

Mr Han 1881

Chapter 1881: No Closeness Beats Biological Ties

Lu Man said softly, "I'm fine, Mom. To put it plainly, he's not related to me at all. Why should I care?"

"Right." Shen Nuo nodded.

Lin Liye was fuming. The family was harmonious and joyful, and that good relationship was being spoiled by Han Dongping.

What a sh*t-stirrer!

Not liking Han Dongping's actions, Old Mrs. Han turned to Lu Man. "How's your mother? Is she alright?"

Han Dongping suddenly recalled that Lu Man was no longer a sad little nobody.

She had a step-father called Wang Juhuai.

Thus, Han Dongping finally reined it in.

He was no longer going overboard, but he was not too enthusiastic either.

No matter what, Shi Xiaoya's the one and only daughter of the Shi family.

As for Lu Man?

Wang Juhuai was only her step-father.

Now that Xia Qingwei's about to deliver, Wang Juhuai would have his own flesh and blood, and he would cool down towards Lu Man.

No closeness beats biological ties, right?

"She's great, rest assured. She recently went for a prenatal checkup. Her weight, blood sugar, and all other indicators fall within the acceptable range. She's expected to deliver in about a month," Lu Man said, smiling.

"That's good." Xia Qingwei's pregnancy could be said to be a high-risk one.

Plus, she's about to deliver, so everyone couldn't help worrying.

Seeing that Han Dongping had toned it down, Old Mrs. Han then turned to Shi Xiaoya. "Did Zhuoling perform fine when he went to your house yesterday?"

"Of course." Shi Xiaoya's look that said "naturally" made everyone chuckle. "Mom and Dad like him so much."

"Glad he didn't fall short on courtesies." Old Mrs. Han nodded happily. "Zhuoling's not a sweet-talker like Zhuofeng. He's the most reserved among us. I was just afraid that he wouldn't know how to make your parents happy and go along with them."

"No, my parents knew his character, and they even said he's steady," Shi Xiaoya replied.

Actually, Han Zhuoling was extremely conversational yesterday, making Shi Guanzhong very happy in the process.

But Shi Xiaoya felt that she could not say that here.

Han Zhuoling was so solemn at home, yet he'd easily humored her parents. No matter how genuine Old Mrs. Han was, she probably won't be that comfortable hearing that.

Han Zhuoling could sense her thoughts in her words and he winked at her.

Shi Xiaoya returned his look, saying in her mind that she's helping him.

Han Zhuoling smiled.

Everyone watched silently as they eyed each other, then observed that Han Zhuoling really liked Shi Xiaoya.

When he looked at her, love oozed from all his pores.

When Shi Xiaoya had just arrived, Old Mrs. Han had tightly restrained herself from pulling her away to discuss wedding dates.

They barely started dating; she didn't want to scare her off.

If she did, Han Zhuoling would have nowhere to look for another girlfriend.

Things thankfully went well when he brought her home.

Everyone chatted a bit more after lunch, then left the house during the late afternoon to let the two elders rest.

Because Han Zhuofeng did not come, Lin Liye brought her own chauffeur.

At the gate, Han Xijin and Shen Nuo left first.

Han Zhuoli and Lu Man said their goodbyes to Lin Liye and the others.

After they departed, Lin Liye said to Han Zhuoling, "You send Xiaoya home. The chauffeur came with me."

"Okay." Han Zhuoling did not insist.

Han Dongping could have left earlier, but he purposely took his own sweet time walking around, refusing to leave.

Chapter 1882: Stop Harboring Hopes

Based on his actions today, Han Zhuoling could make out Han Dongping's intentions.

He didn't bother himself with his parents' matter, so he left with Shi Xiaoya.

Nonetheless, he gave a call to Lin Liye's chauffeur after he got into the car. "Pay attention to Madam. Remember to protect her if she and Sir get into an argument. I'll take responsibility no matter what happens, so don't hesitate."

The chauffeur nodded. "Rest assured, I understand."

Hanging up, Han Zhuoling saw Shi Xiaoya's curiosity and told her, "My mom's been full of self-reproach because of the issue of my previous marriage. She felt that she didn't persist all the way through, allowing my dad to make use of my marriage for other gains."

"It actually wasn't her fault. Back then, I thought marriage was unnecessary, and if they needed me to marry, I'd just do it. Who the bride was didn't matter to me. The divorce afterward also did not affect me at all, be it emotionally or physically. Frankly, I was partly responsible for the breakdown of that marriage too. My thoughtlessness had upset her."

Which was why, when Xia Yixin went around complaining about being neglected and sidelined in her marriage after the divorce, exaggerating and pinning all the blame on Han Zhuoling, he'd made no comments nor attempts to stop her despite knowing about it.

"Back then, I didn't know how to love, nor had I met someone who could move my heart. So I'd assumed love was frivolous." Han Zhuoling reached out and grabbed Shi Xiaoya's hand. "I only understood these after I met you."

"It's my good fortune." Shi Xiaoya entwined her hand with his.

It could be said that she met Han Zhuoling at the right time.

If she'd met him earlier, he'd have been married and wouldn't have spared a glance at her, much less have had the chance to realize he liked her.

Going back further in time, he didn't even know what love was.

And now—it was just the right time.

"I'm the lucky one," Han Zhuoling emphasized, going back to the subject at hand. "Back to the topic, ever since my divorce, Mom has kind of been separated from Dad. She'd never again allow him to make use of my or my brother's marriages to benefit himself, nor allow him to interfere in any of our matters. So they had a massive fight."

"At the time, I could see that she really didn't want to be with Dad anymore, so I brought her here to stay with me. My brother's at home with her usually." Han Zhuoling roughly explained the situation.

He wanted to marry Shi Xiaoya, so he had to let her know his circumstance sooner or later.

"Uncle's still around just now. Is he planning to make up with Auntie?" she asked.

Han Zhuoling laughed. "The Han Family men are faithful to their marriage, no matter how bad they might be in certain aspects, and that includes my dad. He's trying to reconcile but can't get over his pride. Mom's no longer the same as she was in the past, always letting him have his way. After so many years, she's long felt disappointed, so how would she care about his pride? If Dad really wished to reconcile, he can give up hope given his attitude today."

Shi Xiaoya smiled. "I seem to have grasped an important point."

Han Zhuoling raised a brow in a silent question.

Shi Xiaoya couldn't help snickering, and Han Zhuoling squeezed her hand. "Do tell."

"You said that Han Family men are faithful to their marriage, no matter how bad they might be in certain aspects. That includes you!"

Chapter 1883: Taking Advantage

"So that's the point you caught?" Han Zhuoling held back his laugh.

Shi Xiaoya then realized their relationship had just begun and they were not at the marriage stage.

The future is hard to predict, yet she already started planning for marriage.

In truth, she had immersed herself in the role.

Imagining marrying Han Zhuoling and thinking about his words made her incredibly happy.

"So what?" Shi Xiaoya held his hand and gave up denying it. "I wish to be with you all the way and never see you marrying someone else in the end. I naturally want to be with you forever since I'm with you."

Who dates with the aim of breaking up eventually?

Of course, those playing the field didn't count.

Han Zhuoling suddenly tightened his grip on her hand. "No way I'd be with other women."

Not even a glance for them. He's completely uninterested.

Being able to meet Shi Xiaoya in this life was his ultimate luck.

If he had not met her, he would probably be a bachelor his whole life.

"We'll start looking for a time to marry after the New Year," Han Zhuoling said.

"I may be talking about marriage, but I definitely don't mean to force you into it!" Han Zhuoling's urgency was as if she'd pressed for matrimony.

"Of course you're not forcing me, whatever are you thinking?" Han Zhuoling glanced at her in mirth.

"Yesterday, Auntie was clearly the one baldly stating that we should start discussing dates after the New Year."

Shi Xiaoya: "..."

Her mother's words were clearly an excuse.

Even she could read between the lines. Han Zhuoling was so clever, so how could he not understand?

He was clearly taking advantage of her mother's words.

However, she was glad that Han Zhuoling had that intention.

Meanwhile, at the doorway of the Han family home, the chauffeur hung up the call from Han Zhuoling and heard Han Dongping tell Lin Liye coolly, "Get in the car."

Lin Liye glanced at him in disdain and scoffed.

Get into whose car!

Having lived with Han Dongping for so many decades, Lin Liye knew that Han Dongping was trying to reconcile.

But with his current attitude and how he'd behaved in the house?

Dream on!

She spoke directly to the chauffeur. "Get in, go!"

With that, she boarded the vehicle and closed the door with a mighty "bang."

The chauffeur hurriedly followed.

Han Dongping was about to open the door when Lin Liye swiftly locked it, at the same time rushing the chauffeur. "Quickly!"

In the end, Han Dongping could only stand and watch as Lin Liye's car drove away.

That woman, how rebellious she is!

The next day, Lu Man reported to the theater with her script.

As a newbie performing in a stage play for the first time, Lu Man turned up an hour before schedule.

Even Xu Jiashan was not yet here.

"Ms. Lu, you're here!" The workers in the theater were much older, so they were not shy upon seeing Lu Man.

When Lu Man came here for the first time, Xu Jiashan had also brought her on a tour around the theater and introduced her to the people here.

And because there were too many of them, Lu Man might not remember all of them, but everyone had a deep impression of her.

Afterward, to better situate herself with performing on stage, Lu Man not only went to watch plays frequently but she also reported to the theater daily to watch other groups of performers practice in order to learn from it.

Because she came so regularly, she became acquainted with the workers here.

The daily exchange of pleasantries made everyone on good terms with each other.

Chapter 1884: Making Things Difficult

Many had a favorable impression of Lu Man because she was hard-working, good-natured, and polite.

"Uncle Wu," Lu Man called out.

“You’re always the earliest to arrive,” Uncle Wu said, smiling.

“I came to take a look around. I’m a rookie, so I don’t want others to wait for me.”

Lu Man was Han Zhuoli’s wife, the future mistress of the Han Family.

Many knew about this, including Uncle Wu.

But knowing was one thing.

He saw how Lu Man was never arrogant or pretentious but rather was treating herself as a rookie and not demanding special privileges, or slacking off because of her position or by using money.

Thus, Uncle Wu really admired Lu Man.

Making sure no one was around, he then waved Lu Man towards him.

Lu Man walked over, intrigued. Uncle Wu whispered to her, “You gotta be careful. There’s this Wu Jingli in your performing team who’s against you. She’s considered a senior in the theater industry, and she’s leading a few greenhorns who form part of her clique. They were discussing how to make you back off. I don’t know what they’re planning, but it probably won’t be too bad with Director Xu around. But you’ve got to take note also.”

Lu Man nodded. She knew Wu Jingli didn’t like her.

“Understood. Thanks, Uncle Wu.” Lu Man smiled.

“It’s nothing. I can’t help you with anything else apart from giving you a heads-up.”

“Still, thanks again, or I won’t even know a thing.” Waving goodbye, Lu Man went to the stage area, reading her script silently off-stage and going through the various ways of interpretations she’d thought up in the past few days in her mind.

People started trickling in not long after.

The main leads weren’t here. They would have a final run-through before the actual performance.

They were skilled actors from the entertainment industry who had plenty more jobs to do, so they clearly couldn’t keep practicing here every day.

Lu Man was memorizing her lines when she spotted Wu Jingli and a handful of junior actors enter.

She was surrounded by the three juniors, and though the number was small, they tried hard to create an atmosphere like countless people were fawning over her.

A few other performers in their play entered consecutively.

They saw Lu Man and said their hellos to her. “You came so early?”

“I came early to get a feel of the atmosphere to better get into character,” Lu Man said. “Plus, it’s my first time in a stage play, so it’s better to prepare early.”

“There are so few young actors who are as professional as you nowadays,” a senior in the same play remarked.

The three juniors tagging around Wu Jingli didn't like hearing that.

As if they weren't dedicated to their jobs.

Implying that Lu Man came beforehand while they came late.

But they were being narrow-minded.

It was simply an observation.

There were plenty of unprofessional and undedicated young actors within the industry, yet they chose to see the comment as pertaining to themselves.

"Everyone's here!" Xu Jiashan strode over, smiling.

"Director Xu," they chimed in greeting.

"This time, we'll go through the parts separately in detail, without transition. Each of you will run through with your partners scene-by-scene," Xu Jiashan said.

Coincidentally, Lu Man's first scene was opposite Wu Jingli.

Everyone left to prepare, and one of the junior actors tagging behind Wu Jingli, called Sun Xiutong, whispered to Wu Jingli, "Teacher Wu, can she match your acting? You'll have to show her what's called real acting."

Chapter 1885: You Can't

"That's right," a male actor behind Wu Jingli chipped in. "She doesn't even know what level she's in, yet she's claiming to be a rookie and posturing herself lowly, all on top of coming early and studying every day. What a good act she puts on. If she really felt she was a rookie, she wouldn't have snapped up this important role!"

"Just this point alone highlights how she's so thick-skinned. It's useless no matter how she acts humble. She doesn't have the skill yet likes to steal roles," another follower, Xu Yuting, said.

Wu Jingli's face was dark. "I shall see how bad she acts later on."

"Even though her acting is surely bad, Teacher, you'll still have to act opposite her and help her get in character. It's so unfair!" Sun Xiutong goaded.

Were they really speaking up for Wu Jingli?

Obviously not!

They were just green-eyed.

They were around the same age, but because of Han Zhuoli, Lu Man could pick and choose any roles.

Meanwhile, until now, they could only tag behind Wu Jingli, cozying up and currying favor with her, and only acting in minor roles nobody remembers and earning a salary that's barely enough to survive in B City.

Such unfairness, how could they not be envious?

But because they knew of her privileged background, they didn't dare make trouble for her outright and instigated Wu Jingli instead.

Did Wu Jingli not know Lu Man's background?

Of course she did.

But Lu Man had infringed onto her interests, and Wu Jingli was determined to fight for it as long as she didn't threaten her own interest.

Wu Jingli and the three approached Lu Man.

"Teacher Wu," Lu Man greeted automatically.

Wu Jingli gave a half-hearted smile and said, "The first scene seems to be ours."

"That's right," Lu Man replied.

"Here's the flow. We go through our lines first, then go onstage and act it once through. Everyone will follow the script and play out the scenes onstage accordingly. When we're not onstage, we'll be preparing backstage. The director will correct us when we're performing onstage," Wu Jingli explained.

Lu Man nodded her understanding.

Wu Jingli glanced at the script in her hand. "Have you memorized your lines? We're the first ones up, we don't have much time to prepare. Don't keep making mistakes onstage later, or the actors after us can't go out. It'd be like a domino effect, with you alone affecting everyone else after us and wasting everyone's time."

"I've memorized them," Lu Man said.

As she had already said, she's a greenhorn and her acting had areas for improvement. But as long as the elements could be controlled by her, like the fundamental jobs like memorizing lines, she'd complete them perfectly.

Wu Jingli glanced at Lu Man, not confident in her words.

"Alright, let us go through it once," Wu Jingli said.

All of them went backstage. The three junior actors also had minor parts in the first scene.

The three used their scripts, and Wu Jingli wanted to as well.

But Lu Man did not use hers. She remembered all her lines.

Wu Jingli saw that and a streak of competitiveness arose within her. She couldn't lose to Lu Man in this aspect, could she?

She'd memorized her lines too anyway, and so she put away the script.

"You can't act like this," Wu Jingli interrupted Lu Man.

"Then how should I act?" Lu Man, on the other hand, was genuinely asking for guidance.

She'd managed to decipher three different ways of acting this scene and had tried them out a few times, even dragging Han Zhuoli to act opposite her at home.

Chapter 1886: Understanding

In the end, she decided that this method was the most suitable one in her eyes.

Of course, Wu Jingli had a richer acting experience, especially in stage plays.

The acting method for stage plays was very different from that in films and television dramas.

Lu Man's acting experience so far was mostly in films.

Although she'd participated in the Chinese Arts Championships and acted live onstage, the judges assessed her acting mostly from the angle of acting for films and television dramas.

Hence, she was thinking that perhaps Wu Jingli had a better acting method that was more suitable for a stage performance.

That was why Lu Man sought her advice humbly.

Wu Jingli said, "You're exaggerating too much. You're acting as a dance hostess, not a streetwalker. Why are you acting in such a seductive manner? Anyway, Man Yun's character is actually very resolute and upright. In the end, she was a heroic woman who, for the sake of her family and country, did not fear death. How can you act her out as an evil woman, so proud and arrogant, making her look like a villain?"

"But in the first half of the script, she seemed just like a villain." Lu Man explained her understanding of the character. "She was the top hostess in Paramount and was also Chen Dashuai's lover at the same time. So many people were unhappy with her and mocked her for making a living off of entertaining others and prostituting herself. But it was precisely because of Man Yun's pride and resoluteness deep down that other people stopped mocking her."

"She admired Chen Dashuai. Chen Dashuai gave his all to serve his country. She admired him for his generosity and his loyalty. This is actually also a foreshadowing of her character, which explains why she could be so courageous as to tie herself up with bombs and throw herself to perish with the enemy. Actually, this is already pointed out right at the start. It was precisely because she had this patriotism in her heart even when she was just a dance hostess who made a living off of entertaining people. That's why she willingly stayed by Chen Dashuai's side."

"It was also precisely because of her unyielding resoluteness that she would not admit defeat to anyone. That's why the script initially portrayed her to be so obnoxious and defiant when she was being mocked by other people. She just wanted to teach a lesson to those people who knew nothing except resorting to petty schemes all day long. She did not like to give them face and just embarrassed them directly."

"There were scholars who criticize them for wasting their lives in a drunken stupor. Some female students looked down on her, and her colleagues were jealous of her. But in Man Yun's eyes, these people were all very ridiculous. Since the country was facing a crisis, the scholars should just do their part for the country. Why were they coming over to criticize people like them who were living a life they had no other choice but to live? As for the female students, Man Yun simply ignored them. If not out of

desperation, who would choose to perform on stage and make a living off of entertaining others? She wanted to go and study too.”

“As for her colleagues, she found them even more ridiculous. The war was raging on every day outside, but they couldn’t sense it at all and only knew to compete against each other within this narrow world of theirs.”

Lu Man really knew this script inside out.

People who did not watch until the end would probably detest Man Yun, but when they see Man Yun’s end, they would then feel sad for her and turn their feelings of contempt into admiration.

Man Yun actually did not appear on stage often in the whole stage play.

After all, stage plays have a limited duration, and most of the scenes would be left for the male and female leads to act in.

But the contrast between Man Yun’s initial and ending portrayal was way too strong.

In the first part, she made people hate her and wish for her death. In the last part, she made people love her and wish that she had lived on.

When Lu Man saw that, she was moved immediately, and that was why she chose this role.

“Man Yun’s character will only give the audience a different feeling between the start and end, but her personality will not change. She could ignore those invaders and seek death valiantly, and she could also ignore those people whom she looked down on and face them resolutely,” Lu Man said. “This is my understanding of this character.”

Chapter 1887: Don’t Seem Like a Newcomer

Wu Jingli was a little stunned. She stared at Lu Man for a moment, unable to speak.

After Lu Man said that, she actually felt that Lu Man’s understanding of this character was even deeper than hers.

If it was acted according to what Wu Jingli said, perhaps there might not be any errors.

But if it was acted according to what Lu Man described, it could leave a deep impression.

Of course, this was only in theory.

The important thing was whether Lu Man had the skill to artfully perform this style of acting.

If Lu Man’s acting could not make the cut, it would only turn into a disastrous performance in the end and ruin a good character like Man Yun.

Hence, she might as well follow what she said and act it in a safe way.

“Why are you like this? Teacher Wu kindly explained the role to you yet you don’t want to listen and just think you are right,” Sun Xiutong said unhappily. “For how many years has Teacher Wu been acting, and for how many years have you been acting? You called yourself a newcomer, but when Teacher Wu is guiding you, you don’t want to listen. The things you do don’t seem like what a newcomer would do!”

“Exactly. Based on what you said, Teacher Wu, with so many years of experience in acting, can’t even compare to a student like you? You only joined halfway, so what do you know?!” Xu Yuting chimed in.

“Every person has a different understanding of the character and how to act it out. Teacher Wu has her own understanding, and the outcome of her performance would be even better if she acted based on her own understanding. But I have my own understanding. Even when the director directs, the director only makes some adjustments to the details of the actor’s acting to steer it in the direction of the big picture. Yet the director won’t hold your hand every step of the way to teach you how you should act, or how you should not act. If that were the case, the characters that everyone acts out would all be cut from the same mold,” Lu Man said.

“I am not disrespecting Teacher Wu. The things that Teacher Wu knows and can perform, I don’t know, and I can’t do them. If my method of acting is not suitable, then I can make changes. You can’t possibly not let me try at all and just listen to what other people say for the rest of my life, without having my own understanding at all. That way, I will never become a good actress.”

“You really know how to talk, huh,” Gao Sheng said sarcastically. “Based on what you said, you don’t even need to go to school already. I think you probably don’t even listen to what your teachers teach you in school.”

“The teachers in our school have also never told me how I should not act. They would let us freely explore the role and then point out where we are lacking before letting us continue to experiment with the role and how we should go about correcting the flaws. They won’t directly tell us the answer they have in mind,” Lu Man said in a cold voice.

If other people treated her politely, she naturally responded politely.

But they were clearly making things difficult for her. She would not keep tolerating it either.

Wu Jingli was already feeling uncomfortable deep down just because Lu Man actually had a better understanding than her.

Man Yun was the character she wanted to play originally. Aside from how the role got snatched away by Lu Man, she also realized that even when it came to the understanding of the character, she seemed to also lose to a newcomer like her.

This had nothing to do with their backgrounds.

Over here, they were all actors, and they were only differentiated by seniority between seniors and newcomers.

But even in this regard, Lu Man actually won.

Wu Jingli was a senior who had more years of acting experience. Yet when Lu Man was facing her, she actually did not show any humility and even refused to listen to her.

This made Wu Jingli very unhappy.

Lu Man was thinking that she could not compare to her!

At this moment, a staff came over and said, "Hello, Teachers. How are your preparations coming along? We can start now. Director Xu is waiting outside."

"We can start now," Wu Jingli said.

Just when they were about to go up on stage, she hastily warned Lu Man again, "You do make a good point and have a reasonable understanding of the character, but you must see if you actually have the ability to act it out well. If you can't manage it properly, it will only ruin a good role like Man Yun. People must be self-aware and know their own capabilities. Don't have high standards when you can't perform up to that standard, or challenge yourself to something you won't be able to accomplish."

Chapter 1888: making Presumptions Based on Seniority

"Do as I say, do you hear me?" Wu Jingli said in a low voice, then warned, "I am more experienced than you. The things that I tell you won't be wrong."

Lu Man did not say anything. Wu Jingli was just making presumptions based on her seniority.

She was being unreasonable, so she started presuming that she was right just because she was more senior. She did not even care about shame at all.

They were already starting to rush them outside, so Wu Jingli could only throw a warning glare at her before going up on stage.

After a short while, it would be Lu Man's turn to go up on stage.

As it was the first rehearsal, they did not change into their stage costumes but wore their own casual clothes.

In that way, the effect of their acting would naturally not be as good.

Luckily, Lu Man had considered this situation. She did not wear a cheongsam, but since it was also winter time, she wore a tan camel wool gown.

The gown had a deep V-neck design and was open back, so Lu Man paired it with a black base sweater according to the recommended look provided by the clothing brand.

The dress was designed to cover the buttocks, resembling an inverted A-line, reaching slightly below the knees.

This kind of design not only accentuated the beautiful figures of women, but the narrow hem of the gown also prevented one from taking big steps when walking. Thus, involuntarily, one would walk in a graceful manner. This gave off a similar feel like that when wearing a cheongsam but in a different form.

Lu Man walked in flamboyantly and seductively. The way she spoke her lines were also so willful and wild.

She was so reckless, arrogant, and conceited because she was the top dance hostess. As a strong-headed character, she did not hide that about herself, and Lu Man expressed it all out.

On the audience seats below, including Xu Jiashan and all the production staff, they were all blown away by Lu Man's performance.

They did not speak and watched silently, as if Lu Man had transported them back to that war-ravaged era.

Smoke billowed everywhere in the surroundings outside, yet in their small world, songs and dance played on and on.

That lady called Man Yun seemed to have been revived and was standing right in front of their very eyes.

“Stop!” Wu Jingli raised her voice and stopped Lu Man’s performance.

Lu Man had not even finished saying her line, yet she had no choice but to stop.

The performance suddenly stopped, and even the audience was taken aback.

It was such an enjoyable performance at first, and Xu Jiashan felt really excited watching it.

Now that it suddenly stopped, Xu Jiashan was unhappy as well.

He frowned.

Wu Jingli was heard saying unhappily to Lu Man, “Lu Man, what did I tell you? Didn’t I tell you not to act in this way? You are a newcomer, so why do you just refuse to listen to the opinions of others?”

“You can’t master this angle and completely can’t control your acting, so why must you insist on acting it like this? If you do this, how are we supposed to act together with you?”

Wu Jingli’s three students watched the drama unfold gloatingly at the side.

“Did I act badly?” Lu Man asked.

“What are you even acting? Which person sitting there isn’t more experienced than you, yet you have the cheek to ask if you acted badly? You’re really making a fool of yourself showing off before experts. I told you, it’s not suitable if you act it that way. Stop wasting everyone’s time here,” Wu Jingli said without giving Lu Man face at all.

The others were shocked by what Wu Jingli said for a moment.

This... They did not think that way.

They all thought that Lu Man acted very well, and it was hard to believe that this was actually a performance by a student.

Her understanding of the character, and her artfulness when acting, were all masterfully executed.

She was not deliberately trying to steal the scene; her stage presence was just too strong.

The moment Lu Man came up on stage with her seductive and flamboyant demeanor, she was able to attract the gazes of other people over to her subconsciously.

Actually, if she wore a cheongsam during the official performance, this kind of aura would become even stronger.

Chapter 1889: Target

They also finally realized what Xu Jiashan meant previously when he said that, as long as Lu Man was on stage, she would very easily draw people's attention to her.

Her presence was too strong and could indeed easily turn the people around her into side characters.

Without a similar level of aura to match with it, it would be very difficult to outshine Lu Man.

It was just that, Wu Jingli had been their colleague of many years, so no one said anything.

Xu Jiashan frowned and asked, "What's going on? Teacher Wu, you discussed with Lu Man about the performance before this?"

Before waiting for Wu Jingli to say anything, Xu Yuting cut in and said, "Just now when we were rehearsing backstage, Teacher Wu already said that it was inappropriate for Lu Man to act in this way, and she told her how she should act. But Lu Man did not listen to her at all. She is way too arrogant, she doesn't even care about the teacher's guidance."

Xu Jiashan threw a glance at Xu Yuting, and Xu Yuting suddenly felt guilty and stopped talking.

How would Xu Jiashan not understand?

The young people could not stand how Lu Man was also a newcomer but could act in such an important role.

Wu Jingli wanted to act as Man Yun but did not get the role, so she started targeting Lu Man.

He did not care about their targeting in private, but it should not influence the quality of the play.

Xu Jiashan held his temper back and asked, "Then how did Teacher Wu tell Lu Man to act before this?"

Wu Jingli felt a little regretful at this moment.

She had been stunned by Lu Man's performance just now as well.

She'd stopped her performance in her panic.

But now that Xu Jiashan asked, Wu Jingli instantly felt that what she said previously really was not as good as the way Lu Man acted it out.

Sun Xiutong seized the chance to say the method that Wu Jingli mentioned earlier on.

Xu Jiashan raised his eyebrow and smiled. "Teacher Wu's method is not bad too."

Wu Jingli's anxious heart could finally relax, and she threw a gloating look at Lu Man.

"Lu Man, tell me, how did you understand this character?" Xu Jiashan said.

Lu Man then explained her understanding of Man Yun's character.

Xu Jiashan nodded and said, "Indeed, for Man Yun's character, I agree with Lu Man's view more. This script was crafted by me and the scriptwriter. With regards to understanding the characters in the play, I believe no one would be more clear on it than me."

"I am very shocked that Lu Man could actually reach such a deep understanding of this character." Xu Jiashan smiled and said to Lu Man, "Don't tell me you memorized the whole script inside out?"

Lu Man smiled embarrassedly and did not speak.

Xu Jiashan's words clearly indicated that Lu Man's method was better.

"Teacher Wu, your method is not wrong, but Lu Man's method is more suitable for Man Yun's character here." Xu Jiashan could be said to have given Wu Jingli enough face.

Wu Jingli smiled stiffly before saying, "What Lu Man said is really quite good, but I'm worried that she is still young and inexperienced, so she might not be able to artfully act it out because she could very easily overdo it. One must know that plays are not filmed with cameras and one can't edit and cut scenes out. Perhaps she might be acting it quite decently now, but when the time comes for her to act in front of such a huge audience, her mentality might be affected. If she acted badly then, it might just hugely reduce the quality of our whole play."

"I was just giving Lu Man a more stable method of performing," Wu Jingli said. "At the same time, I also hope that Lu Man will stop thinking about herself only and spare a thought for the whole team as well."

"Teacher Wu," Lu Man called out.

It was fine if Wu Jingli targeted her. Lu Man didn't care at all about it.

Ever since she'd stepped into this industry, she had met her fair share of such people and matters.

Chapter 1890: The Final Decision

She had never been scared of these things.

If there was one person against her, she took one on; if two came, she would take two on!

It was fine if Wu Jingli targeted her, but she came up with such a lofty-sounding excuse and even dragged the whole team into this. In the end, she was doing this for her own selfish reasons, but she sugarcoated her selfish interests to make it sound nice, which was really disgusting.

If Wu Jingli dared to just admit it directly, she would be competing with her openly, so she would have actually looked well on Wu Jingli.

But given Wu Jingli's lofty-sounding demeanor now.

Since she was so prideful, Lu Man would not be polite with her anymore.

When Wu Jingli saw Lu Man's reaction, she suddenly had a bad feeling.

Lu Man then said, "Teacher Wu, the so-called stable method that you said is actually just an unexciting performance. It would not be able to bring out the brilliance of Man Yun's character completely."

"Although Man Yun is not the lead role, she is a very brilliant character. Or else, Teacher Wu would not keep clutching on to this role and still not be able to get over it," Lu Man said.

Everyone knew that Wu Jingli wanted this role.

But this was the first time it had been said out so explicitly by Lu Man.

“What nonsense are you saying!” Wu Jingli shouted furiously.

Lu Man did not squabble with her over that and continued saying, “The method that you said will just make Man Yun’s character become plain and normal and make the whole play boring, bringing a lackluster performance to the audience. All our hard work and effort is for the purpose of making a play successful and making it receive recognition from the audience. If we are not capable enough, we should try our best to improve ourselves to reach our goals. It is not for the sake of seeking safety and stability that we should just choose an average method that can get us by and then give the audience a defective performance.”

Wu Jingli’s face had already turned beet red. Lu Man had called her method a defective performance. Wasn’t she just saying that the method she proposed was not good enough?

“Since there is a better method, why should we present the method that is not as good to the audience?” Lu Man did not intend to give Wu Jingli any face.

She respected Wu Jingli like a senior, but Wu Jingli did not respect her, so she couldn’t blame Lu Man for this.

“Besides, I have the confidence that I can act well. I also have the confidence that I can stabilize my mentality and won’t be affected during the actual performance,” Lu Man said.

Sun Xiutong pursed her lips and said, “You make it sound so nice. There is only one chance in a play, which is as good as acting out a scene in one take. If you messed up then, you messed up. If you mess up your own part, do you expect the whole team to shoulder that burden?”

Lu Man would not be bothered with her.

Did it matter no matter how much Sun Xiutong spoke?

Lu Man just ignored Sun Xiutong and turned to face the audience.

Sun Xiutong got so angry that she almost stomped her feet.

“Director Xu.” Lu Man decided to find the one who could actually have the final say. “Can I act according to my understanding of the character?”

“You can.” Xu Jiashan made the final decision with his words. “Just act in this way. I believe in the stability of your acting.”

Xu Jiashan turned to look at everyone and said, “You all might not have seen Lu Man perform live before. Previously, when the top four schools in the country went to compete with the exchange team, I went there as a judge. Lu Man’s performance was very stable and her stage presence was great. I believe she has the ability to interpret and act out the character she is in charge of.”

“Alright, that’s settled.” Xu Jiashan did not give Wu Jingli and the others a chance to continue speaking. “I’ll talk to you all about your positions and where you should walk on stage.”

Xu Jiashan watched their performance once just now and pointed out some parts where they needed to improve. "Let's rehearse again now."

The first scene started all over again. Lu Man acted without any problems, and she'd memorized her lines very well. She did not falter at all and sounded very natural, just like how she conversed with other people usually.