

Chapter 261: The Odds of Winning

Xia Qinghan had been in a state of excitement since receiving Bai Meixue's notice that she could audition.

If the audition was successful, her journey as a star would begin!

But when she learned that she had to take a pet to the audition, she was dumbfounded.

Since she didn't like these little creatures, she had never had a pet. Now they wanted her to bring a pet? What was she going to do?

Bai Meixue knew that she didn't have any pets, so she helped her borrow a well-behaved, beautiful ragdoll cat.

Even though Xia Qinghan didn't like pets, when she saw this ragdoll cat called Pudding, she became a little smitten.

Its hair was fluffy and clean, its neck had its own "scarf," and its bright blue eyes truly charmed people.

Pudding was very docile. Although it was a little nervous when seeing strangers, it calmed down quickly after being comforted by the owner.

Even if it wasn't very close to Xia Qinghan, it didn't reject her either.

“Relax, everything will be fine with Pudding here,” Bai Meixue said, patting her own chest in reassurance.

Seeing such a beautiful cat, Xia Qinghan was also relieved.

She could definitely impress the casting director with the cooperation of this cat.

On the day of the audition, she brought the cat to the site, the cat owner accompanying them.

Holding such a gentle cat, Xia Qinghan’s heart felt a little soft, and she thought it was good to have a pet.

After arriving at the scene, she couldn’t help but frown, listening to the barkings of various cats and dogs.

All of these cats and dogs were so annoying!

She felt repulsed but didn’t show it. Looking at the others carefully, she began to wonder about their competitiveness.

The number of cats and dogs were half and half, but Xia Qinghan didn’t care about them. She only paid attention to the actors.

Everyone who came here to audition was obviously a gorgeous girl.

The role of the Queen of Animals was meant to be around 20 years old, so the girls who came to the audition were not old; they were between 17- or 18-years-old to 24- or 25-years-old.

Xia Qinghan looked and found that there were many new faces, none of them having appeared on TV.

There were also some actors who had appeared on TV, but they were not very popular.

In fact, everyone here was fighting for a role in director Jiang Shenghe's work.

However, this role was a bit complex.

Jiang Shenghe had already told everyone that this time, it was a real shoot, and they had prepared animals such as lions and tigers.

Although there were animal trainers monitoring the situation on-site, who could ensure that there would be no problems?

Moreover, director Jiang Shenghe's micromanaging and fault-finding habits were well-known, and he had strict requirements for details in all aspects.

The work created in this manner was indeed very good, but the actors and crew would have a headache.

Since he had said this, everyone knew they would definitely be in close contact with the big animals.

If something happened, it would be very troublesome.

Therefore, while other good roles had been cast, this was the only one left. The actors who came to compete were all third- or fourth tier. The top actors would not be fighting for this kind of role.

Xia Qinghan thought of what Bai Meixue had told her while looking at the people around her.

“Don’t listen to them being so dramatic. When it’s really filming, the tigers and lions must use special effects! So you don’t have to worry about safety.”

Xia Qinghan held the cat, thinking about her chances of winning. She couldn’t help smiling confidently.

When the cat in her arms suddenly started to fuss, Xia Qinghan hugged it slightly. However, that failed to calm it down. Turning around, her eyes widened in horror and she cried out, “Xia Xibei?!”

Chapter 262: Why Can’t I Be Here?

When Xia Qinghan saw Xia Xibei in front of her, she almost thought she was seeing an illusion!

Bai Meixue was equally shocked.

“How are you here?!”

The look on Bai Meixue’s face turned extremely awful upon seeing Xia Xibei and the cat in her arms.

If Xia Xibei had come by herself, she could comfort herself that Xia Xibei was probably just passing by.

However, Xia Xibei had brought a cat along, and she had Pan Yan beside her too.

None of these convinced her that Xia Xibei wasn’t here for an obvious reason.

With Honey in her arms, Xia Xibei diverted a small part of her spiritual power to comfort the cat in Xia Qinghan’s arms and help it calm down.

With a face full of innocence, she replied, “I’m just here for the audition.”

“How is that possible!” Xia Qinghan was so worked up that she could no longer maintain her composure and elegance. Her face turned somewhat ferocious, nearly dropping the cat.

Xia Xibei shrugged, “Why not?”

“How did you get here?” Bai Meixue pulled Xia Qinghan over and stood in front of her in an attempt to conceal her loss of temper, “Was it the company’s arrangement?”

Bai Meixue’s face had turned as dark as ink, and she shot a glare at Pan Yan, continuing to ask, “Why did the company arrange work for a trainee at such an early stage?”

Before Pan Yan could speak, Xia Xibei replied, “Sister Xue, you’re mistaken, this wasn’t the company’s arrangement. I was actually recommended by a friend of mine.”

Bai Meixue pulled a long face, extremely displeased. “You just joined the company not long ago. Is there a need to be so eager?”

“Of course,” Xia Xibei shrugged and stroked Honey, which was baring its teeth at Bai Meixue. “People say that fame is better gained when one is young, don’t they? I have to be spontaneous! Also, if we shouldn’t be so eager, why is she here as well? Isn’t she a newbie just like me?”

She pointed at Xia Qinghan, bafflement apparent on her face.

Bai Meixue was so furious that she blurted out, “You two are different!”

“Different?” Xia Xibei was puzzled. “How are we different? She only joined the company a few days before I did, so why can’t I be here as well?”

Bai Meixue felt rather guilty when she met Xia Xibei's beautiful eyes, so she could only glower at Pan Yan, "The company seems to disallow us from accepting gigs personally, doesn't it?"

Pan Yan was stunned for a second before replying in a neutral tone, "Sister Xue, it's not like we are personally taking gigs. Things like this are pretty common, aren't they? Once we get the role, we'll inform the company."

There were so many artists in the company. If everyone were to wait for the company's arrangements, would they even get a chance to stand out?

Therefore, some of them sought outside resources.

Sure enough, if they were to take part in the filming afterwards, they would have to sign a contract with the company.

This was all just a part of the usual operation, so Pan Yan couldn't understand what made Bai Meixue so edgy.

Did she think she was the only one with privilege?

This made him rather unhappy, so his tone of voice became a little harsh.

Having been rebutted by Pan Yan, Bai Meixue's face turned even more ashen.

Nonetheless, she knew that she had no reason to be mad.

Afterall, she had brought Xia Qinghan here for the audition too!

However, to audition was one thing. Getting selected for the role was a whole other matter.

Furthermore, Xia Xibei hadn't been exposed to acting in the past, unlike Xia Qinghan, whom she had been backing.

How could an inexperienced rookie like her get the role?

As she thought of that, the rage within Bai Meixue gradually died down and she finally managed to put on a smile.

"Alright then, all the best to you."

"Thank you, sister Xue. I'll succeed for sure," Xia Xibei accepted her wish blatantly.

Bai Meixue and Xia Qinghan's lips twitched, and their faces nearly turned gloomy once again.

Fortunately, the audition started very soon.

Chapter 263: There's No Conflict

There were more than 40 auditionees at the moment.

With each of the 40 auditionees taking up a few minutes, the day passed at a pretty fast pace.

Everyone watched the other auditionees vigilantly, with their pets in their arms or on a leash.

The pets that had been brought here were all good-looking. If they were posted on social media, people would go crazy over their cuteness.

However, they noticed that their pets seemed somewhat distraught and anxious. If they hadn't been carrying them or holding their leashes, they might have run loose by now.

They comforted their pets while looking around in confusion but couldn't seem to figure out what the problem was.

Luckily, their pets gradually calmed down towards the end, causing the owners to sigh in relief.

The animals probably got worked up because this was their first time here with so many other cats and dogs around, and they were alright now that they had gotten used to it.

They could finally prepare for the audition at ease, the animals no longer moving around restlessly.

In fact, Xia Xibei was the one who had comforted these clever, little things with her spiritual power, concealing her scent, thus returning peace to the scene.

Although she knew that these little things whom the humans loved so much were all pretty sensitive, she hadn't expected all the cats and dogs here to be so equally sensitive.

If not for her suppression and the owners holding them back, they might have already dashed towards her.

If all the cats and dogs gathered around her, a commotion would ensue for certain.

She had come here in the hopes of completing the audition in peace, not to make a big scene.

After caressing Honey, which lay so comfortably in her arms that it almost fell asleep, Xia Xibei took a look at the numbered card in her hand.

How lucky was she to nearly have gotten the last number among so many auditionees?

Beside her, Pan Yan sat with his head hung low, saying in an apologetic manner, "I was really unlucky!"

He couldn't help but mumble, "Was I not sincere enough this morning?"

Xia Xibei was speechless.

This was the first time she had seen this side of Pan Yan. He was usually very hard working, so why did he still have to pray to the gods?

The waiting time was very long, so she couldn't help but voice her doubt.

Upon hearing her question, Pan Yan replied with a serious face, "There's no conflict between praying to the gods and working hard!"

Not even the gods would be able to save a person if he didn't work hard enough.

Nonetheless, wouldn't it be good if a hardworking person prayed to the gods? It was best to invest in both!

Was there a conflict between the two? There wasn't!

The two of them stared at each other for a moment, Xia Xibei looking away first.

What Pan Yan just said sounded very reasonable.

He was a great one indeed!

There were too many people waiting, and the waiting time was very long.

The actors could muster their patience and keep waiting, but their pets did not have such patience.

Moreover, they had to go to WC!

The crew workers had taken that into consideration, preparing cat litter and sand for the pets in another room in order to avoid any smell.

Despite this preparation, however, no one could be sure that the little things would behave well.

They couldn't help it if the animals decided to make a mess of the place. After all, no one couldn't reason with animals!

Much to everyone's surprise, however, the little things did behave well!

They broke free from their owners' embraces and headed for the "public toilet" to settle their problem.

It wasn't just one animal who did this but many, and the people couldn't help but marvel at them.

How were these little things so smart?!

In the meantime, the contributor behind the scene was waiting for her turn to be auditioned, Honey still in her arms.

Xia Qinghan went before her. When she saw Xia Xibei upon coming out of the room, she couldn't help but approach her, flashing a smug smile.

Before she could even say a word, Pudding broke free from her arms and pounced forward.

"Pudding!" Xia Qinghan and the owner both screamed.

Chapter 264: An One-Sided Beating

Xia Qinghan was shocked and hopeful when she saw Pudding leap towards Xia Xibei.

What if Pudding scratched Xia Xibei and ruined her nasty face?!

What Xia Qinghan hated the most was Xia Xibei's face. Every time she saw it, she felt uncomfortable.

If she was truly scratched by the cat, she would be affected, maybe even needing surgery later on.

Thinking of this, Xia Qinghan became very excited.

However, as soon as she had this vicious thought, she was dumbfounded.

Pudding swiftly landed, and before anyone could react, it flew into Xia Xibei's arms.

"Meow!"

Honey was lying in Xia Xibei's arms, drowsy from being caressed, and its eyes were almost squinted.

Suddenly, sensing an unfamiliar scent, it opened its eyes. As it watched an equally pretty cat rushing toward it, or more accurately, Xia Xibei's arms, it suddenly became angry!

Its claws opened and a cat vs. cat fight began.

People watched Honey slap Pudding to the ground with two swipes!

But that wasn't all.

Honey soon broke free from Xia Xibei's arms and punched Pudding angrily.

"Meow! Meow!" it screeched. 'I will beat you!'

“Meow~” Pudding was caught off guard, only able to dodge left and right for a while. It gave out helpless cries but couldn’t avoid Honey’s attack.

Everyone present was dumbfounded at seeing the two cats fighting!

Actually, it was a Chinchilla cat who was unilaterally beating a Ragdoll cat! It was adorable in its fierceness, and not to be messed with!

What the-

The Chinchilla cat and the Ragdoll cat were both very docile cats. They rarely fought, so why were they fighting now?!

“Stop fighting!”

Pudding’s owner felt distressed, as her baby was beaten without any strength to fight back. This would simply kill her!

However, she didn’t dare to go up too rashly. If this Chinchilla went nuts, she might be scratched!

“Honey! Stop!”

Xia Xibei was also stunned by Honey’s outburst. Recovering, she hurriedly called out for them to stop.

However, Honey was still upset.

What did this cat want? Was it attacking it or its big treasure?

Honey wanted to continue punching but was suddenly plucked up by the neck by Xia Xibei.

When Xia Xibei acted, everyone took a deep breath.

When cats and dogs were fighting, most people couldn't get involved. Even if the fight wasn't lethal, it would be awful if you got scratched. If your face was hurt, it would be even more troublesome.

Under everyone's horrified gazes, Xia Xibei's hand moved to lift Honey up.

Being caught by its weak spot, Honey waved its paws twice in the air, then dropped down in vain, looking a bit pitiful.

"I'm telling you to stop fighting!"

Xia Xibei wanted to laugh. Honey was getting bossier and bossier!

"If you hit anyone... Any cat, I'll stop playing with you!"

With these words, Honey's pupils shrank, and its body became tense.

"Meow!" it yelled immediately. Its body softened and its voice was full of grievances, begging for mercy.

It was that little b*tch who started the fight!

Xia Xibei couldn't even react. Pudding just wanted to get close to her.

Because she was off in a remote area, other cats and dogs did not react much after being comforted.

However, Pudding had just been brought towards her by Xia Qinghan, so its reaction was a bit enthusiastic.

Too bad that it met Honey and was almost overwhelmed.

Pudding's owner quickly picked up the cat and looked at the scratch marks on its body, feeling heartbroken.

Regardless of how she felt, she still couldn't blame Xia Xibei.

After all, her cat had started the fight.

Chapter 265: You Have to Apologize

Pudding was picked up by its owner, tears flickering in its eyes. The cat pathetically shrank into its owner's arms, but still looked at Xia Xibei.

The poor thing just wanted to get close to Xia Xibei but was instead beaten up by Honey.

"It's okay, it's okay..."

Pudding's owner was a woman in her forties. She loved Pudding like a child. If Pudding was hurt, her heart would break.

If she hadn't watched the whole thing and knew that it wasn't Honey's fault, she would have been cursing.

Bai Meixue, who had just come out of the inner area, didn't know this.

Bai Meixue was talking to an acquaintance for a while, and after saying goodbye, she had come outside.

As soon as she came outside, she heard that there was a fight. When she came up and saw the pitifully injured Pudding, she immediately became annoyed. When she heard others say it was because of Honey, she became angry.

“Xia Xibei, you’re out of line!”

Xia Xibei was holding Honey, teaching it not to be so impulsive. When she heard Bai Meixue’s reprimand, she couldn’t help but be stunned.

“I’m out of line?” she asked, pointing to herself questioningly. “What did I do?”

“You made your cat attack other cats! Isn’t that out of line?!”

Seeing Pudding’s messy fur and how people around her were watching the show, the look Bai Meixue gave Xia Xibei was filled with even more disgust.

“What?” Xia Xibei looked blank, “I made my cat attack...”

Seeing her innocent expression, Bai Meixue became angrier and angrier.

“Apologize! Apologize to them!”

The crowd around them was also confused. Did she make a mistake?

“Apologize?” Xia Xibei asked, narrowing her eyes.

“Yes! You have to apologize for doing something wrong!” Bai Meixue was ferocious. “Everyone at the audition is well-behaved. You are the only one making trouble here!”

Xia Xibei’s eyes widened. “I’m making trouble?”

“Yes!” Bai Meixue’s dislike of Xia Xibei was overwhelming. “I know you are jealous of Qinghan, but you can’t do such a vicious thing! If your cat scratched her, could you afford to pay for the damage?!”

As soon as she said this, the expressions of the people around them all changed slightly, becoming complicated.

These words weren’t wrong, but the roles were mixed up.

“Auntie Xue...” Xia Qinghan was anxious, wanting to make Bai Meixue stop talking.

However, Bai Meixue was unstoppable in her logic. She shook off Xia Qinghan’s hand and stared at Xia Xibei in anger. She must make her apologize!

Xia Xibei also stopped Pan Yan, who was about to speak.

Showing an innocent smile, she asked, “Whether it is a human or a cat, do you need to apologize if you were the one to start the fight?”

“Of course!” That’s what she meant!

“If you were injured, how serious would the consequences be, right?” Xia Xibei continued to ask.

“Exactly!” Although Bai Meixue didn’t know why, she frowned and nodded along. “So…”

“So, shouldn’t you apologize to me?” Xia Xibei’s smile suddenly disappeared, and her face fell too.

At that moment, she changed from harmless to aggressive.

Bai Meixue was taken aback by her powerful aura, and when she figured out what she meant, she almost jumped up in outrage.

“You’re asking whom to apologize?!”

Pudding’s owner finally found a chance to speak, exclaiming, “Sister Xue, you made a mistake!”

Bai Meixue turned her head in amazement, “What mistake?”

The woman looked embarrassed as she explained, “Pudding started the fight.”

As soon as she said this, Bai Meixue froze immediately, her face quickly turning flushed.

“But...”

Looking around, everyone’s scornful gazes almost broke her.

Chapter 266: Because It Likes Me

Everyone’s gazes mortified Bai Meixue.

“I was going to just let this go, as it wasn’t a big deal anyway. But I didn’t expect Sister Xue to remind me.” Xia Xibei’s face then became a bit serious, “Cats are naive and cute, they have no malicious thoughts, but humans are not necessarily the same.”

She looked at Xia Qinghan, who had an ugly expression on her face, asking her, “What did you want to say when you walked up to me just now?”

“I...” Xia Qinghan was a little flustered being called out suddenly. “I didn’t want to say anything...”

“Then you came here to make this cat attack me?” Xia Xibei repeated what Bai Meixue had said.

“I didn’t!” How could Xia Qinghan be accused of this, especially with so many people here... She wouldn’t be able to stay in the industry in the future.

“I just wanted to come over and say hello!” Xia Qinghan quickly found a reason.

“Really?”

“Of course!”

“Right,” Xia Xibei smiled suddenly. “You definitely wouldn’t tell this cat to hurt me; you are not that vicious.”

Xia Qinghan and Bai Meixue’s expressions turned even more grim.

“Actually, those things that Sister Xue said just now are incorrect. Even if I was really jealous of you, I can’t make trouble here.” Xia Xibei shook her head, “We are from the same company. If there is anything going on, we can always talk privately. It doesn’t need to be so ugly.”

These words made Bai Meixue’s face turn red, then white.

If Xia Xibei had started the fight, what she said just now would really make everyone dislike her

However, if the situation was reversed, it would be embarrassing.

Seeing other people's contemptuous eyes, her face felt as if it was burning.

It was the first time that she had encountered this kind of thing. She was being ridiculed, and she couldn't even talk back!

"And I also believe that you have no ability to make the little cutie attack me."

Xia Qinghan was speechless at that statement.

"Besides, the little cutie is so adorable, why would it attack me?"

Xia Xibei looked at Pan Yan.

He understood right away, asking, "Then why did it do this?"

Xia Xibei smiled brighter, "That's because it likes me!"

Everyone was shocked. How dare she say this?!

Under everyone's complicated gazes, Xia Xibei reached out to Pudding and stroked its head, "Right?"

"Meow!" Yes, exactly!

Pudding immediately narrowed its eyes in contentment, its little head still rubbing against Xia Xibei's hand.

Everyone was dumbfounded at seeing its affection for Xia Xibei.

Pudding's owner was also stunned; she had never seen Pudding act so affectionate for anyone!

After Xia Xibei caressed Pudding for a few seconds, she pulled her hand away. Pudding immediately poked its head out of its owner's arms and tried to lean towards Xia Xibei.

"Hey!"

Before the owner could react, Pudding got free.

Falling on the ground and raising its head, it shouted at Xia Xibei.

However, looking at Honey, who was in Xia Xibei's arms, it didn't dare to pounce, only able to rub against her feet.

"Meow!" Stroke me more... So comfortable...

“Meow!”

Although Pudding did not dare to pounce again, Honey was not happy. It moved in Xia Xibei’s arms, rubbing its little head on her chest. Fluttering and flicking its furry tail on her arms, it looked very attached.

Everyone was speechless at seeing the two cats ingratiate themselves to Xia Xibei.

Pudding did leap on her because it liked her!

Was Xia Xibei addictive?!

Thinking of this, they couldn’t help but look at Bai Meixue and Xia Qinghan.

Everyone’s gazes fell like heavy slaps to their faces.

Chapter 267: The Scene of a Large Fake Accident

Xia Xibei squatted down and touched Pudding’s head. She smiled and held a cat in her arms too. This scene left a deep impression on many people.

A beautiful and vibrant girl, cute pets... People and animals in harmony... Just looking at the scene made people feel warm.

Everyone was attracted to Xia Xibei, so no one paid attention to their own pets.

“Bark!”

“Meow!”

As Xia Xibei relaxed, the atmosphere also eased up.

So, before everyone could react, all the cats and dogs present rushed towards Xia Xibei as if they had seen their favorite treat.

“Careful!”

“Watch out!”

Everyone became terrified as they watched their cats and dogs suddenly rushing towards Xia Xibei.

Was this an animal riot? Xia Xibei would get hurt!

Everyone watched this scene in amazement. Some people rushed over, but they couldn't match the speed of these little creatures.

As a result, everyone could only watch these pets rush to Xia Xibei, and then—they all fell down!

Fell... Fell down?!

Whether it was a cat or a dog, when they reached Xia Xibei, they all lay down on the ground, revealing their soft bellies.

What the- The scene of a large fake accident?!

Everyone was dumbfounded watching the ground become covered in bellies.

Were they drugged? Fainting?

Could it be that Xia Xibei had sprayed something that made cats and dogs faint?

“Baby!”

“Da Zhuang!”

“Lucky!”

The owners screamed in shock, thinking that something had happened to their little babies.

However, before they went up, they saw their little babies rolling in place, and after rolling to Xia Xibei's feet, they resumed their four-legged posture. Some even stretched their paws to reach her knees, begging for a hug.

Everyone was shocked. Were they seeing things?!

They had suspected that there was something wrong with their pets, but these actions let them know that there was nothing wrong with the animals at all! They were all very lively!

“Meow-meow...”

“Bark-bark...”

They fell at Xia Xibei's feet, making sweet whining noises, which softened people's hearts but also made the owners feel sad.

What was wrong with their babies?!

One girl had just finished her audition, and she walked out while holding her cute little cat.

Before the door even closed, the cat in her arms broke free from her grip.

“Mimi!” the girl immediately yelled in shock.

Her anxiety surprised the people inside, everyone standing up involuntarily.

The endless shouts from outside gave them an ominous premonition. They looked at each other and quickly walked out.

In fact, they had found a certain candidate for this audition. Xia Qinghan, who was recommended by Bai Meixue, was quite good.

Although her acting skills were untried, she had quite an aura.

She was very beautiful, the Ragdoll cat was cute, and their cat-human interaction was pleasant to watch.

Moreover, Xia Qinghan was recommended by Bai Meixue.

Although Bai Meixue’s popularity had dropped a lot because of her age and the number of rising stars in the circle, she still had her background, complete with great acting skills and many awards.

With her here, Xia Qinghan could learn a lot.

They also knew that they would definitely get special effects when it was needed. Who could really get close to lions and tigers? The Queen of Animals only existed in books and movies.

Therefore, after an overall comparison, several people were willing to vote for Xia Qinghan.

However, when they walked outside, they couldn't help but be stunned by the scene before them!

Chapter 268: She's the Queen of Animals

Because of the special circumstances of this audition, the space rented by the crew was very spacious, the outside hall containing at least 100 square meters.

And now, there was a magical sight in this hall.

In the center of the hall, a beautiful girl was surrounded by cats and dogs, big and small, who had all spread out around her in a circle.

This scene reminded people of a certain kind of sacrifice.

Their god was in the middle, surrounded by devout believers.

This fantastic scene shocked everyone.

What was happening?!

However, this situation was obviously different from human sacrifices, because these cats and dogs were not very obedient.

Someone with a sharp eye saw a Russian Blue cat on the ground; it tried to squeeze in to get closer to Xia Xibei, kicking the Teddy dog next to it.

After kicking the dog, it continued to meow, acting very innocent.

Noone knew what to say. What kind of spell were these cats and dogs under?

Several casting agents turned their eyes to the girl in the middle, stunned.

They had seen a lot of beautiful girls today, and they were used to seeing plenty of beautiful women, but this girl's beauty was beyond their imagination.

Her eyes and eyebrows were exquisite and picturesque. More would be too much and less would be too plain, but they were just right.

The girls who came to the audition had all tried their best to make their makeup and clothes appear exquisite and gorgeous, attempting to make themselves similar to the character setting of "Queen of Animals."

However, this girl's makeup was simple and clean.

Such clean makeup made her look more ethereal and delicate. The simple green dress, with her long hair draped across her back and no luxurious accessories in sight, made her look like an elf walking out of the forest.

She smiled and looked helplessly at the small animals around her, like a compassionate and noble fairy queen.

At this moment, a scene suddenly appeared in their minds.

On the blooming meadow, the noble elf queen was surrounded by animals. Every creature wanted to get near her, jumping desperately in order to receive her gentle touch.

At this moment, she was not the queen of animals; she was the elf queen, chosen by nature.

This moment amazed and excited everyone, so much so that they couldn't bear to go up and break this beautiful scene.

"Bark!"

"Bark!"

Everyone stood quietly in place, but the animals did not have such patience. In order to compete for Xia Xibei's love, they were about to fight, especially when they saw her petting other cats and dogs. At that point, they became even more excited, trying to squeeze forward.

Halfway through, two dogs yelled at each other, wanting to drive the other out.

These noises jolted everyone out of their thoughts.

Xia Xibei looked resigned, softly but firmly stating, "You can't fight!"

When she said that, the two dogs, who were baring their teeth, quickly stopped being angry. Their tails shook and their tongues stuck out, and one couldn't see their old confrontation at all.

Everyone was shocked speechless!

What was this?

"Xibei..." Pan Yan was also stunned by this scene.

He had known that Xia Xibei had an affinity for animals, but he did not expect that it would be this strong!

This was supernatural! Did she become a monster?! Was she even human?!

Xia Xibei sighed helplessly after meeting everyone's shocked eyes.

She didn't think that things would turn out like this. She really wanted to be low-key!

This was all because of Xia Qinghan! If she hadn't brought Pudding over, things wouldn't have been derailed and ended up this way.

However, looking at Xia Qinghan and Bai Meixue, their faces were darker than the bottom of the pot.

Chapter 269: Too Sad

What magic power did Xia Xibei have?!

Why did these cats and dogs like her so much?!

Bai Meixue and Xia Qinghan stood frozen in place, their faces very awkward.

Bai Meixue had wanted to find an excuse to leave. After all, it was too embarrassing.

But now, she didn't need to get away at all, because everyone's attention was on Xia Xibei!

Bai Meixue's heart was uncomfortable when she saw Xia Xibei become the focus of the crowd once again, as if it was being burned by flames.

It was happening again! Why were they so effortless in gaining everyone's attention and adoration!

Xia Xibei had nothing now, so why was it like this again? Why?!

Bai Meixue kept shouting in her heart, so much so that her face turned hideous.

If everyone's attention were not on Xia Xibei, they would find this goddess in everyone's mind was actually quite terrifying.

However, there were more important things on everyone's mind.

While people watched, Xia Xibei reached out and touched every animal.

After being stroked, they had different reactions.

The dogs comfortably lay on the ground, flicking their tails in a circle, sticking out their tongues, and grinning.

As for cats, their eyes narrowed in pleasure, collapsing into a pile.

Soon, piles of all different colors appeared on the ground.

The sight made everyone feel different things.

Without exception, however, there was sadness. They were all thinking, 'Why was my pet so good to a stranger?!'

After finally comforting all the little creatures, Xia Xibei stood up, Honey still in her arms.

Honey nestled in Xia Xibei's arms and looked condescendingly at all the cats and dogs below, feeling extremely proud.

"Meow!"

It raised its head and licked Xia Xibei's neck, full of affection.

"Okay, don't make trouble," Xia Xibei smiled and moved its head away. There were barbs on its tongue, which made it a bit uncomfortable to be licked.

Honey didn't insist, nestling back contentedly.

After Xia Xibei calmed down Honey, she turned her head to look, so frightened by everyone's eyes that she almost jumped up.

Everyone's eyes pointedly revealed a message: How dare you seduce my baby! You're shameless!

Xia Xibei had seen such a sad look in many people's eyes. Ren Juncheng and Yu Ziqi had the same look almost every day, and she had long since become immune.

However, there were many people here, and all of them had the same look, which was very creepy.

She felt as if she would be attacked by the crowd in the very next second.

Looking at the cats and dogs on the ground once again, she couldn't help but show an awkward smile.

She really didn't want this!

"Great!" An enthusiastic voice sounded, breaking the embarrassing situation. "Awesome!"

Everyone turned their heads and looked, their expressions changing slightly.

For the actors who had finished their auditions, their faces became even more unpleasant.

These people were the bosses of the production team, including Jiang Shenghe, the director, and the producer!

It was obvious that they were very satisfied with Xia Xibei.

Thinking about what had happened just now, no one could say anything.

Although they didn't know what magic Xia Xibei had used, she was undoubtedly the "Queen of Animals" based on her performance just now.

"Fantastic!"

A middle-aged man came over and applauded her, his eyes filled with surprise and admiration. "How did you do it?"

Everyone's expressions became even more mixed, because this person was Jiang Shenghe, the director who controlled their destiny!

Xia Xibei was startled for a moment, then smiled, "This is my secret, I can't tell you."

Chapter 270: Show Us More

“Animals have been attracted to me ever since I was a child. I have a special physique that others can’t learn.”

Xia Xibei’s answer stunned everyone, then caused them to smile.

“This girl is quite funny!”

Director Jiang Shenghe was a middle-aged man, nearly 50-years-old. He looked ordinary, but because of years of work experience, he had a different aura.

When he spoke, everyone else closed their mouths.

He looked at Xia Xibei with appreciation, a very satisfied expression on his face.

They had seen many people just now, having just made the decision to choose Xia Qinghan.

However, after watching Xia Xibei’s performance, they would be stupid to not change their minds.

The interaction between Xia Xibei and these little animals would definitely shock the audience—no special effects needed!

Moreover, Xia Xibei looked beautiful and had extraordinary temperament. In the words of fans, she was full of an ethereal spirit!

She looked beautiful and her interactions with animals were heartwarming. This was the queen of animals they had been looking for!

“Which company are you with?”

As everyone’s expressions changed slightly, Pan Yan stood up immediately.

“Hello Director Jiang. Her name is Xia Xibei, and I am Pan Yan, her agent. We are from SY Entertainment.”

“The SY company?”

Jiang Shenghe was stunned for a moment, then reacted, “The girl who performed well just now was also from SY Entertainment, right?”

As soon as she heard these words, Xia Qinghan’s heart jumped and she became overjoyed, almost coming out of the crowd.

They were talking about her!

There were two people here from the SY company; she was the only one here from their company besides Xia Xibei.

However, Jiang Shenghe’s next words made her heart drop.

“I thought that girl’s performance was pretty good, but I didn’t expect there to be a better one!”

The smile on Xia Qinghan’s face froze; it was as if a slap had landed on her from the sky, making her dumbfounded.

Jiang Shenghe did not realize she was standing not too far away.

He looked at Honey in Xia Xibei’s arms and asked, “You’re here to audition too?”

“Yes,” Xia Xibei nodded.

“Do you have any other skills?”

Pan Yan moved his mouth, but no words came out.

The power Xia Xibei had shown just now was amazing enough!

However, this was director Jiang Shenghe, so he dared not say anything.

Xia Xibei smiled as she looked at him, “What do you want to see?”

“Since you have more secret skills, how about showing us some of them?” There was strong curiosity in Jiang Shenghe’s eyes.

In his opinion, Xia Xibei had probably mastered special skills that controlled cats and dogs, but there was nothing else there.

It was the same as some people who could control a snake; it was a unique skill, but the scope of control was not very large.

However, it was enough to make cats and dogs get close to oneself.

This was equivalent to a real life, low-profile queen of animals.

However, he was also very curious, did Xia Xibei have more tricks?

Xia Xibei smiled, “Yes.”

She looked around, then instructed Pan Yan, “Brother Pan, help bring that chair over.”

Pan Yan nodded, immediately bringing the chair over and placing it according to Xia Xibei’s direction.

Then Xia Xibei snapped her fingers.

Everyone was shocked to find that those cats and dogs seemed to have heard some instructions. The animals all came out of their previously relaxed state, standing up in unison and looking at Xia Xibei.

She pointed to the chair and said, "Come, jump over. One by one."

Following her command, the cats and dogs lined up obediently, elegantly jumping over one by one.

The chair was not high, so no matter the size of these cats and dogs, they all jumped over easily.

After they had all jumped over, the place became silent.

Chapter 271: The Role is Yours

As they watched the cats and dogs hopping through, one after another, as if they were acrobats, everyone was left astonished.

This was way too magical!

They would have thought that those animals were trained by Xia Xibei from their youth if they weren't their own pets!

Why did this seem so much like a circus performance?!

Xia Xibei snapped her fingers after all the animals had made it through, and as if a spell had been broken, all the cats and dogs got into motion once again.

Only when the animals returned to their sides and started barking and meowing at them again did the people recover from their daze.

Everyone stared at Xia Xibei in horror, pondering over this scenario with extreme bewilderment. How in the world did she master such skills?!

Jiang Shenghe beheld the scene with great awe, only coming back to his senses after a long moment, taking the lead in the applause.

“Absolutely amazing! Absolutely stunning!”

Everyone else started clapping along too.

Such magical things actually existed in real life! This was way beyond what they could ever imagine!

Jiang Shenghe made an announcement right away, “Alright, the role is yours!”

His words brought theatrical changes to the faces around him.

Pan Yan was so exhilarated that his cheeks flushed red, and there was only one thought left in his mind—the gods had heard his prayer and come to his aid!

Everyone else seemed to be stewing in a mixture of envy, jealousy, and resentment.

Xia Qinghan and Bailey Meixue's faces first turned pale, then ashen, and finally dark. It was very amusing to watch the colors on their faces change so suddenly.

Bai Meixue in particular was extremely frustrated. They had clearly agreed upon saving the role for Xia Qinghan beforehand!

However, who would have expected Xia Xibei to possess such miraculous skills?

Who could rival the astounding performance that she had put on?

Jiang Shenghe took note of all their reactions and laughed, "If anyone here can perform better than her, I'll give the role to them!"

All of them exchanged glances, their gazes floating, and their heads hung low in deference.

Perform better than Xia Xibei? They couldn't even match a tenth of what she could do, now could they!

She wasn't human, was she?

Having thought of that, no one dared to challenge her further, despite their reluctance to admit defeat.

That really wasn't something they could compare to.

As for acting... Who didn't know that Director Jiang Shenghe was renowned for his strict coaching of actors?

Even people who had never been exposed to acting in the past would be molded into qualified actors after joining his crew. Moreover, Xia Xibei did not seem like an idiot at all.

"Alright then, we can discuss the follow-ups now."

Once he saw that no one had raised any objections, Jiang Shenghe clapped his hands and turned around to talk to Xia Xibei and Pan Yan.

"Sure!"

Pan Yan was on cloud nine. He really hadn't expected such greatness from Xia Xibei!

He had only prayed to the gods because he needed some consolation. In the end, however, the outcome had utterly surprised him!

Xia Xibei held Honey in her arms and flashed everyone a modest smile.

For a moment, they were all left in a daze because she was way too gorgeous. When she smiled, it was like all the spring flowers had blossomed at once, taking their breaths away.

They started discussing their upcoming collaboration, while everyone else, regardless of whether they had their turn to audition or not, had no choice but to go home with their pets.

They all had mixed feelings, unsure of how they should reconcile with what had happened today.

It was unpleasant that they hadn't managed to get the role.

However, what they had just witnessed was memorable enough for them to keep it in their minds for the rest of their lives.

When would they ever see so many cats and dogs jumping over chairs together again?

It was a pity that they had forgotten to record it with their phones!

Bai Meixue and Xia Qinghan were the only ones left in the room, awful looks pasted on their faces even after everyone else had left.

Xia Qinghan bit her lower lip, looking as if she was on the brink of tears.

Bai Meixue's heart ached when she looked at her, so she reached out a hand in an attempt to comfort her.

"Han..."

However, Xia Qinghan dashed out of the room with her hand clasped over her mouth.

"Han!" Bai Meixue yelled behind her but couldn't manage to stop her.

Xia Qinghan's tears didn't fall until she dashed into the bathroom.

She bit her lip and cried soundlessly, but her phone started ringing at that moment, forcing her to speak.

"Hello."

"Han... What's wrong with you? Are you crying?"

Chapter 272: I'll Help You

The moment she heard the voice on the other end of the phone, Xia Qinghan burst into tears.

“Brother Haoming...”

Qiao Haoming panicked right away upon hearing her pitiful crying, “What’s wrong? Did you get bullied?”

“I...”

Xia Qinghan felt so aggrieved, she couldn’t even speak.

“Don’t cry now! Tell me who bullied you, I’ll send someone to teach them a lesson!”

Qiao Haoming cajoled her for a while, but Xia Qinghan became even more distressed and tears kept falling from her eyes as though it was the end of the world.

Qiao Haoming’s heart ached terribly, reassuring her, “Don’t you cry anymore, I’m coming over right now!”

“Don’t!” Xia Qinghan exclaimed hurriedly, “You don’t have to come, I’m alright.”

However, the sobbing in her voice enraged Qiao Haoming even more, “How can you be alright! Tell me, what actually happened? Is it... The audition that you told me about?”

Yesterday, she had told him that she was going for an audition.

He had assumed it was almost finished by looking at the time.

Was it really because of the audition?

Xia Qinghan had felt much calmer after that round of crying, but she couldn't help but start weeping again when he mentioned the audition.

"I knew it!" Qiao Haoming gritted his teeth in anger, "You must have been bullied! Tell me all about it, I'll make things right for you!"

Xia Qinghan sniffled after being coaxed for a while, then started explaining, "I really am fine, it's just that..."

"You didn't get selected?"

"Yes..."

"Are those people blind?!" Qiao Haoming blew his top, "How could they not choose an outstanding actress like you?!"

Xia Qinghan finally felt better after being waxed lyrical by Qiao Haoming, modestly insisting, "You're exaggerating."

"I am not!" Qiao Haoming instantly objected. "You're such a perfect girl, it's their loss that they didn't choose you!"

Xia Qinghan chortled through her tears, "You're the only one that thinks I'm perfect."

"Not just me, a lot of people think of you that way!" Qiao Haoming finally felt relieved when he heard her laugh, saying, "It's an honor that I can be with you."

Xia Qinghan's cheeks turned rosy due to shyness. Although she knew that his words weren't entirely sincere and that he was just cajoling her, she still felt pleased.

"Whom did they choose then, if they didn't pick you?"

Xia Qinghan's heart sank a little as she casually replied, "A girl who's about my age, but she could make cats and dogs do stunts."

"Make cats and dogs do stunts?" Qiao Haoming was befuddled, "Was it like YD's snake-controlling skill?"

"Something like that."

Qiao Haoming snorted, "Simply crooked tricks! How about her acting, then? Are you sure she wasn't as good as you!"

“I have no idea. The director didn’t even audition her. He gave her the role the moment he saw her controlling the animals.” Xia Qinghan was crestfallen, asking, “What can I do? She was the director’s choice.”

Qiao Haoming became indignant upon hearing that.

“What kind of a director is he?! Shouldn’t he choose actors based on their acting?!”

“How would I be able to guess what the director’s thinking,” Xia Qinghan said, forcing out a bitter smile.

“It’s alright, I’ll settle it for you!”

Qiao Haoming’s words delighted Xia Qinghan, but she got a little nervous. “How are you going to settle it?”

“By making them choose fairly, of course!” Qiao Haoming declared righteously.

“Huh... Of course they won’t listen to you! I might not be their choice even if that girl didn’t get chosen. I’m a newbie, and I’m not popular enough. Without any saving grace, what do I have to compete with...”

“You’re talking about popularity?” Qiao Haoming snorted. “That’s simple!”

“Simple?” Xia Qinghan was perplexed. What could Qiao Haoming do about popularity?

“I’ll have a friend of mine contact you soon. Since you’re not popular enough, we’ll create popularity for you!”

Chapter 273: Lover-brother?

It was worth mentioning that Pan Yan was a very capable man at his work.

During the signing of the contract, he clearly displayed his professionalism as an agent by proactively vying for Xia Xibei’s benefits.

Even Jiang Shenghe started to view him very highly.

It was quite impressive that he could have such competence even though he was only in his twenties.

The two of them said their farewell and left after having discussed the details regarding her joining the crew.

Right as they stepped out of the room, Xia Xibei received a call from Nie Zehai.

“Congratulations!” Nie Zehai said with complete sincerity on the other end.

“I have to thank you for this! I wouldn’t have gotten this opportunity without you!” Xia Xibei replied instantly. She wasn’t an ungrateful person.

“Hahaha...” Nie Zehai laughed heartily, “All I did was give you an opportunity. It was your hard work that got you this role.”

Nie Zehai had heard about Xia Xibei’s performance. Although there was no video to watch, he was able to imagine the scene.

“I have to thank you no matter what,” Xia Xibei stated with a laugh. Taking a look at the time, she asked, “Are you free right now? How about I treat you to a meal?”

“You wanna treat me?” Nie Zehai was stunned for a second, but he quickly nodded, “I happen to be available; let do tonight then!”

“Alright, I’ll go with Qi and the others.”

“Sure.”

They agreed upon a meeting venue, which was the Yuhai Pavilion. It was basically their stronghold now, and Nie Zehai felt more comfortable there, as he didn’t have to watch out for any paparazzi.

Xia Xibei sent Honey back before calling Yu Ziqi to inform him of her plans.

Right upon arriving at the Yuhai Pavilion and stepping into their usual room, Xia received a call.

“Are you done with the audition?” Qiao Yanjue asked. He smiled with pride as he read the message that was sent to him.

“Yes, it’s done. I got selected,” Xia Xibei replied with a smile.

“Let’s go out for dinner to celebrate it then.”

“I have plans for dinner already.”

“Plans for dinner?” Qiao Yanjue’s heart skipped a beat, “Whom are you going to dine with?”

“Qi’s cousin, Qi, and brother Pan.”

Qiao Yanjue’s tension was relieved upon hearing that she was going out with so many people.

“I’ll go fetch you later then?”

“No need, I’m not sure what time it’ll end. Also, brother Pan will send me back.”

“Alright then, be careful on your own.”

“I know.”

After hanging up the call, Xia Xibei almost jumped when she turned around and met Pan Yan’s gaze.

“What are you doing?!”

Pan Yan had a strange look on his face, his eyes seeming to gleam as he demanded, “Who just called you? Are you in a relationship?”

“In a relationship?” Xia Xibei’s lips twitched as she asked in bewilderment, “How did you get to that conclusion?”

“You’re not in a relationship?” Pan Yan was skeptical, snorting, “But your tone of voice didn’t sound right!”

Xia Xibei was speechless, “Come on, that was my brother!”

“Your brother?” Pan Yan scowled, “When did you get a brother? Is it the lover kind of brother?”

Hadn’t Xia Xibei severed connections with her parents already? How would she have a brother?

“What nonsense are you talking about!” Xia Xibei rolled her eyes at him, “He’s the son of sister Hong’s elder sister, so doesn’t that make him my cousin?”

Pan Yan took a while to wrap his head around the complicated relations involved in this scenario, still suspicious as he exclaimed, "But you aren't biologically related!"

"So that makes us lovers? You're too narrow-minded!" Xia Xibei chuckled in contempt, "Also, he has a fiancée! And I'm too young for him!"

Although she would turn into an adult in just a few months and her mental age wasn't young anymore, Xia Xibei felt that she would always be a little girl. Besides, relationships just didn't interest her.

"Great! He's not your lover then!" Pan Yan sighed in relief.

Chapter 274: Should Have Been Strangers

"You are only a teenager now, don't waste your time on these things! You have a bright future ahead of you!" Pan Yan said sincerely.

He had been in this circle for a few years and he had seen many ups and downs, feeling his fair share of resignation and helplessness.

The male stars were alright and more sensible.

However, there were so many actresses whose IQs plummeted when they fell in love!

They had extremely bright futures ahead of them, but they gave it all up for a man, or sacrificed themselves for their lover, and forever lost their good fortune!

They were at the peak of their careers, but they dropped out from the entertainment world and went home to their husbands and children.

If they had stayed happy at that point, it wouldn't have been so regrettable.

Unfortunately, after they sacrificed their lives in this way, very few of them stayed happy for long!

If they had focused on their careers, it definitely would have been better than this!

Every time he saw the married lives of these actresses, Pan Yan felt a lot of pity for them!

And for a young woman like Xia Xibei, the most important thing was to make a career first, then she could think about feelings.

“When you make it, there will be a lot of handsome guys for you to choose from! Don't give up the entire forest for the sake of a single tree!”

Pan Yan's words made the corners of Xia Xibei's mouth twitch.

Of course she wouldn't reject this kind of rationale, but the problem was- She didn't have any thoughts about getting into a relationship right now, so why was he telling her this?!

"Don't worry, I won't be so stupid," Xia Xibei said with resignation. She didn't want to argue with him too much, so she could only reply earnestly.

"That's good!"

Pan Yan breathed a sigh of relief, but thought to himself, 'I must keep an eye on her and definitely not let her go off-track!

Such a good prospect, so young and pretty with so much potential... How could she be blinded by feelings so early?!

Xia Xibei didn't know what Pan Yan was thinking. In fact, she didn't think about the topic at all.

Moreover, she didn't think Qiao Yanjue would have any thoughts about her.

In her memory, Qiao Yanjue had a fiancée.

Although she didn't know when they would get together, it would have been in a year or two at most.

Xia Xibei had seen Qiao Yanjue's fiancée. She was a well-educated beauty with a superior family background and an elegant temperament.

Although Xia Xibei had no opinions on this woman, Qiao Yanjue's family background and own features were well-matched with hers.

So, even if Qiao Yanjue had nothing to do with that woman now, she didn't want to get involved.

Had it not been for so many accidents in this life, she and Qiao Yanjue would have been strangers.

Now, it was enough to be able to eat peacefully with Qiao Yanjue and care about each other like siblings.

As for anything else... Pan Yan was thinking too much into it!

Although Xia Xibei was confident that she could make something of herself and maybe even surpass Qiao's family in the future, Qiao's family was too complicated. She was fine on her own, so why would she want to get involved in their drama?

Moreover, Qiao Yanjue was gentle and close to her only because she had saved him twice.

Thinking of the words Qiao Yanjue had said before, "My life is worth more money," Xia Xibei couldn't help but chuckle.

However, in a few months at most, after dealing with things here, Qiao Yanjue would leave G City and return to the Imperial Capital.

After he had “repaid his favor” and there was more distance between them, their relationship would naturally fade away.

Xia Xibei smiled brightly while thinking about this.

The priority now was to make something of herself!

Soon, Yu Ziqi and Nie Zehai arrived, one after another.

Chapter 275: Fame is Troublesome

Nie Zehai flashed a delighted smile the moment he saw Xia Xibei.

“Congrats, congrats!”

Yu Ziqi yelled alongside him, “You’re amazing! The meal is on me this time! Let’s celebrate it well!”

Xia Xibei laughed, “Of course we’ll celebrate, but I’ll be the one paying.”

Yu Ziqi wanted to say something, but she cut him off, “Rest assured, I can still afford to pay for our meal.”

“How about I pay!” Pan Yan was also excited.

“Enough, does it really matter who’s going to pay?” Nie Zehai coughed softly.

It didn’t matter who would be paying because everyone present could afford it.

They laughed and seated themselves.

After ordering the dishes, Nie Zehai couldn’t help but sigh, “If I’d known that there would be such a spectacular sight today, I would have been there to watch it no matter what!”

It was a pity that no one had managed to record the scene, and that the hall did not have any surveillance cameras. Otherwise, this scene would have become a huge sensation if it was aired!

Xia Xibei laughed, “It’s okay, you’ll still get to see it in the future.”

“How on earth did you do that though?” Nie Zehai was extremely curious.

Yu Ziqi’s eyes were equally wide as he begged, “Yes! Please teach us!”

If he could master some of those skills, he wouldn't have to worry about getting ditched by Asura ever again.

Xia Xibei raised her glass and took a sip of water, laughing, "This is about my body's nature, combined with a little bit of secret techniques. You won't be able to master it even if I teach you."

The two of them thought it was a pity, but there was nothing they could do about it.

If it was about the nature of one's body, then it really wasn't something that they could acquire despite their envy.

The world had such an enormous population with diversity in people; it simply wasn't possible to duplicate them all.

"Are you just close with cats and dogs, or all animals in general?" Nie Zehai wanted to know.

"Hmm...So far, all I know is that cats and dogs are close with me. I'm not sure about other animals, as I've never tried it before."

Xia Xibei certainly couldn't tell them the whole truth. She couldn't just reveal that it worked on all animals, could she?

That would frighten the hell out of them.

Even so, that alone was enough to make them envious.

“I don’t need much, I just want Asura to listen to me,” Yu Ziqi moaned.

“You could get help from Xibei,” Nie Zehai suggested.

“I know!” Yu Ziqi sighed, “But it always ditches me the second Xibei shows up!”

Nie Zehai and Pan Yan were both silent.

Wasn’t he finding fault with himself by comparing himself with Xia Xibei? Would the animals even spare another glance for other people if Xia Xibei was around?

Xia Xibei changed the subject with a smile, “Brother Hai, your new drama series is going to be aired soon, right?”

“Yup,” Nie Zehai nodded, “It’s going to be airing starting tomorrow.”

“Don’t worry, you’ll be just fine!”

Nie Zehai laughed frankly, “It’s okay, as long as I tried my best.”

He came from a wealthy family, and acting was merely an interest of his.

It was only natural that every actor wanted to gain recognition from the audience, and he was no exception.

All that he wanted was some recognition from people, but not the rise in one's commercial value that came along with fame.

Moreover, it was also because of his disregard for the pay that he could set his mind to a more placid state and concentrate on improving his acting.

"You'll succeed for sure!" Xia Xibei said in a serious manner. "One day, you'll be so famous that you'll have to go out in a disguise."

Fame came with its own agonies. It was a miserable thing to be surrounded at all times and followed by fans everywhere one went.

Nie Zehai couldn't help but laugh when he saw her taking the banter so seriously, but he followed along and pretended to be distressed.

"Yes, you're right, it really is troublesome! If I become famous today and someone takes photos of this gathering that we're having, rumors will start to spread. Let me think... 'Nie Zehai on a Secret Date with Lover'! This title is exciting enough, I guess."

Chapter 276: Be Well-prepared

Nie Zehai's joke made everyone burst into laughter.

Both men and women would start getting surrounded by all sorts of bizarre rumors once they became famous.

On top of that, their love lives would always be the center of the public's attention.

It would cause a big scene regardless of if they got into a relationship or broke up.

The paparazzi loved drawing people's attention with news and rumors like that.

It was reconcilable if those rumors were true, but most of the time it was simply some fuss they created from bits and pieces.

If Nie Zehai was being serious about their gathering being captured, it would certainly turn out as scary as he had just described!

Nie Zehai shook his head when he finished talking, "I'm glad that I'm not that famous yet."

Although it would be nice to gain fame, a lot of things in this industry were a double-edged sword. The troubles that would follow fame were not to be taken lightly.

“But still, you have to be well-prepared!”

Nie Zehai shrugged and spread his hands helplessly, “What more preparation can I do apart from being mentally prepared?”

Xia Xibei laughed, “I wouldn’t have asked you out today if I didn’t have something great for you!”

Her words stunned everyone.

Pan Yan looked towards Xia Xibei with curiosity as well. What did she have in store?

With all eyes pinned on her, Xia Xibei took out a tiny box from her bag.

She opened the box, revealing two light-yellow spherical objects, both about the size of marbles.

“What are these?”

“Look.”

Xia Xibei took one of the tiny balls, and then got a random glass. After filling it with some water, she submerged the ball into the glass of water.

Upon absorbing water, the tiny ball started spreading out, like a flower in full bloom.

In the blink of an eye, the glass was filled with it.

By the time Xia Xibei removed it from the glass, it had turned into a paper-like object.

“Is this a... Face mask?” Nie Zehai was baffled.

This object was like a condensed face mask, enlarging and spreading out upon being immersed in liquid.

Xia Xibei’s lips curled into a smile, saying mysteriously, “Something like a face mask. In terms of function... It’s quite similar to that as well.”

She lifted the “face mask,” and called out to Yu Ziqi, “Come here.”

Yu Ziqi hesitated for a moment while staring at the thing, but walked over slowly, mumbling under his breath, “What are you trying to do?”

Xia Xibei did not answer. She grabbed him and slammed the piece onto his face.

“What the hell?!” Yu Ziqi cried out in shock. He couldn’t help but tense, reaching for the thing on reflex in an attempt to tear it off his face.

“Don’t move!” Xia Xibei yelled in a low voice.

In just a short while, Xia Xibei turned Yu Ziqi around so that he was facing Nie Zehai and Pan Yan.

“Look.”

Upon taking a proper look at Yu Ziqi’s face, Pan Yan and Nie Zehai both drew in deep breaths of horror.

Yu Ziqi couldn’t be considered very handsome, but he was an adorable little, plump guy nonetheless, especially with his fair, supple skin.

However, his appearance had changed drastically after the strange thing was pasted on his face!

His fair skin turned a few tones yellow and was much rougher; there were even some irremovable pockmarks.

Apart from the changes to his skin, his facial features had been altered as well.

His originally prominent nose collapsed a little, his fairly large eyes now became small, and his mouth became tiny too.

He was like a whole different person!

Nie Zehai hurried forward in astonishment. He clutched Yu Ziqi's face and flipped it around to get a proper look but couldn't seem to find the edges of the mask.

Pan Yan also came to his aid, but their efforts were fruitless.

Their eyes were wide in awe, almost crushing Yu Ziqi's face in their attempts to search for the mask, but they simply couldn't identify the problem.

"Let go of me!"

Yu Ziqi shivered at the way they were looking at him, hurriedly breaking free from their grasp to run to the side.

He fumbled to get out his phone and switched on the front camera in order to get a look.

He couldn't help but roll his eyes, nearly passing out!

He was incredibly ugly!

Chapter 277: Change of Face

Yu Ziqi nearly tossed his phone away.

He was usually quite confident in his appearance but turning so ugly all of a sudden nearly scared him to death!

He traced his fingers all over his face but couldn't seem to find the edges of the "face mask" anywhere. It was as if this was the face he was born with.

"How did you do that? Help me get it off now!"

The anxiety was killing him.

Pan Yan and Nie Zehai were both shocked and curious, asking, "How on earth was it done?"

"This is a face-changing mask that I made," Xia Xibei laughed. "All you need to do to change your face is put it in water to spread it out, and then stick it onto your face."

The three of them were stupefied.

If they hadn't seen it with their very own eyes, they would never have believed that such a thing actually existed!

Nie Zehai had been on many filming sets. He had worn head gears before and had even tried on “skin masks.”

However, it took a long time to put those masks on, and it was not effortless, like what he had just seen.

Moreover, the flaws could always be identified, no matter how exquisitely they were made.

However, Xia Xibei’s “face-changing mask” seemed to be totally flawless, as though it was fused with one’s face!

That was a literal change of face!

If they hadn’t witnessed what was done to Yu Ziqi, they would never have recognized him if they met him outside!

This was absolutely magical!

“How do we get it off then?”

Xia Xibei took out a vial, “By using this.”

She opened the vial and poured out a little bit of the transparent liquid, and gently tapped it onto Yu Ziqi’s face.

After that, everyone saw the “skin” on Yu Ziqi’s face starting to peel off.

In just a brief moment, the mask had fallen off of his face. Then they took a look at Yu Ziqi’s face again.

His original face had returned, and there was not a single trace of the mask left, as if nothing had happened.

If not for the “skin” in Xia Xibei’s hand, they would have thought that what had just happened was an illusion.

“Fantastic!” Nie Zehai clapped his hands together abruptly, looking extremely excited. “This is truly a treasure!”

Although Nie Zehai had yet to experience what it was like to be chased and blocked by fans on the streets, that didn’t mean he had no idea what his fellow colleagues had been through.

Many celebrities he knew had to go out in full gears.

Hats, sunglasses, and masks; all of those were indispensable parts of their disguise.

It was fine during winter, but wouldn’t it be really obvious to dress like that during summer?

With such a magical mask, however, they could go outside without having to go through all that fuss!

After getting changed into an ordinary face and some casual clothes, they would be just the same as any other passersby, and no one would give them another glance.

In that case, they could go shopping and dating without worrying about being discovered by fans or reporters!

This would totally be the top item on any celebrity's wish list!

As part of the entertainment industry, Pan Yan knew the benefits of the mask as well.

"Is it harmful to the skin in any way?" he wondered, raising his doubt.

"No, it isn't," Xia Xibei shook her head. "This is made of the safest materials. It doesn't harm the skin, and it's also highly ventilated. As long as you don't wash it with the solvent, it can last three days at most."

"That's amazing!"

Pan Yan and Nie Zehai exchanged a glance, their eyes filled with surprise.

"But this is a one-time thing. It can't be reused after being removed," Xia Xibei shrugged.

“It’s still useful!” Nie Zehai exclaimed with excitement. “How did you make it?”

“Very simply, in fact. Just by-”

Nie Zehai cut her off before Xia Xibei could expound, waving away her words, “Alright, alright, you don’t have to tell me. I won’t understand it anyway. I’d just like to know, how many of these do you have?”

“As many as you like,” Xia Xibei replied, the corners of her lips curled into a cunning smile.

Chapter 278: Five Thousand and Fifty Thousand

Nie Zehai was delighted, eagerly asking, “What’s the price?”

“As for the price... We can talk about it,” Xia Xibei said with a smile. “I can give you a discount for sure, but others have to pay the original price.”

Nie Zehai couldn’t help but laugh when he saw the cunning, foxy smile that Xia Xibei was wearing, begging, “Tell me! How much is it?”

“For you, 5,000 yuan per piece. For others, 50,000 yuan per piece.”

The price that she had stated made all three of them draw in a sharp breath at once.

That was unbelievable!

Moreover, the price difference between the two sides was way too big! She really did give him a discount... A 90% discount!

“This is... This is way too expensive, isn’t it!”

In great shock, Yu Ziqi stared at the used mask that had been tossed onto the table by Xia Xibei. He almost had the urge to bring it back and frame it.

This was a mask that cost 50,000 yuan per piece!

Although Yu Ziqi came from a wealthy family, his pocket money wasn’t unlimited. At least, he had never thought of purchasing a mask that cost 50,000 yuan.

“It isn’t that expensive.”

Surprisingly, it was Pan Yan who made that remark.

Lifting the thin piece of mask from the table, he explained, “Most people wouldn’t need to use such things, while those who do need them... They don’t mind the cost.”

Fifty thousand yuan might be most people's annual income, but as far as the high-paid celebrities were concerned, that wasn't a big sum of money.

Furthermore, they would be willing to pay any price for the sake of their own privacy.

"You're right," Nie Zehai nodded, "No offense, but if the reporters out there managed to capture some unpleasant scenes involving them, it would cost them at least a million yuan to buy those clips or photos back."

They would have to spend a great deal of money to retrieve any photos or clips that could affect their career. Besides, it wasn't guaranteed that they would be safe—who knew if the reporters had kept a back-up, ready to expose them someday?

Hence, this was definitely cheaper, and much better in comparison.

Moreover, it wasn't like they had to use it every day. It would only come in handy when they were doing things that were meant to be secretive or wanted to move around unseen.

This was part of their essential expenses.

"I couldn't agree more," Xia Xibei said with great emotion. "I believe that they know what's the right choice to make."

"Rest assured, these masks will sell very well," Nie Zehai added.

If those popular artists out there learnt about the existence of something like this, they surely would fight for it.

Reporters and fans could be easily avoided once they had these weapons in their hands... That was their wildest dream!

“But you can’t expose me, though,” Xia Xibei stated in a serious manner.

“Why?” Yu Ziqi queried.

“If they know it was me who made it, I’ll never be able to live in peace. I have to stay mysterious.”

Nie Zehai understood Xia Xibei’s concern, so he nodded, “Sure, I won’t tell anyone about it.”

“Neither will I,” Pan Yan followed suit.

“I won’t either.” Yu Ziqi made a mouth-zipping gesture, “If I spread the word, sister Jia will beat me to death.”

He definitely didn’t want to get a taste of Song Jiaren’s violence.

“How many more of these masks do you still have?” Nie Zehai asked.

“This is the only one I have left at hand,” Xia Xibei replied, looking at the remaining little ball.

“If you want them, I’ll make more when I get home, but it’ll take some time.”

With an unfaltering look on her face, Xia Xibei swindled them—she would never tell them that she could make ten of these overnight!

“Alright, I’ll take five to begin with. I’ll pay the original price.”

Xia Xibei shook her head, “You’ve been of great help to me. I have to give you the discount.”

She had wanted to give them to him for free at first, but having considered his future development, she thought it was better to accept his money.

Nie Zehai did not insist any further, accepting the offer, “Thanks a lot, then.”

“I’ll be done with them in a fortnight, and I’ll send them to you,” Xia Xibei said in the end.

Chapter 279: The Wan Family

Xia Xibei went home after the dinner.

Before returning to her own home, however, she went to visit Liu Manhong.

Right as the gates opened up, King Chu pounced on her.

The dog was excited at first, but when it got near and smelled the scents of many other cats and dogs on Xia Xibei, it erupted in anger.

How dare you have affairs with other animals!

It started weeping right away, looking extremely aggrieved.

Xia Xibei was unsure whether to laugh or cry after listening to its complaints.

All she could do was stroke its fur in an attempt to comfort it, but she wouldn't make any promises.

That it would be her one and only dog from now on?

That was impossible!

That was also the reason why Xia Xibei could never have pets; she had to divide her love equally.

If she got entangled with other cuties out there, wouldn't her pets cry to death when she got home?

Liu Manhong couldn't help but shake her head as she watched Xia Xibei comforting King Chu.

After meeting Xia Xibei, her dog seemed to have unlocked its innate talents, and was now marching dauntlessly in the direction of a pure-bred husky.

Snuggled up on the couch, Liu Manhong asked in an idle manner, "You went for the audition today, right? How did it go?"

"I passed, of course," Xia Xibei raised her gaze and flashed her a confident smile.

"Congratulations!" Liu Manhong applauded with exhilaration, "That means I'll be seeing your work in the theater soon, right? I'm gonna be booking the entire place!"

"Not that soon," Xia Xibei shook her head. "It's just the role that has been decided. The film crew still needs some time to get ready."

Actors wouldn't be joining the crew until all the preparations were in place. Even after filming, there was editing, finalization, and publicity to be tackled before the film could be seen on the big screen.

Filming duration was different for TV series and movies. Besides, based on Director Jiang Shenghe's past experiences, the movie would not be aired until at least a year from now.

Hence, Xia Xibei wasn't anxious about it.

"It doesn't matter, you have my support," Liu Manhong shot her a playful look.

"Whoof!" Out of nowhere, King Chu barked at her.

Liu Manhong was speechless.

Getting up from the couch, eyes wide and teeth gritted in anger, she scolded King Chu, "Stupid dog!"

Who the hell was its actual owner?!

"Whoof!" Stupid owner!

Xia Xibei was silent on this matter. Instead, she hurriedly changed the subject to forestall the human-dog war, questioning her, "Sister Hong, how's business at the beauty salon been lately?"

She didn't seem quite energetic.

"As usual," Liu Manhong replied, laying down on the couch listlessly, looking weary. "There's a new beauty salon nearby, and they stole many of my beauticians."

Xia Xibei was stunned for a second.

“Is it a big beauty salon?”

“Yea,” Liu Manhong yawned, “Very big. The owner has quite an impressive background too.”

“Who’s the owner?” Xia Xibei asked, curious.

Liu Manhong was Qiao Yanjue’s aunt, the sister-in-law of the Qiao family’s master. That was a powerful status, but now there was someone who was daring enough to rival her?

Starting a business was completely acceptable but stealing your competitor’s workforce was rather unscrupulous.

“The Wan family.”

Liu Manhong had no intention of hiding things from Xia Xibei either. After all, they had a “mother-daughter” relationship now, so she couldn’t just keep her in the dark.

“The Wans?” Xia Xibei echoed, her face falling a little.

Liu Manhong's eyelids were drooping due to sleepiness, so she didn't notice Xia Xibei's reaction. "The maiden family of the Qiao's eldest daughter-in-law."

Xia Xibei's expression turned precarious right away.

She knew about it without even needing Liu Manhong to explain the situation.

Moreover, her feud with the Wan family wasn't a minor one.

When she got attacked by netizens back in her first life, the Wans had contributed to the drama, apart from Xia Qinghan and her squad.

She hadn't expected Liu Manhong to have developed some strife with them too.

Liu Manhong explained, "The eldest children of the Qiao family have a distaste for my sister and I, so they take every chance they can get to find fault with us."

She hadn't expected them to come attacking head on, though.

Apparently, Qiao Yanjue's presence had been giving them a hard time.

Chapter 280: The Complicated Qiao Family

The Qiao family's situation was rather complicated.

Qiao's father, Qiao Zhengyuan, was 73 years old. His first wife had died when he was 45 years old. Two years later, he married his secretary, Liu Yiqin, who was Qiao Yanjue's mother.

Qiao Zhengyuan and Liu Yiqin had an 18-year age difference. When Liu Yiqin married the elder Qiao, she was 29 years old, while Qiao Zhengyuan's eldest son, Qiao Weiyue, was already 19 years old. His younger siblings, Qiao Weisen and Qiao Zhiqing, the boy-girl twins, were 16 years old.

Qiao Zhengyuan met Liu Yiqin one year after his wife's death and got married only one year after that.

However, in the opinion of the three siblings, Liu Yiqin was still the homewrecker who had destroyed their family. Perhaps their mother's death was also related to Liu Yiqin.

A few years ago, they were still looking for evidence of Liu Yiqin's plots against their mother—of course, they didn't find anything.

Although they had no evidence, they firmly believed that Qiao Zhengyuan had erased all the evidence.

Therefore, while they acted respectful towards Liu Yiqin, everyone knew what they were really thinking.

Two years later, Liu Yiqin gave birth to Qiao Yanjue.

Four years after that, Qiao Haoming, the eldest grandson of the Qiao family and Qiao Weiyue's son, was born.

Therefore, despite being uncle and nephew, Qiao Yanjue and Qiao Haoming were only four years apart.

Usually, the eldest grandson and the youngest child were the most favored. However, when there was a very small age difference between the two, problems arose.

Liu Yiqin was a gentle and generous person. Despite doubts from her stepsons and stepdaughter, she acted impartially. Moreover, she was quite capable and had helped her husband a lot, so Qiao Zhengyuan quite liked this much younger wife of his.

Qiao Yanjue had shown his brilliance since he was a child, and when he was born, it was during the transformation of the Qiao family, when the family's net worth grew many times and became a top family in China.

Therefore, how could such a smart and lucky child not be adored?

When Liu Yiqin and Qiao Yanjue did well in the Qiao house, the three siblings were not happy.

Especially when Qiao Zhengyuan revealed that he would hand over the family business to Qiao Yanjue. At that moment, the three siblings became even more anxious.

Therefore, they did everything possible to keep Qiao Yanjue down.

As Liu Yiqin's younger sister and Qiao Yanjue's aunt, Liu Manhong had a good life being supported by the big Qiao family.

She didn't have any ambitions, she just wanted to live her life well.

However, other people didn't want to let her go.

Liu Manhong suspected that her ex-husband had cheated on her with Bai Meixue due to the Wan family.

Of course, flies didn't seek out unbroken eggs, and her ex-husband was no good either, but things wouldn't have gotten so bad without the Wan family's meddling.

"I'm telling you, the Wan family are not good people. You have to be careful with them," Liu Manhong said sincerely. "Now that you are like my daughter, they won't make it easy for you."

At this point, she frowned, considering, "Or what if I help you change your guardian?"

Xia Xibei smiled, "Sister Hong, do you really think so little of me? Am I someone who will be scared away easily?"

Never mind that she already had bad blood with the Wan family. After Liu Manhong had helped her, she definitely wouldn't run away from the fight.

"I know you are capable, but the Wan family likes to be underhanded!"

"If they're really playing underhanded..." Xia Xibei sneered, "Then I'll wait!"

Regardless of whether their attack was upfront or underhanded, she promised to make them cry!

Looking at Xia Xibei's cold smile, Liu Manhong couldn't help but tremble, a chill running down her back.