chen has to trust me first. He has never seemed to trust me before.

When they arrived home, Ning Ran placed the urn in her house.

She would then need to find a proper date to bury her mother so the latter can truly rest in peace.

After settling everything, Ning Ran had to rush to the movie set.

However, Qiao Zhan was not driving towards the set.

It was only after Ning Ran reminded him of where she was supposed to go to that he said they were headed to the hospital, as they had called to say that Ning Ziqiang wanted to see Ning Ran.

Hearing that made her upset immediately. “So I have to put down everything and rush to him the moment he wants to see me? I’m not going!”

“He says he has something very important to tell you. It might be related to some secret, so you should go and take a look.”

Is it possible that he knows where the USB is? That devil Luo Yi has refused to say where it is. Since Ning Ziqiang has been with her all the time, he should have a clue.

“Fine, we’ll go and take a look then.” She finally agreed.

When they arrived, Qiao Zhan brought Ning Ran to the hospital room where Ning Ziqiang was put on a drip.

When he saw Ning Ran, he tried to sit up.

“It’s all right, just lie down. You don’t have to get up,” Ning Ran said coldly.

“Ran, thank goodness for you, or I would have died of starvation at home,” Ning Ziqiang said emotionally.

“Serves you right. It was your rightful retribution when that Luo Yi dealt with you!” scoffed Ning Ran.

“Yes, yes I admit that was my retribution,” Ning Ziqiang replied miserably.

“Why did you ask me to come here? What did you want to say to me?” Ning Ran asked.

“I wanted to tell you to not be so upset. Those are not your mother’s ashes. Her ashes have already been buried in her grave,” Ning Ziqiang said.

“What?”

“Luo Yi had asked me to change out your mother’s ashes and hide them. I couldn’t bear to do that, so I didn’t. It’s just regular grass ash in that urn. Luo Yi felt so guilty; she had never dared to open up the urn, so she never found out about it. So don’t worry, your mother has already been laid to rest,” Ning Ziqiang said.

Ning Ran had not seen this coming at all.

However, this is Ning Ziqiang. Can I trust him? Could he be lying to me?

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Ning Ran thought long and hard before she reacted to this revelation. *This is too complicated. We can’t verify the ashes, so there is no way to tell whether Ning Ziqiang is telling the truth.*

“Ran, you have to believe me, I really am telling you the truth. If I were to lie, your mother’s ghost would definitely haunt me...”

“Shut up! My mother was a good person, she’s definitely in heaven. She would never be a ghost! Such fate is only people for people like you and Luo Yi! You both will become ghosts after you die!” Ning Ran was livid.

“Yes, I was wrong, of course, your mother is in heaven. Anyway, it’s really just grass ash, and not your mother’s ashes, in the urn. There is a big difference between human ashes and grass ash, so you can go and get it verified,” Ning Ziqiang said.

“So, what you are trying to tell me is that you still have a conscience? Are you trying to whitewash yourself?”

“I don’t mean it in that way at all. I know I have committed the most heinous crimes, and I don’t ever expect you to forgive me. All I wanted to do was tell you the truth.”

“I will never forgive you! Shouldn’t you tell me where my mother’s USB drive is by now?”

“I don’t know where it is. I’ve told you all I know, but I really don’t know where the USB drive is.”

“Do you really not know, or do you just not want to tell me?”

“I really don’t know where it is, and I can swear I don’t know anything about it...”

“Fine, I won’t believe you even if you swore on your own life anyway. I’ll go and find it myself, I’m sure I will be able to find it.”

“Ran, I’ve done too many things to wrong you, and I have always regretted them...”

“You don’t have to say all these to me. No matter what, I will never forgive you.” Ning Ran interrupted him before walking out of the hospital room.

Two police officers then came over to the room to find out more about the case.

“Captain Qiao, may I trouble you to send me to the movie set? I have a movie to shoot.” Ning Ran glanced at her watch.

“Yes, Ma’am.”

Ning Ran reached the set half an hour later.

Everyone had to wait for her before they could begin shooting.

Ning Ran felt quite embarrassed. She had been messing up the filming schedule due to all the things that have been happening to her.

“I’m going to get my makeup done now and will start work immediately after that. I’m so sorry, everybody.” Ning Ran took a deep bow.

“No rush at all. It’s a good day today, so no rush!” The director was beaming with joy.

“What good day is it today?” Ning Ran was completely befuddled.

The director put on an enigmatic look and said, “You’ll find out once you go to the makeup room.”

Ning Ran’s curiosity was piqued by now. “Did you all find some treasure? Is that why you are so happy?”

“Yes, it’s a huge treasure! Quick, go and take a look!”

That actually set off Ning Ran’s alarm bells instead.

“You are not trying to set me up, are you? There’s a dog or a snake waiting for me in there, isn’t it?”

“No, it’s really a huge treasure. You’ll find out when you go in and take a look,” The director urged.

Still skeptical, Ning Ran found a walking stick prop and headed to the makeup room.

In the end, there was no dog nor snake awaiting her. Instead, there was a pretty boy.

This pretty boy was applying makeup onto his porcelain face which showcased his flirtatious iridescent eyes.

There could only be that one androgynous devil in the whole of China, and that was Beauty Zheng.

“Blondie? You’re back?” Ning Ran screamed.

The moment Zheng Lunlun saw Ning Ran, he shouted with joy and jumped up from the chair with his arms wide open, “Computer Guru, I’ve missed you too much!”

Ning Ran stuck out her fingers and counted that Zheng Lunlun had uttered seven words without a single stutter!

Has he been healed from his stutter?

Zheng Lunlun had already pounced on her while she was still counting his words.

She then took a few steps back and refused his bear hug.

“Hang on, sing one line for me,” she said.

“Huh? Sing?”

“Sing a song with more than ten words in it.”

“Which song?”

“Any song, as long as there are more than ten words in it.”

“But it’s quite hard to find a song with more than ten words in the title…”

“You fool, it’s not about the song title, it’d do as long as the lyric has more than ten words,” Ning Ran reprimanded him.

“Then you should have said so earlier. But why do you suddenly want me to sing? Shouldn’t we be having a tearful reunion right now? Why should I be singing?”

“Enough!” Ning Ran shouted excitedly.

Zheng Lunlun’s little speech just now was definitely more than ten words, and he still did not stutter at all. *This means he has been healed from his stutter!*

“Enough what?” Zheng Lunlun was confused again.

“Enough words! Blondie, you aren’t stuttering anymore?” Ning Ran was jumping for joy.

“Hahaha, so that was what you meant. Yes, I don’t stutter anymore!” Zheng Lunlun laughed out loud.

“That’s great!” Ning Ran cried out, laughing happily as well.

The two of them continued to laugh like two fools while the makeup artist stood there completely confused.

“Can we continue with our shoot then? We still have a lot of scenes to shoot. The progress of the whole drama has been massively delayed and it’s all our fault,” Ning Ran said.

“Yes, and we get to work together again. Come on, let’s have a long-awaited celebratory hug!” Zheng Lunlun squealed.

The female makeup artist looked at them enviously. *Beauty Zheng asking for a hug? How wonderful is that? Why don’t I ever get something like that?*

“Forget it, no hug, just a handshake. We need to remember our status.” Ning Ran waved her hands.

“What do you mean?”

“Don’t you remember? You should be calling me...”

“Shut up!”

The thing Zheng Lunlun simply could not stand was that Ning Ran wanted him to call her ‘Aunt’.

That title made him want to go mad. *I will never call her that!*

“Fine, no hug then. Let’s do our makeup first, and hang out tonight. We haven’t done this in so long!” Zheng Lunlun said.

The makeup artist grew even more envious. *They are making plans to hang out tonight? Man, these two...*

“Err, should I give you some space?” The makeup artist volunteered.

“Sure, we haven’t seen each other for such a long time, and it’d be good to have a quick chat,” Zheng Lunlun said.

The makeup artist responded before heading outside.

“Don’t spread rumors out there! He and I have the best platonic friendship ever, so don’t make things up,” Ning Ran reminded her.

The makeup artist immediately laughed and said, “Don’t worry, I won’t make things up.”

“Hey, did anyone bully you when I wasn’t around?” Zheng Lunlun asked.

“Yes,” said Ning Ran.

“Oh, so someone really did bully you! Who is it? I’ll kill them!” Zheng Lunlun screamed agitatedly.

“Forget it, let’s not talk about me. How did you get over your stutter?”

“I don’t know either. All I did was to follow the doctor’s orders to take my medication and to practice continuously, on top of therapy sessions. It then improved slowly. I still stutter when I’m anxious, but it’s mostly all right now.” Zheng Lunlun smiled.

“That’s good, that’s good. It would be a shame for such a handsome little boy like you to stutter your whole life.”

“Yea, since I am so good looking, I’d be best looking stutterer in the world had I continued to stutter. How have you been? I keep seeing negative news about you,

something to do with some man? What's wrong with your eyes? What did you see in a man like that? Were you crazy?" Zheng Lunlun asked her anxiously.

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"What man? I didn't go look for any man. Wouldn't that be your uncle? I didn't look for him, and he didn't look for me either. He just disappeared into thin air, God knows where he is now. Probably chasing after some chick. But it turned out to be all good, as he is not disturbing me. I can finally have some peace," Ning Ran said.

"Didn't you reconcile with my fourth uncle?"

"We'd never reconciled, and the children were just an accident which has nothing to do with our issues," Ning Ran said.

"But I somehow think that they look more like Third Uncle than Fourth Uncle."

Ning Ran kicked him. "What kind of nonsense is that? What's gonna happen if other people hear that?"

Zheng Lunlun immediately avoided her. "Hey, stop it! Why are you still so rough?"

Ning Ran smacked Zheng Lunlun a few times on his head. "This isn't the first day you've known me, and you know very well that I've always been rough."

"Hey, that's enough! It really hurts ok?" Zheng Lunlun was forced to a corner of the makeup room.

At this very moment, the director walked in to see Ning Ran chasing after Zheng Lunlun to smack him.

The director was completely taken aback. *Beauty Zheng was an A-list actor after all, so how could he completely have no airs in front of Ning Ran?*

This Ning Ran was really quite a little devil. The moment she emerged out of nowhere, she just kicked the highly popular Luo Fei out of the circuit.

Look at her now, chasing after Zheng Lunlun like that. She really must be quite amazing, judging by the way all the big shots have fallen from the pedestal in front of her.

The director sounded two warning coughs.

Embarrassed, Zheng Lunlun said, "Director, we're just rehearsing our scene!"

"Yes, we are rehearsing our scene," echoed Ning Ran.

“Yes, I can see that you are rehearsing your scene. In that case, you can continue for a little while longer? Get yourself a little more acquainted with the lines?”

“No it’s all right, we are almost done. Let’s get back to our makeup now. Director, now that Lunlun is back, you can now arrange for us to speed up our shooting,” said Ning Ran.

“I was just about to discuss this with the both of you. We had planned to finish shooting by the end of the year. However, the days are about to get colder and we still have a lot of scenes to catch up on, so it’s definitely time to speed things up. Otherwise, it will be tougher for everybody if we have to film the summer scenes in the winter.”

Ning Ran and Zheng Lunlun both expressed their understanding and agreed to speed up the shoot.

“All right, it’s all decided then. Let’s get ready!” The director cried out happily.

With Ning Ran’s acting chops and Zheng Lunlun’s popularity, together with Star Entertainment’s marketing resources, Wang Yan had a feeling this series was about to burn up and become the best series of the year.

When the creators are inundated with awards, I’d be regarded as one of the top directors then too!

What a wonderful thought!

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Nanshi Corporation headquarters.

After his video conference meeting, Nan Chen switched off the large monitor in the conference room and pinched his nose slightly out of exhaustion.

Dabao had sent a bunch of codes to his phone, with a message saying that there were some recorded messages in there for him to listen to when he was free.

Nan Chen had been so busy that he didn’t get to listen to it.

However, he would definitely listen to what Dabao had sent him.

Dabao was not the type to get adults to do silly useless things. Even though he was little, his thoughts and actions were adult-like.

He then went back to his office, switched on his computer and put on his earphones.

The voices were distinctive enough for him to distinguish the relationship between the people, the chronology, and the details of that issue.

After he heard it, Nan Chen immediately gave a call to Qiao Zhan asking him to come to the office.

Qiao Zhan rushed over immediately but had to wait for Nan Chen who was caught up in another meeting.

After more than an hour, Nan Chen finally emerged from the conference room.

“Why didn’t you report that to me?” Nan Chen immediately reprimanded him.

Qiao Zhan was a little confused and asked, “Sir Chen, what are you referring to?”

“Why didn’t you report to me that you had misunderstood Ning Ran?” Nan Chen snarled coldly.

Why is it my responsibility when you were the one who had misunderstood her?

However, Qiao Zhan did not dare voice his thoughts out loud.

“I thought Ms. Ding would tell you everything since the issue has been clarified. I did not dare to get involved.” Qiao Zhan bowed his head.

“Knowing her character, she would never tell me things on her own accord,” Nan Chen muttered through gritted teeth.

To Nan Chen, Ning Ran was just an obstinate woman. To him, her occasional weakness was a mere act, and he hated those kinds of people the most.

“Actually, I have never thought of Ms. Ding to be that kind of person. Not only is she beautiful, but she is also extremely kind. One has to be blind to treat her as a villain...”

Qiao Zhan was a very candid person who rarely thought before he spoke. Now that he had begun to speak, he could barely control his verbal diarrhea. When he realized he was wrong, it was already too late.

“Who’s blind now?”

Nan Chen glared at Qiao Zhan.

“Me. I was blind. Of course, I wasn’t referring to you, Sir Chen,” Qiao Zhan said quickly.

“So which eye of yours is blinded?”

“Oh?” Qiao Zhan was at a loss for words initially, but quickly recovered and said, “Both. Both my eyes are blinded, I can’t see anything at all!”

Nan Chen snorted coldly at him.

“What do we do now?” Nan Chen asked.

“What?”

“Don’t you need to rectify the situation now that you have misunderstood her?”

My God, you were the one who misunderstood her, what has it got to do with me?

What can I do as a subordinate? Are you going to dock one month’s pay off me?

“Yes, I’d need to do so, but I am not sure what I can do.” Qiao Zhan had no choice but to say this.

“Think.”

With that one word, Nan Chen turned back to his work.

Work was really piling up for him, and he barely had a few minutes to himself before he had to start on the next task.

Qiao Zhan was left standing there.

Master Chen clearly wanted Qiao Zhan to think of a way to remedy this issue before he could leave.

When it came to fighting, Qiao Zhan was the expert who could beat up ten men on his own; he had the ability to organize large fights as well. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have become the leader of the Nan family’s security team.

However, problem-solving was definitely not his strong suit. In fact, women were probably Qiao Zhan’s weakest point.

If Qiao Zhan could handle women, he wouldn’t have been still single in his thirties.

Clearly, this was a task that was completely unsuitable for him, and he found himself in a very difficult situation.

He knew it was an impossible mission, but yet he did not dare voice that out loud.

On the other hand, Nan Chen was so caught up by the work that he seemed to have forgotten about the people around him.

Like a statue, Qiao Zhan was there for half an hour with no idea popping into his mind at all.

At this moment, Jiang Zhe came in with a document for Nan Chen to sign.

“Oh, Captain Qiao is here again? What’s going on?” Jiang Zhe said while sizing him up.

“Oh yes, Sir Chen, you should get him to think about it too. He is so chirpy and talkative, I am sure he will have his ways.”

The sight of Jiang Zhe was like a lifebuoy to Qiao Zhan.

“What do you mean?” Jiang Zhe was completely confused.

Of course, Nan Chen was not about to explain everything. Hence, Jiang Zhe continued to ask Qiao Zhan, “Captain Qiao, what is it that you wanted me to think about?”

“We have misunderstood Ms. Ding a while ago. Now, Master Chen wants me to come up with an idea to rectify the situation and I am completely stuck. Assistant Jiang, you have always been the fastest when it comes to ideas, so it’d be great if you could help me think of a solution as well.”

With Jiang Zhe’s intelligence, he immediately guessed what was going on.

Clearly, Master Chen had misunderstood Ning Ran for some reason, and now he wants to make things right. However, because of his overpowering ego, he is getting Qiao Zhan to come up with a plan instead.

However, Qiao Zhan is all brawn and no brains. What idea can he come up with?

Jiang Zhe laughed to himself. Captain Qiao, aren’t you supposed to be very capable? I bet you can’t even think of a single idea now!