

## Lady gu 741

### Chapter 741: The Situ Family's Support

The butler respectfully opened the car door and invited Qiao Xi to get in. She did not expect to see a man in the car. That man's face was pale and looked tired. He looked like he had been sick for a long time.

With her experience, she guessed that this man did not have long to live. His eyes revealed the grayness of death.

The man did not say anything and only glanced at Qiao Xi before closing his eyes in exhaustion. Because of his illness, he did not have the energy to pay attention to anything else.

For some reason, Qiao Xi's heart ached when she saw such a weak man. Perhaps it was because her heart ached for a patient who was about to die.

The journey was very quiet. The car slowly stopped at the Situ family's residence. The butler got out of the car to open the door for the man. After Qiao Xi got out of the car, she saw a few bodyguards pushing a wheelchair over and helping the man into the wheelchair.

After standing up and taking a few steps, the man collapsed weakly in the wheelchair. Even so, the aura he exuded was still very powerful.

"Miss Qiao, please," the butler said respectfully.

Only then did Qiao Xi realize that she had been staring at the man for a long time, so she apologized in embarrassment and followed the butler in.

After Qiao Xi entered, the butler instructed his subordinates, "Old Master doesn't like Miss Tang Ruge. He says she's too scheming."

The Situ family's subordinates were all smart people. They immediately understood what the butler meant and turned to leave.

At this moment, Song Shiyu, who was in Qingyuan Pavilion, quickly called Gu Zheng. "President, the Situ family has picked Young Madam up. It seems to be about the design."

Gu Zheng's expression froze. After thinking for a moment, he said indifferently, "Alright, I understand."

In Longwan Residential, Gu Zheng was dressed neatly. He walked out of the study. Song Shijing quickly followed him. "President, it's so late. Where are we going?"

"The Situ family."

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On the other hand, Qiao Xi saw Mr. Situ Jian again. Situ Jian was gentle and elegant, but the gaze he shot at Qiao Xi carried a few more emotions. "Miss Qiao, my grandfather is already waiting for you in the room."

It turned out that Old Master Situ wanted to see her. Qiao Xi had always heard that the old man was powerful when he was young. It was precisely because of his thunderous methods back then that the Situ family was able to occupy a high position in high society. His son and grandson were both extremely outstanding as well. Unfortunately, for some reason, they disappeared after becoming the head of the Situ family.

Old Master Situ's hair was white, but he was in good spirits. He was holding the porcelain vase with hollowed-out jade rings that Luo Qing made. When he saw Qiao Xi arrive, he nodded at her with a serious expression.

The Situ family was a big family with extremely strict upbringing. The successors of the family had all gone through a strict selection. In order to ensure that the family could prosper and not decline, the successors had to put in a lot of effort.

The old man had grown up in such a strict environment since he was young. Moreover, his family was filled with boys, so he naturally had to be stricter with them. When facing a young and beautiful girl like Qiao Xi, his attitude was indeed much softer. "Miss Qiao."

He placed the porcelain vase with the hollowed-out jade rings on the table. The old man tried to speak as gently as possible, "Miss Qiao, take a look at this invitation."

Qiao Xi lowered her eyes to take a look. It was sent by Tang Ruge.

Old Master Situ threw the invitation aside. The butler immediately understood and said respectfully, "Miss Qiao, our Situ family is on good terms with many famous artists. If you want to learn, we can arrange for it at any time. Qi Zhong isn't qualified."

"Miss Qiao, feel free to tell me what you want to learn. The Situ family will definitely give you the best conditions. Some people are not worthy of your status at all."

Qiao Xi had a surprised expression, then looked at Old Master Situ in confusion. What did the Situ family mean? Why did she have the feeling that Old Master Situ was afraid that she would be sad, so he was backing her up?

The butler looked at her with a smile and even brewed her some good Longjing tea. Then, he smiled and said, "Master heard that you were coming, Miss Qiao, so he instructed the kitchen to make pastries and even brought out his precious Longjing tea. If you don't like it, we can prepare coffee for you."

Qiao Xi picked up the cup, and the fragrance instantly wafted into her nose. She hurriedly said, "This tea is very good. There's no need to trouble yourself."

What she was puzzled about now was why Old Master Situ was so good to her.

Before she could think it through, Old Master Situ slowly said, "You can choose any teacher in the art world. As long as you like someone, the Situ family will try their best to invite them over. They'll even hold a grand apprenticeship banquet for you."

#### **Chapter 742: What Happened To President Gu?**

Qiao Xi hesitated for a moment. "I already have a painting master, so there's no need for me to acknowledge another one."

Old Master Situ waved his hand at the butler, who handed Qiao Xi a list. “Miss Qiao, you can have many masters. You can choose anyone on this list.”

Qiao Xi looked at the people on the list. Any one of them could make the art world tremble. Moreover, not only were there oil painting masters among these people, but there were also masters of watercolor and sketching. These people could be said to be top-notch in their respective fields, but Old Master Situ was actually letting her choose as she pleased.

After hesitating for a moment, Qiao Xi said, “Thank you, Old Master. It’s just that I’ve always been learning oil painting from my grandfather since I was young. I’ve also held an art exhibition. Now that my style has already matured, there’s no need for me to take anyone else as my master.”

A trace of surprise flashed through Old Master Situ’s eyes, then he looked at Qiao Xi with slight admiration. “Miss Qiao, you’ve held an art exhibition before?”

Qiao Xi nodded. “It was held in F Nation.”

Old Master Situ and the butler looked at each other. F Nation was called an art country, but Qiao Xi, as a foreign artist, was actually able to hold an art exhibition there. This was enough to prove that her standard was very high.

He looked at the list. “So you really don’t need a master? Then Tang Ruge... Forget it, I was thinking too much.”

Qiao Xi said with a face full of smiles, “Even so, I still have to thank you, Old Master, for being so considerate of me.”

The corners of Old Master Situ’s mouth curled up unconsciously. “I’m old enough to be your great-grandfather. Just call me that in the future.”

Old Master Situ looked serious, but Qiao Xi kept having an inexplicable sense of intimacy. Hence, she called out sweetly, “Great-grandfather.”

The butler was slightly surprised. The old man had previously said that he wanted to investigate this girl carefully, but in less than ten minutes, Qiao Xi was already addressing him as ‘Great-grandfather’.

Not everyone had the right to call him that. Only the bloodline of the Situ family could call him that. Moreover, the descendants of the Situ family had to be capable. If they were incompetent, they would eventually be abandoned by the family.

If Miss Qiao really could not win against Tang Ruge, then she would not be qualified to be a member of the Situ family.

Unexpectedly, the old man was not a bystander this time. He even found many artists for Qiao Xi to choose from. He wanted to stand up for her and attack Tang Ruge. It was truly shocking.

Old Master Situ finished the tea in his cup in one gulp and frowned slightly. Qiao Xi could smell that it was not ordinary tea but a kind of medicine. This made her involuntarily recall the man she met in the car. He looked to be in his 30s or 40s and had an extraordinary bearing. However, he seemed to have been seriously ill for a long time.

Qiao Xi originally wanted to ask about that person, but this was the Situ family's matter, after all. It was not appropriate for an outsider like her to ask about it.

The next second, Old Master Situ took the initiative to say, "The person in the same car as you when you came is my son."

Qiao Xi looked at him with a shocked expression. This was impossible, right?! That man was only in his 30s or 40s. How could he be the son of a 100-year-old man?

Old Master Situ frowned. "This is the hereditary disease of the Situ family."

Hereditary disease?

Qiao Xi could not help but think of that particular disease. It turned out that the person she saw was not someone in their 30s or 40s but someone in their 60s or 70s. He had difficulty moving, and his aura was weak. Perhaps it was because he was old, but what kind of illness could make a person look young?

"Old Master, Gu Zheng is here." The butler came forward to report.

Old Master Situ's expression was indifferent. "President Gu, you came so quickly. Are you afraid that I'll make things difficult for Mrs. Gu?"

As soon as he finished speaking, Gu Zheng walked in wearing a navy blue windbreaker. His long legs took steady steps as he slowly walked to Qiao Xi's side. He first sized her up. After seeing that she was fine, he looked at Old Master Situ.

"What brings you here?" Old Master Situ's eyes were icy-cold. He had long since retracted the gentleness that he showed Qiao Xi and had a serious expression.

Gu Zheng looked straight into the old man's eyes without the slightest fear. Then, Gu Zheng said, "Xi Xi, wait for me outside first. I have something to say to the old master alone."

Qiao Xi glanced at him in confusion, but she still left obediently.

After Qiao Xi left, Gu Zheng went straight to the point. "If you suspect that Xi Xi is of the Situ family's bloodline, you can do a paternity test and officially announce her identity."

### **Chapter 743: Is She Of The Situ Family's Bloodline?**

Old Master Situ replied indifferently, "Even if she's related to me by blood, we're four generations apart. The paternity test won't be very accurate, so I can't confirm which of my grandsons or sons she belongs to."

"President Gu, I know you care about her a lot, but..." Old Master Situ's expression turned cold. "Please don't interfere in the Situ family's matters. Whether she's a member of the Situ family or not is up to me. Whether she's qualified to be the heiress or not is also up to me."

Gu Zheng was silent for a moment before he curled his lips. "Old Master, you're right. I have no right to interfere in the Situ family's matters, but Xi Xi is my wife. Moreover, she doesn't know about her relationship with the Situ family. I hope the Situ family won't hurt her and bring her over without any notice in the future."

The butler frowned. "President Gu, regardless of whether Miss Qiao is of the Situ family's bloodline or not, we won't hurt her. You're overthinking it."

Gu Zheng's eyes turned cold. "I don't much to say about the internal affairs of the Situ family. Everyone knows very well that you don't care about kinship at all. All you care about is the family's interests. If it weren't for your heaven-defying actions, your descendants wouldn't have been plagued by illness for generations."

These words hit Old Master Situ's sore spot. If he had not been so heartless back then, his son would not have gotten such an illness.

Old Master Situ did not look too good and did not answer. The butler hurriedly went forward to explain, "President Gu, you've misunderstood us. We were very polite to Miss Qiao and did not treat her harshly."

Gu Zheng's expression softened a little. "Old Master, it's better if this doesn't happen again."

As soon as he finished speaking, Gu Zheng nodded slightly at Old Master Situ before turning to leave.

The butler comforted him, saying, "Old Master, don't take President Gu's words to heart. He's just worried about Miss Qiao. He doesn't have any ill intentions. Moreover, you can't be blamed for those things."

"He's indeed not an ordinary person. He actually knows the Situ family's secret. The reason he's so angry is because he's afraid that I'll do the same thing to Xi Xi. Perhaps he'll try his best to minimize my contact with Xi Xi in the future."

The butler looked sad. "Sir doesn't blame you..." The 'sir' he was talking about was Old Master Situ's son.

His words were only to comfort Old Master Situ. It was impossible to say that he did not blame the old master. Old Master Situ's son was seriously ill, while his grandson had been missing for many years. Now, they had to rely on him, a 100-year-old man, to support the Situ family.

Old Master Situ sighed helplessly. "Forget it. It's pointless to regret anything now. I should just treat Xi Xi better."

The butler said helplessly, "Tang Ruge is just a clown. With Miss Qiao's strength and President Gu's protection, she definitely won't lose out. You don't have to interfere in this matter. Moreover, I'm afraid you don't know that Qingyuan Pavilion is under Miss Qiao's name."

"I see! I was thinking too much. I thought that she would be bullied by that girl from the Tang family." Old Master Situ finally relaxed.

On the other hand, Qiao Xi and Gu Zheng got into the car. Gu Zheng asked, "What did you two talk about before I came?"

Qiao Xi thought for a moment and replied truthfully, "Nothing much. Tang Ruge has acknowledged Qi Zhong as her master and wants to show off in front of me."

“Hence, Old Master Situ gave me a list of artists and asked me to choose one of them to be my master. He wants to hold a grand apprenticeship banquet for me. I don’t think Old Master Situ has any ill intentions. He seems to be standing up for me.”

Even though Qiao Xi did not understand why the old man would do this, it was obvious that this was his intention. Perhaps he had deeper intentions, but Qiao Xi did not know about that.

Gu Zheng was not interested in Tang Ruge becoming someone’s disciple. Instead, he asked, “Is there an artist you like on that list? Do you want to become someone’s disciple?”

Qiao Xi shook her head. “There’s no need for me to take anyone as my master anymore. I’ve been learning how to paint from my grandfather since I was young. My style is already very mature. If I take someone else as my master and learn another style, it’ll be inappropriate. Moreover, my grandfather has gone missing. If he finds out that I’ve taken someone else as my master, he’ll definitely be sad.

“What if Han Ye wants to take you in as his disciple?” Gu Zheng’s tone was indifferent. It seemed to be a casual sentence, but in reality, he was already starting to feel nervous. His heart was beating violently.

Qiao Xi thought for a moment and said, “It’s indeed very difficult to refuse Han Ye if he wants to take me in as his disciple, but I’m afraid that even if I learn from him, it won’t change much.”

#### **Chapter 744: He’s My Savior**

Qiao Xi thought that her style was already mature. Even if she took Han Ye as her master, it would be very difficult for her to change her original style. In that case, there was not much of a difference regardless of whether she became his apprentice. Moreover, in the circle of painters, many people only took in apprentices for the sake of their reputation. She could not bring greater benefits and reputation to Han Ye.

“As long as you want to be his apprentice, I’ll fulfill your wish.” Gu Zheng’s eyes burned.

Hearing Gu Zheng’s words, Qiao Xi shook her head and refused. “No need.”

A trace of surprise flashed through Gu Zheng’s eyes. Then, he heard Qiao Xi say, “Senior Han Ye should already be over 50 years old and have taken in many apprentices. Why should I take him as my master at my age? Moreover, he’s old and definitely won’t have the energy to teach me. If I don’t disturb him, perhaps he might be able to live for a few more years.

“Although I admire Han Ye a lot, I can’t harm him!”

Qiao Xi smiled lightly. “Gu Zheng, what do you think?”

The corners of Gu Zheng’s mouth twitched slightly. Did she mean that it was not that she did not want to acknowledge him as her master but that Han Ye was old and his health was not good, so he would not be able to live for long?

The air instantly fell silent, and Gu Zheng’s eyes narrowed. If Qiao Xi knew that he was Han Ye, what would her reaction be?

It was better not to tell her first. She would be even more surprised when she realized it herself.

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A few days later.

Li Xing'er called. "Qiao Xi, it's my birthday tomorrow. I've already booked a seat at Fragrance Hotel. You must come and support me!"

Qiao Xi agreed. However, after hanging up, Gu Yao asked in surprise, "Li Xing'er's birthday?"

"That's right!"

"Why didn't you tell me?! I haven't prepared a gift yet! There's only one day left. What can I buy?!" Gu Yao suddenly panicked, then looked at Qiao Xi with sorrow in his eyes. "She didn't even tell me it's her birthday! She doesn't treat me as a friend!"

Qiao Xi raised her eyebrows. "Do you know each other?"

"Nonsense!" Gu Yao said firmly, "Of course, we know each other! Previously, during the design competition, we even complained about Yao Mengqing together. After that, we became friends. Later on, she even asked me about the president of ZR, but I didn't tell her that the person is Gu Zheng."

At the mention of Gu Zheng, Gu Yao instantly gasped. "F\*ck! Could it be that she has fallen for the president of ZR?! That's awkward!"

Qiao Xi: "..."

The atmosphere instantly became heavy. Qiao Xi was silent for a short while before asking, "What did she say?"

Gu Yao hurriedly picked up his phone and opened Li Xing'er's WeChat conversation to show Qiao Xi the chat history. "That's all we talked about. I didn't reveal the identity of the president of ZR at all. Qiao Xi, don't worry. If she tries to snatch Gu Zheng from you, I'll definitely help you!"

Qiao Xi glanced at the chat history. It showed:

Li Xing'er: [Gu Yao, when did you meet the president of ZR? When did you confirm your relationship?]

Gu Yao: [We've known each other since we were young! What relationship? Of course, it's been confirmed since we were born!]

Li Xing'er sent a shy emoji, then said: [Wow! You two are childhood sweethearts! You actually knew each other since you were young. Has he always been so good to you?]

Gu Yao complained with a face full of sorrow: [He's been so outstanding since I was young, while I was a fool. He even forced me to study. If I failed, he would punish me. Hence, even though I'm a good-for-nothing, my results back then were still quite good because he didn't allow me to perform badly! He's only a few years older than me, but he supervised my studies like he was my parent. I'm on the brink of tears just telling you this!]

Li Xing'er: [What else did he do?]

Gu Yao: [Actually, he's really good to me. When I was young, I didn't quite understand why he wanted to sleep with me. After I grew up, I understood. He has a lot of responsibilities to shoulder, but he never said anything. He just gritted his teeth and endured it. Even if he was covered in injuries, he still insisted on protecting me. Now that I've grown up, I'll protect him too!]

Li Xing'er seemed to have heard a shocking secret and got excited: [You've been sleeping together since you were young! Hehehe... How does he treat you?]

Gu Yao: [Of course, he's good to me! He's the person I love the most! If it weren't for him, I don't know what I would've become. He's my savior! He even said before that even if he had to lose his life, he wanted me to live a peaceful life. Who wouldn't love such a man?! Actually, I'm willing to give up my life for him!]

### **Chapter 745: The Domineering President And The Innocent Little Puppy**

Reading Gu Yao's words, Li Xing'er sent another shy emoji.

Qiao Xi frowned. It was because of this conversation that Gu Yao thought that Li Xing'er liked the president of ZR?

She cleared her throat with a serious expression. "Gu Yao, I think you might be too naive. Xing'er doesn't mean what you think she means. It's better if you don't tell her about you sleeping with Gu Zheng in the future."

Gu Yao looked at her innocently. "What's wrong with that? Gu Zheng and I often slept together when we were young. Even when we grew up, we would still sleep together. Is there a problem?"

Qiao Xi was speechless: "..."

She really wanted to tell him Li Xing'er's thoughts when she received his texts, but she could not bear to ruin Gu Yao's pure heart. After hesitating for a moment, she decided to just forget about it.

Unexpectedly, her phone suddenly rang. Li Xing'er hurriedly said, "Xi Xi, don't forget to tell Gu Yao that I've booked a large private room this time. Have him come over!"

"Um... It would be even better if he could invite the president of ZR to join us as well. You know what I mean!"

Li Xing'er muttered softly, "Xi Xi, I've already asked around. The president of ZR is really too good to Gu Yao. I thought that the president liked you, but it turns out he likes Gu Yao!"

"Actually, I think the two of them are quite compatible too. One is a domineering president, while the other is an innocent little puppy. I like this ship so much!"

The corners of Qiao Xi's mouth twitched slightly. "Alright, I'll convey your message."

After saying this, Li Xing'er started complaining again. "Xi Xi, I've been so annoyed recently! Our Li family can be considered a scholarly family. My parents are both writers, and my grandfather is a painter. My ancestors are also artists. I'm the only one in the design industry, but I haven't improved at all. Now that the eldest daughter of the Tang family is in Li City and she got to be in the limelight for a while, those



people have started to praise the strong and trample on the weak. Everyone's looking at me with harsh gazes these days!"

Qiao Xi frowned. "Are you talking about Tang Ruge?"

"That's her! Perhaps it's because she hates our Li family for exposing her painting as a fake at Matriarch Gu's birthday banquet. Ever since then, she's been targeting me. I'm unwilling to pay attention to her, but she still doesn't stop. How annoying!

"As the eldest family of the Tang family, she considers herself a daughter from a wealthy family. But am I, Li Xing'er, an ignorant and incompetent piece of trash? Is there a point in comparing her to me?"

Li Xing'er continued to complain, "They even said that Miss Tang is holding an apprenticeship banquet. Her master is Mr. Qi Zhong, but I, the daughter of the Li family, don't even know how to use a paintbrush. All I know is to spend our family's money to hold a grand birthday banquet. They talk about how extravagant I am!

"I really don't understand! My family dotes on me. What's wrong with spending money on my birthday party? Am I spending those people's money? We're both from scholarly families, but she, Tang Ruge, is superior to me. Am I trash?"

Li Xing'er gritted her teeth in anger. "I don't want to be angry over these things either. A hypocrite like her will be exposed sooner or later! At that time, let's see if she still has the face to say that she's from a noble family!"

Qiao Xi narrowed her eyes. Ever since Tang Ruge lost her dignity at the birthday banquet, she had been anxious to salvage her image. Taking advantage of the matter of becoming Qi Zhong's apprentice, she was making a comeback.

"That's right. She'll be exposed sooner or later!" Qiao Xi smiled meaningfully. She hadn't forgotten that Tang Ruge had stolen her account.

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The next morning.

After breakfast, Qiao Xi decided to make a trip to the law firm.

Song Shiyu hurriedly said, "Young Madam, you want a lawyer? Why don't you look for my brother directly? My brother is a professional!"

At this moment, Song Shijing walked over and said respectfully, "Yes, Young Madam. You can tell me what your request is."

"I composed some songs previously. I think I need to prove the copyright, especially for the song that won the championship in the Planet Music Festival," Qiao Xi said.

Song Shijing looked up in shock. "That song was actually composed by you, Young Madam? As long as you can provide some evidence of your early creation, I believe it won't be a problem to prove the copyright."

The corners of Qiao Xi's lips curled up slightly. "There were surveillance cameras in my previous composition room. They've been kept for many years, and the process of my composition was all recorded."

Song Shijing nodded and said, "If that's the case, there's definitely no problem proving the copyright. But do we need to inform the organizers of the Planet Music Festival in advance?"

If that song was composed by Young Madam, then the person participating in the Planet Music Festival had plagiarized someone else's work to participate in the competition!

#### **Chapter 746: Han Yin Is His Apprentice**

Qiao Xi said indifferently, "There's no need to make a fuss for now."

Song Shijing was puzzled. "But that person plagiarized your work. You should be the champion of the Planet Music Festival!"

"It won't be that simple. The evidence has to be taken out at special times to be of greatest use. Since she bullied my friend, she has to pay the price!" Qiao Xi smiled sinisterly.

"She shouldn't think that just because she stole my account, those songs will be hers. She shouldn't flatter herself if she doesn't have the ability, or she'll only get into trouble!"

After confirming the copyright matter, Qiao Xi and Gu Yao went to Fragrance Hotel to attend Li Xing'er's birthday party.

On the other hand, Gu Zheng stood in front of the office window with a middle-aged man standing behind him. He said respectfully, "Mr. Han Ye, the international art exhibition will be held in Li City. We hope you can attend."

The person in charge would invite Han Ye to attend every year's international art exhibition because his influence was too great. He had admirers all over the world. Unfortunately, Han Ye kept a low profile and never showed his face. Moreover, he did not participate in any art exhibitions or competitions.

13 years ago, a painting that stunned the entire oil painting world appeared. Everyone thought that it was a new work by a hidden master. The International Oil Painting Organization investigated for a long time before discovering that the creator of the painting was actually a 13-year-old boy.

No one expected a 13-year-old boy to be able to create such a divine piece of art. After many inquiries, the International Oil Painting Organization confirmed that this 13-year-old boy was Han Ye.

Unfortunately, Han Ye was different from other artists. Painting was just a form of entertainment for him. His mind wasn't on it. He only painted in his free time. He didn't produce any new works for two or three years. He didn't care how successful he was in the painting world.

When the president of the International Oil Painting Organization saw Han Ye's painting for the first time, he decided to pass the position of president to him. Unfortunately, Han Ye refused. Later on, he never participated in the annual international art exhibitions.

The man was filled with disappointment. He had already guessed that Han Ye would not participate as usual. Who knew that in the next second...

Gu Zheng said casually, "Okay."

The middle-aged man stood rooted to the ground for a few seconds before his eyes were filled with surprise. His voice trembled slightly. "Mr. Han Ye, are you serious? As long as... As long as you agree to attend, we'll definitely not expose your identity! We won't cause you any trouble!"

Gu Zheng nodded and said, "My assistant will give you my work later. Also, there'll be another person attending with me."

Han Ye's work was naturally expensive, so he would only temporarily hand the work to the International Oil Painting Organization for the exhibition. After the exhibition ended, Han Ye's work would be returned to him.

The man said hesitantly, "Mr. Han Ye, you said that there's another person attending. Can I ask who that person is?"

Since 13 years ago, they had invited Mr. Han Ye every year, but he always rejected them. Could it be that he agreed to attend this time for that person?

Gu Zheng smiled. "Han Yin will attend with me."

The man's eyes widened in surprise and joy. "Miss Han Yin? She... She's actually attending?"

"Yeah."

The middle-aged man thought for a moment and couldn't help but ask, "Mr. Han Ye, may I ask what your relationship with Miss Han Yin is?"

Both of them had the word 'Han' in their names, and they were about the same age. Although the outside world thought they were very old people, the International Oil Painting Organization knew their exact ages. It was just that both of them kept a low profile.

Gu Zheng's lips curled up slightly. "What do you think their relationship is?"

The middle-aged man pondered for a moment before saying calmly, "Miss Han Yin is your apprentice, right? I remember that she's only 20 years old. She's suitable to be your apprentice."

Gu Zheng was speechless. How annoying! Was he so unlike her husband?

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Five o'clock.

Qiao Xi and Gu Yao arrived at Fragrance Hotel. At this moment, the hall was filled with people heading upstairs.

"So many people!"

The manager at the side explained, "Sixth Miss, apart from Miss Li's birthday banquet, there's also an apprenticeship banquet happening at Fragrance Hotel today. It's in Room One. I heard that the master is a very famous oil painter. He has apprentices all over the country, and he has many friends too. Therefore, the people attending the apprenticeship banquet are almost filling up Fragrance Hotel."

## Chapter 747: Do You Own Fragrance Hotel?

When Qiao Xi heard about the apprenticeship banquet, she instantly understood and nodded.

“Would you like me to show you to Room Three, Sixth Miss?” the manager asked.

Qiao Xi said, “No need. I’ll wait for my friend.”

As soon as she finished speaking, Qiao Xi’s phone suddenly rang. Tang Ruge’s voice came from the other end. “Xi Xi, did you receive the invitation? When are you arriving? I can send someone to pick you up. We’re in Room One of Fragrance Hotel.”

Qiao Xi’s entire body emitted a chill as she decisively hung up the call. In order to prevent Tang Ruge from bothering her again, she even blocked Tang Ruge’s number.

Right now, she only wanted to attend Li Xing’er’s birthday party and was not in the mood to care about Tang Ruge. However, Tang Ruge still shamelessly called her. Qiao Xi even suspected that Tang Ruge had masochistic tendencies.

After a moment, Qiao Xi suddenly heard a cry from behind her.

“Xi Xi?”

Qiao Xi turned around and saw a group of people walking over. Tang Ruge was in the middle, and the old man beside her was Qi Zhong. Qiao Xi had seen Qi Zhong in an art exhibition, but Qi Zhong did not know her identity.

Tang Ruge held the arm of a middle-aged woman intimately. The woman was dressed gorgeously and had a jade pendant around her neck. Judging from her age, she was probably Madam Tang.

When everyone saw Qiao Xi, their expressions changed slightly.

“What are you doing here?!” Tang Lingyun looked defensive. “Just now, my sister called you and invited you over, but you hung up immediately. Why are you suddenly here now?”

When Tang Ruge called Qiao Xi just now, Tang Lingyun was beside her. She thought that Qiao Xi wouldn’t be coming, but who knew that Qiao Xi would appear here? She must have known that the people attending the banquet were all famous figures in the painting world, so she came over to get to know them.

The group suddenly stopped walking. The painters behind all asked curiously about what was happening.

Madam Tang’s face darkened, and Tang Ruge frowned slightly. “Mom, don’t worry. I’ll talk to her.”

“Yes, no matter what, don’t let her cause trouble. Today is your apprenticeship banquet. You can’t let her ruin it,” Madam Gu instructed in a low voice.

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Tang Ruge slowly walked up to Qiao Xi and said gently, “Xi Xi, I sent you an invitation a week ago. I even called you today, but you clearly rejected me. Since that’s the case, why did you still come to my

apprenticeship banquet? If you've suddenly changed your mind and want to attend the apprenticeship banquet, I'll naturally welcome you. But why are you blocking the door? The guests today are all respected figures in the painting world. Don't mess around, or else in the future...

"Anyway, can you leave first? If you're unhappy, you can wait until after the apprenticeship banquet. I beg you not to ruin my apprenticeship banquet, alright?"

In everyone's eyes, Tang Ruge was trying to persuade her nicely, but Qiao Xi did not even bother to look at her. She fiddled with her phone as if Tang Ruge did not exist.

Tang Ruge's face was ashen. She bit her lip. "Xi Xi, I sincerely welcome you to my apprenticeship banquet. And I heard that you like oil paintings very much. If you want to learn, I can recommend a master to you."

Qiao Xi still stood on the spot without saying a word.

Tang Ruge's eyes were red as she said aggrievedly, "Xi Xi..."

"Qiao Xi! Are you done?!" Tang Lingyun finally couldn't suppress the anger in her heart and shouted loudly, "Aren't you just relying on President Gu's power to throw your weight around here? When you heard that Sister Ruge would be Mr. Qi Zhong's apprentice, you started to feel jealous again. That's why you came to cause trouble, didn't you?! Why are you blocking the door? Get out of here immediately. Don't make us miss the apprenticeship banquet!"

The corners of Qiao Xi's lips curled up as she sneered. "Does your Tang family own Fragrance Hotel?"

Tang Lingyun blurted out, "No!"

"Then why can't I be here? Besides, do you think I came to Fragrance Hotel to attend Tang Ruge's apprenticeship banquet?" Qiao Xi said casually.

"You!" Tang Lingyun was fuming with anger. She gritted her teeth and roared, "Get lost! Although our Tang family doesn't own Fragrance Hotel, it's wrong for you to block the door!"

Seeing that there was an argument, everyone looked over curiously.

Qi Zhong asked unhappily, "What's going on?"

Madam Tang explained, "That girl is Ruge's friend. Previously, Ruge invited her to attend the apprenticeship banquet, but she threw a tantrum and refused to come. Who knew that just before the banquet started, she appeared and blocked the door to cause trouble?"

#### **Chapter 748: A Family Of Intellectually Impaired People**

Madam Tang sighed helplessly. "If it were any other time, Ruge and I would naturally not bicker with her. But today is the apprenticeship banquet. And you invited so many big shots too, Mr. Qi. Now..."

Qi Zhong frowned and snorted. "Ruge is my disciple. It's better for her not to interact with such a person in the future. It's simply disgraceful!"

Madam Tang nodded and took a few steps forward. She said gently, "Miss Qiao, you and Ruge are friends. Thank you very much for coming to her apprenticeship banquet, but it's not right for you to block the door."

Everyone's gazes landed on Qiao Xi, their eyes filled with disdain.

Qiao Xi's entire body emitted a chill as she slowly raised her eyes. "Madam Tang, I've been standing here since Miss Tang came to talk to me. The door of Fragrance Hotel is so wide. There's more than enough space for all of you to walk in. Why would you say that I'm blocking the door?"

As soon as these words were spoken, the crowd could not help but be stunned. The painters also reacted. It seemed that this little girl had been standing beside them from the beginning and had not blocked the middle of the entrance. She really could not be considered to be blocking the door.

The door of Fragrance Hotel was ten meters wide. How could a young lady block the door on her own? Moreover, she was standing at the side and did not affect the guests from entering.

From the beginning, it was Tang Ruge who said that someone was blocking the way. She went forward to negotiate with Qiao Xi, causing everyone to mistakenly think that Qiao Xi was blocking the way. In fact, she was just standing at the door and playing with her phone.

Madam Tang looked a little embarrassed, and a trace of ruthlessness flashed across her eyes. However, she was the mistress of the Tang family, after all. How could she easily expose her anger?

Unexpectedly, before she could speak, Tang Lingyun asked, "Since you're not blocking the way, why are you standing here?"

Qiao Xi rolled her eyes at Tang Lingyun as if she were looking at an idiot. Previously, she had reminded Tang Lingyun not to be used by others, but this idiot did not take her advice to heart at all.

Qiao Xi was so angry that she laughed. "Do I have to tell you why I'm here? Who do you think you are?"

She really did not want to quarrel with the Tang family. This family was full of intellectually impaired people. She stood here waiting for Li Xing'er, but Tang Ruge insisted that she was blocking the way. Qiao Xi said that she was not here to attend the apprenticeship banquet, nor was she blocking the door. In the end, someone even asked her what she was here for.

'Who do you think you are? Why should I tell you all this?'

The few painters behind Qi Zhong looked at each other and revealed meaningful expressions. They felt that Qi Zhong's apprentice was very scheming.

Tang Ruge looked like a lady from a wealthy family—elegant, intellectual, gentle, and polite. However, it seemed that she always pretended to be a victim to incite others into forming speculations.

Tang Ruge bit her lip. "Xi Xi, whatever your purpose in coming here today is, I'm happy to have you. As long as you—"

"Tang Ruge! What are you doing?! Are you bullying Xi Xi?!" Li Xing'er had just entered when she saw a group of people surrounding Qiao Xi.

She stepped forward angrily and blocked Qiao Xi behind her as she started to attack crazily. “Tang Ruge, is your Tang family the only one who can come to Fragrance Hotel? I’m holding a birthday banquet here today. Xi Xi is here to celebrate my birthday, and I was the one who asked her to wait for me at the door. If you have a problem, come look for me! Don’t make things difficult for Xi Xi! Your Tang family claims to be a scholarly family, but you’re still so domineering. You’re holding an apprenticeship banquet at Fragrance Hotel, but you’re not allowing other guests to enter? What kind of logic is this?!”

At this moment, the manager came forward to explain, “Madam Tang, Miss Tang, Miss Li has indeed booked a private hall at Fragrance Hotel a month ago for a birthday party. Miss Qiao is here to attend the birthday party.”

What the manager meant was that Li Xing’er had booked the birthday banquet first, in case the Tang family said that Li Xing’er deliberately booked a venue here to target the Tang family.

Madam Tang’s face was ashen. She seemed to have heard the discussions around her. Anger burned in her heart, but she could only grit her teeth and endure it. She still pretended to be elegant. “Then it seems we misunderstood.”

“Is just saying that it’s a misunderstanding enough? Shouldn’t you apologize for your mistake?” Qiao Xi sneered.

Tang Ruge bit her lip and said nothing.

Li Xing’er said arrogantly, “Tang Ruge, take a closer look at this door. It’s ten meters wide! Our Xi Xi is so thin and small, yet you say that she’s blocking your way. If you don’t need eyes, you can donate them to someone who needs them. Don’t go about spouting lies!”

#### **Chapter 749: Luxurious Room One**

“Weren’t you quite good at talking just now? Why aren’t you saying anything when I’m asking you to apologize?” Li Xing’er snorted.

Tang Lingyun said indignantly, “We just misunderstood...”

“Miss Qiao, I’m sorry.” Madam Tang apologized and said elegantly, “Ruge thought you weren’t coming. She was so excited when you suddenly appeared that she said the wrong thing. Don’t take it to heart.”

Then, Madam Tang slowly turned around and bowed deeply to everyone. “Everyone, I’m sorry to have wasted your time.”

A trace of surprise flashed across Qiao Xi’s eyes. Madam Tang looked just like a lady from a wealthy family.

Tang Lingyun glared fiercely at Qiao Xi. The last time, Qiao Xi had sprained her wrist and she had to recuperate for a long time. Now, her wrist was still aching faintly. This time, Qiao Xi even shamelessly appeared in front of her in Fragrance Hotel.

The anger in her heart intensified as she shouted, “Qiao Xi! You can’t enter Fragrance Hotel! So what if Li Xing’er invited you?! You’ve offended the Tang family, so you can’t enter!”

Everyone's gaze landed on Tang Lingyun. Madam Tang's eyes darkened. This idiot was really incompetent. Today was Ruge's apprenticeship banquet. No accidents were allowed.

It didn't matter to Qiao Xi if they argued, but it would make everyone feel that the Tang family was petty.

Madam Tang quickly stopped her. "Lingyun, stop fooling around!"

Then, she looked at Qiao Xi with a gentle expression. "Miss Qiao, I'm really sorry to have disturbed your friend's birthday party. Which room will you be in? If it's convenient, I'll have Ruge make a trip there later to formally apologize and celebrate Miss Li's birthday."

Li Xing'er looked impatient, but Madam Tang's attitude was very good as she kept smiling. She was also an elder, so Li Xing'er could not refute her. She could only answer, "Room Three."

Hearing this, Tang Lingyun immediately chuckled. "That's quite close! We're in Room One."

The most luxurious and largest private room in Fragrance Hotel was Room One. Although it was called a private room, it could accommodate hundreds of people. There were also various entertainment facilities that could satisfy the customers' every need. Everything could be adjusted according to the customers' needs too. Of course, this private room was also the most expensive one in Fragrance Hotel, representing the customers' noble status.

Tang Lingyun immediately looked smug. "Hey, the dignified eldest daughter of the Li family is holding a birthday party in Room Three? With that arrogant look just now, I thought she would be holding it in a luxurious private room. In the end, she's not even in Room Two and can only hold it in Room Three."

"You!" Li Xing'er gritted her teeth in anger.

When Tang Lingyun saw that she was angry, she became even smugger. With a mocking expression, she said, "Qiao Xi, what's there to be arrogant about?! The people in Room One are our Tang family! Who do you think you are?! Do you think you own Fragrance Hotel?"

Qiao Xi was about to enter when she suddenly stopped in her tracks upon hearing the last sentence.

Yes, she really owned Fragrance Hotel!

Qiao Xi slowly turned around and asked indifferently, "Miss Tang's private room is Fragrance Hotel's Room One?"

Tang Ruge smiled and nodded. "Yes, Xi Xi... If you think Room Three isn't good, you can come to Room One. Anyway, the two rooms aren't far away. You can come anytime."

Tang Lingyun refused to give up. "Sister, don't be so kind! Perhaps Qiao Xi would prefer to stay in Room Three with her group of bad friends! Our Tang family will never choose a low-class room. If we have to choose, we'll choose the best one! I heard that the Li family is also a scholarly family! It's too embarrassing! Are they even worthy of being compared to the Tang family?"

Li Xing'er was trembling with anger.



“Xing’er.” Qiao Xi patted her hand, indicating that she shouldn’t be angry. Then, Qiao Xi’s cold gaze landed on Tang Lingyun. “The Tang family wouldn’t choose a low-class private room, right? Miss Tang, I hope you won’t forget what you said!”

Li Xing’er couldn’t help but complain in a low voice, “What’s wrong with her?! It’s just a private room. What’s there to compare?! Moreover, Room Three isn’t bad either! Tang Ruge is crazy, but that sister of hers is even more stupid! Damn it! I’m so angry!”

“Why are you angry with them? It’s not worth it.” Qiao Xi smiled. “It’s my fault. I didn’t know that she was going to hold an apprenticeship banquet here.”

If she had known that Tang Ruge had made a reservation here, she would have instructed the manager to cancel the booking. She would rather not earn the money from them than see Tang Ruge’s disgusting face!

### **Chapter 750: She’s The Sixth Miss Of Fragrance Hotel!**

Everyone entered together. The staff hurriedly went forward and asked, “May I know which private room you’ve booked?”

Tang Lingyun shouted proudly, “Room One!”

Wasn’t Qiao Xi so arrogant? However, she could only escape to Room Three dejectedly now! Meanwhile, their Tang family would be holding a banquet in Room One.

The staff asked respectfully, “Are you Madam Tang and Miss Tang? The private room you reserved is ready. I’ll bring you there now.”

Madam Tang smiled elegantly. Being able to hold an apprenticeship banquet in Room One of Fragrance Hotel was a symbol of status. Not only could it boost Ruge’s reputation, but it could also make the Tang family proud.

At this moment, the staff walked up to Qiao Xi and Li Xing’er and asked, “Which private room have you reserved?”

Just as Li Xing’er was about to answer, Tang Lingyun said mockingly, “It’s Room Three! The eldest daughter of the Li family is actually holding her birthday party in Room Three. How disgraceful!”

“Sister, our Tang family is a scholarly family and we’ve always cared about our reputation. You’re also a young lady from a wealthy family and a socialite from the capital. You’re talented, not someone some arrogant young ladies can compare to!”

These words were no longer mocking Li Xing’er but also looking down on the Li family. Although the Tang family’s foundation and wealth were inferior to the Li family’s, Tang Ruge’s reputation and talent were much better than Li Xing’er’s. The entire capital knew that the Tang family had produced a talented woman. She would definitely achieve something great in the future!

Li Xing’er was just an ignorant and incompetent little girl. She could not be compared to Tang Ruge at all.

Tang Ruge stopped her gently. "Lingyun, you can't say that! Miss Li, I'm really sorry. Lingyun doesn't mean to look down on you. It's just that the Tang family has many rules, so they have high expectations for everything."

Just how big was the Tang family? How dare she talk about rules?

Li Xing'er was so angry that her lungs were about to explode. The Tang family was simply too much. First, they bullied Xi Xi. Now, they were mocking her and her family!

This was intolerable!

Before she could explode, Qiao Xi said indifferently, "At first, I couldn't be bothered to compete with you, but since you insist on competing in this regard, let's compete."

As soon as she finished speaking, Qiao Xi turned around and said to the staff, "I'm Qiao Xi."

Tang Lingyun immediately laughed out loud. "Qiao Xi, are you stupid?! Do you really think you're some big shot?! Aren't you just relying on President Gu's power? If you want to do something, you have to first ask President Gu! What's the use of reporting your name?!"

Unexpectedly, the staff members' eyes were filled with surprise. They rushed to Qiao Xi and bowed respectfully to her. "Sixth Miss! We're really sorry! We didn't know you were here. President Qin had already instructed us to bring you to Furong Pavilion if you came!"

Tang Lingyun's eyes widened as she watched this scene in disbelief. Her expression gradually stiffened as if she had seen a ghost.

Qiao Xi's gaze landed on Tang Lingyun, and the corners of her mouth curled up slightly as she laughed arrogantly. "You guessed correctly! Fragrance Hotel is indeed owned by my family."

These words were like a heavy blow to Tang Lingyun's face, rendering her and the rest of the Tang family speechless.

The Tang family had just mocked Li Xing'er and Qiao Xi for holding a birthday party in a low-class private room. Now, they were slapped in the face. Qiao Xi was actually the sixth miss of Fragrance Hotel.

Tang Lingyun looked at Qiao Xi viciously. She was actually the boss of Fragrance Hotel?

Qiao Xi smiled and said, "Xing'er, let's go to Furong Pavilion. It's an independent courtyard that's even more spacious than Room One. Moreover, the scenery there is very beautiful!"

"Sure! I won't argue with a dog on my birthday today," Li Xing'er replied with a smile. Then, she turned around and raised her eyebrows. "Miss Tang, I hope you have fun in Room One!"

Tang Ruge looked embarrassed, but today was an important day. She had to maintain a good image.

Seeing her daughter's unhappy expression, Madam Tang went forward and comforted her. "Ruge, those who achieve great things have to endure difficulties. Qiao Xi is just relying on her power and influence to mock you. It's nothing. You're already Mr. Qi Zhong's last apprentice. With Mr. Qi Zhong's current reputation, you'll definitely be able to inherit his mantle in the future and become the number one

female artist in the oil painting world. At that time, how can Qiao Xi be qualified to compare to you? Therefore, you can't give up your status for these people."

Hearing this, Tang Ruge's expression gradually softened. She smiled and nodded.

"Mom, who do you think will be attending Li Xing'er's birthday party?" Tang Ruge asked curiously.