

Priceless Baby 491

Chapter 491: Going Too Far

The nurse knew who Qi Liya was, but had referred to her with her bed number in accordance with the hospital's special privacy protection measures for celebrities. "Ms. Qi, your medical report is out. We would like to ask someone from your family to go over it with the doctor."

Xu Xiyan asked, "Ms. Qi, is no one from your family around?"

"Xiao Ke looks after me, but she had other things to attend to this afternoon."

A wounded look passed over Qi Liya's face, but it was gone before anyone could catch it. She'd had a falling out with her family several years ago, when she had insisted on going to Peijing with Peng Sicheng to further her career, and had not been in contact with her family ever since.

Her assistant, Xiao Ke, was the only one who genuinely cared about her well-being now.

Since there were no family members around, Xu Xiyan decided it was time for her to step up to the plate. She volunteered herself.

"How about this then—I'll stand in for your family today, and get the report for you. How's that? Do I have the honor?"

"Thank you, Jing Xi."

Qi Liya's heart overflowed with warmth; she had not felt this in a long, long time. She was grateful to Jing Xi for being such a good and sincere friend.

"Everything will be all right. Why don't you take a nap, Ms. Qi? I'll be right back."

Xu Xiyan gave her a small, reassuring smile before following the nurse out the room.

The nurse led Xu Xiyan to the office of Qi Liya's doctor, who offered the medical report to Xu Xiyan. She read it, and was stunned.

"Doctor, this has to be a mistake. Are you sure about this?"

Xu Xiyan could not believe what she had just read. The results on the report could not be true: Qi Liya had a tumor in her uterus.

She knew now why the nurse had asked for a family member, instead of handing the report to Qi Liya straight away; the nurse was probably worried that Qi Liya would not be able to take the news.

The male doctor pushed his glasses up the bridge of his nose and said gravely, "As you can see, we discovered a tumor in Ms. Qi's uterus. We decided it would be best to discuss her condition with her family first."

"Is it benign?"

"I'm sorry to say that the tumor is malignant."

“What should we do?”

Xu Xiyuan's heart sank like a stone. This was going to be a massive blow to Qi Liya.

“We can perform a surgery and remove the tumor, but if that doesn't work, we may have to remove her uterus. Time is of the essence. We ask that her family members discuss this with her and try to persuade her to go for the surgery as soon as possible.”

Xu Xiyuan reeled at the news; she felt as though her scalp had just burst into flames. What the doctor had just described was the absolute worst-case scenario.

A tumor in the uterus... malignant... may have to remove the entire uterus?

Xu Xiyuan's thoughts were in a jumble. She wanted to ask the doctor: Do you know have any idea what it means for a woman to have her uterus removed?

It means that she'll never be able to have children of her own. Ever.

Xu Xiyuan walked out of the doctor's office with a heavy heart. She felt nauseous. The medical report in her hands seemed to burn her like a hot potato.

She thought despairingly: What should I do? How do I break the bad news to Qi Liya?

Back in the doctor's office, the doctor, whose surname was Xia, exchanged a look with the nurse after Xu Xiyuan left.

The nurse asked doubtfully, “Dr. Xia, are you sure about this? What if the hospital finds out?”

“I'll take responsibility if anything goes wrong. What are you afraid of?”

Dr. Xia removed his mask and took a sip of his tea.

The look on the doctor's face was one of complete disinterest. To him, fabricating a patient's medical report was a trivial, insignificant matter.

“But that's Qi Liya, the superstar...”

The nurse was a gentle soul. She was a fan of Qi Liya, and enjoyed watching her shows.

But now her idol had been admitted to the hospital, and instead of helping her, her supervisor was forcing her to deceive the actress and rob her of her future as a mother. The nurse did not have the heart to do it.

“So what if she's a superstar? Big deal! There are only two kinds of people in a hospital: the sick, and the healthy.”

It was a huge risk, but Dr. Xia was willing to take it because he would be handsomely compensated for it.

“But Ms. Qi doesn't have uterine cancer. Removing her uterus when there's nothing wrong with it... isn't that going too far?”

Chapter 492: An Irresistible Offer

The nurse was just an intern, fresh out of college. She had never seen corruption and shady dealings up-close before this, and the thought of getting involved in an evil scheme scared her.

Dr. Xia had picked her to be his accomplice precisely because he knew she was timid. Fresh graduates like her were the easiest to control.

“Just do as you're told, and shut up. I'm warning you: you're already in this with me. There's no backing out for you now,” growled Dr. Xia menacingly.

And then, not wanting to scare the nurse away, he hastily added in a gentle voice, “Don't worry, I have it all worked out. The big boss behind this will be paying us handsomely. Even if this gets out, we'll just say it was a medical accident. If someone finds out about this before the surgery, we'll say it was a diagnostic error. Got it?”

Dr. Xia had received a lot of “benefits” from the big boss pulling the strings. The big boss was offering him an astronomical amount of money; he could slave away at the hospital for the next several years, and still come nowhere close to earning that much money.

Aside from the money, the big boss would also be recommending the doctor to a famous hospital abroad. This was an irresistible offer for Dr. Xia.

Dr. Xia sat in his chair, dreaming of fame and fortune. He did not realize that Xu Xiyan had recorded everything he had just said.

Xu Xiyan had returned to the doctor's office to ask him something, and had accidentally overheard the shocking revelation from outside the door.

Now that it was clear that someone was trying to sabotage Qi Liya, Xu Xiyan decided it was better not to blow the whistle on the doctor before she knew exactly what was going on.

She stealthily moved away from the doctor's office and returned to Qi Liya's room. Taking a deep breath, she opened the door.

Qi Liya saw that Xu Xiyan had returned. “Jing Xi, thanks for doing this for me. Do you have the report?”

Xu Xiyan had a plan in mind, but she knew that she would have to pretend to play along with the schemers for now. She had to break the cruel news to Qi Liya, even if it was fake; the masterminds behind the scheme expected her to go for the surgery, after all.

“I have it.”

“What does it say? Show me.”

“I don't think you should read it.”

Xu Xiyan hid the report behind her. Qi Liya saw the unhappy look on Xu Xiyan's face, and the way she seemed to be struggling with herself. Her heart sank. She had a bad feeling about the report.

“What's wrong? Show me! Give it here!”

Xu Xiyan gave in to Qi Liya's insistent demands. She handed the report over to her.

Qi Liya saw what was written on the report. She was stunned; she felt as though she had been struck by lightning. When she recovered, she gave a loud cry and said, her voice shrill, "How is this possible? Jing Xi, tell me, please, how is this possible? Why is this happening to me?"

"Ms. Qi..."

Xu Xiyan did not want the news to affect Qi Liya's recovery. She grabbed hold of her hand and said comfortingly, "Ms. Qi, stay calm. This is curable."

"Tell me the truth, Jing Xi. What did the doctor say?"

Qi Liya wasn't stupid. She knew how to read, and the report said that she had a malignant tumor. It was right there on the report, plain as day.

A malignant tumor was basically cancer, wasn't it?

Why? Why were the gods always trying to rob her of her happiness?

They had robbed her of love when she had been lonely and desperate.

Now that she was fully invested in her work and had a successful career, the gods had decided to play another cruel joke on her.

Were the gods taking away her health, too?

"The doctor said that it's malignant and has to be operated on as soon as possible. If necessary, they may have to remove your uterus." Xu Xiyan clenched her fingers into fists as she said this. Her tone was one of righteous anger.

Xu Xiyan was determined to protect Qi Liya at all costs, but in order to do that she had to keep her in the dark for now.

"Remove my... uterus?"

Qi Liya's hands began to tremble. Her lips quivered as she fought to keep her tears at bay.

"Ms. Qi, don't let this get to you. It may end up being just a simple, straightforward removal of the tumor. What's important is that you don't let this get you down."

Chapter 493: You Better Be Grateful

The only thing Xu Xiyan could do now was to try her best to comfort Qi Liya.

"I know. Jing Xi, why don't you come back another day? I need some time alone."

Qi Liya put the report down, and lifted her empty eyes to the ceiling. She was extremely depressed; a veil of sorrow hung over her.

"Sure. I'll be going now. Call me if you need anything."

Xu Xiyan squeezed Qi Liya's hand. She left the hospital room with a troubled heart.

Outside the room, she bumped into Xiao Ke, who had just returned. Xu Xiyan pulled the assistant to a secluded corner and briefed her on the situation. After that, she left the hospital.

Qi Liya was now alone in her hospital room. Her thoughts were in a jumble, and her heart ached terribly.

She was overcome with grief and sorrow. Tears streamed silently down her cheeks.

She was still young. She had only been in one romantic relationship. She had yet to find her one true love, marry him, and have children—was she really going to lose her womb, even before she'd had the chance to find true happiness?

Without her womb, was she still a complete woman?

How was she going to face the rest of her life?

Xu Xiyan sent a message to Huo Yunshen once she had left the hospital, telling him that she had to return to the set that afternoon because she had something to attend to.

Huo Yunshen texted her back: "Stay safe. I'll see you tonight."

Xu Xiyan drove to the studio lot and walked onto the set for "Red Sleeved Beauty."

As soon as she entered the set, she saw Wen Li distributing snack packets to the production crew on behalf of Xu Xinrou.

Wen Li saw Xu Xiyan had come, and made a show of turning the empty snack box upside down and shaking it. "Oh my, I'm so sorry, Jing Xi. I didn't expect you to be here today. President Huo bought snacks for everyone today, but it looks like we've run out!"

Wen Li had deliberately emphasized the words "President Huo" to let everyone know that Huo Jingtang was now Xu Xinrou's boyfriend. In other words, crossing her would mean crossing Huo Jingtang.

Xu Xiyan already knew all about it: after Huo Jingtang took over Yunhai Entertainment, the first thing he did was sign Xu Xinrou under the Yunhai Entertainment label.

Now that Xu Xinrou was part of Yunhai Entertainment, her status was almost equal to Qi Liya's.

"That's okay, thanks."

Xu Xiyan did not like the way they tried to gain small favors by distributing snacks.

She looked around the set, and saw Xu Xinrou sitting in a recliner, having her makeup touched up.

Xu Xinrou heard Xu Xiyan's voice, and signaled to the makeup artist to stop for a moment. She sat up and looked at Xu Xiyan. "I have an extra packet here, actually. You can have it, Jing Xi—catch!"

She tossed the snack packet in Xu Xiyan's direction without asking her whether she actually wanted it. The snack packet fell short; it dropped to the floor, right before Xu Xiyan's feet.

"Whoops," said Xu Xinrou. "My bad, it landed on the floor."

It was clear what she was really saying: "Go on, pick it up yourself!"

Xu Xiyan gave her an icy look. She knew that Xu Xinrou had meant for this to happen: she had deliberately thrown the snack onto the floor so that Xu Xiyan would have to pick it up like a shameless beggar.

Not picking it up would be equivalent to spitting in Xu Xinrou's face. Everyone on the set would think that she, Jing Xi, was acting like an arrogant diva.

Wen Li gleefully added fuel to the fire. "What are you waiting for, Jing Xi? Pick it up. These pastries are from overseas, President Huo had them couriered here to share with everyone. You can only buy them from overseas, so this is a rare privilege. Ms. Xinrou was kind enough to give you her share, so you better be grateful."

The last sentence—"you better be grateful"—was an explicit warning.

Everyone was now watching Xu Xiyan. She casually bent over and retrieved the snack packet from the floor. She examined the packaging.

"It looks delicious. Too bad I'm allergic to peanut butter. But I don't want to waste this, so how about you eat it, Assistant Wen? You gave everyone a packet, but it looks like you didn't save one for yourself!"

Chapter 494: His Deepest Secrets

Xu Xiyan immediately walked over to Wen Li, opening the pastry packaging along the way. By the time she reached the assistant, Xu Xiyan had already fished out the peanut butter cream pastry from inside the packet.

"Oh no, you eat it, Ms. Xinrou gave it to you," said Wen Li as she stared at the pastry in disgust. She did not want to look at anything Jing Xi had touched, let alone eat it.

"I know, but good things are meant to be shared, right?"

Xu Xiyan's smile was now firmly set on her face. "Assistant Wen, you've been so nice to me. Please, let me return the favor by feeding you!"

And then—

Right in front of everyone, Xu Xiyan forcefully stuffed the pastry into Wen Li's mouth, pressing it in with all her strength.

Xu Xiyan recalled Wen Li's snide remarks and disdainful looks, and wished the pastry had been dog poop instead.

Wen Li had not been quick enough to avoid Xu Xiyan. Her mouth was now stuffed full of cake. She tried to resist, but Xu Xiyan was stronger than she was: she smeared peanut butter and cream all over Wen Li's face.

Xu Xiyan released Wen Li and casually wiped her sticky fingers on the assistant's clothes, as though it was the most natural thing in the world. She patted Wen Li on the shoulder and said, "There we go. Please, enjoy the pastry, Assistant Wen. Thank you for the snack, Ms. Xu!"

Everyone watched in shock as Xu Xiyan leisurely sauntered back to the set to find the person responsible for the in-program ads.

"Pfft! Pfffffft..."

Wen Li shook off the peanut butter and cream from her face. In her fury, she forgot where she was and began ranting loudly to Xu Xinrou.

"Ms. Xinrou, did you see that?! She stuffed my mouth with food! That Jing Xi is too much, how dare she humiliate me in front of everyone. That means she has no respect for you, you know. We need to teach her a lesson, before she forgets she's from the Xu family, too."

"Assistant Wen, watch your tongue!"

Xu Xinrou shot Wen Li a look of warning, telling her to shut up. Jing Xi's insolent attitude towards Xu Xinrou was nothing new; like Wen Li, Xu Xinrou wanted badly to put Xu Xiyan in her place, but they had to be smart about it and do it in secret.

Wen Li glanced at the people around her and realized she had been too rash. She immediately clammed up.

Deep down, however, she continued to curse Xu Xiyan: Damn you, Jing Xi! Just you wait!

Xu Xinrou had wanted to embarrass Xu Xiyan in front of everyone, but the actress had turned the tables and bullied her assistant instead. It was a slap to the face for Xu Xinrou.

She would have to swallow her anger and resentment for now, and remember to avenge herself later.

Xu Xiyan found the crew responsible for the in-program ads. Once she'd changed into her costume and gotten her makeup done, it was time to begin shooting the ads.

The trend now was to insert the in-program ads seamlessly into the show to act as "commercial breaks" for viewers on online streaming sites.

It was much more convenient this way: the production crew would be able to film the ads on the set, and viewers tended to be much more receptive towards ads that were properly integrated into the show.

Xu Xiyan did not have many lines for her ads. They were easy to remember.

She completed all three of her in-program ads without a hitch. Before leaving the set, Xu Xiyan decided to look for the director, Huang Guoqiang.

Huang Guoqiang was discussing something with the set manager. Xu Xiyan waited until he had finished before walking over to greet him.

"Director Huang, I'm done shooting my in-program ads."

Huang Guoqiang turned at the sound of her voice, and smiled when he saw that it was Xu Xiyan. He pointed to the chair across him. "You're done? Excellent. Come, have a seat."

Xu Xiyan sat down.

Huang Guoqiang had asked Xu Xiyan to sit down and talk because he wanted to ask about Qi Liya. "By the way, Jing Xi, was Little Qi alone in her room when you left the hospital?"

"That's right."

Huang Guoqiang nodded. He made a few false starts, not knowing how to broach the subject. "So Little Qi..."

"Don't worry, Director Huang. Xiao Ke's with her now." Xu Xiyan watched him intently with her bright eyes. She decided it was time to lay it all out in the open. "Hey, Director Huang, can I ask you something? Are you in love with Ms. Qi?"

A look of surprise flashed across Huang Guoqiang's face; this was quickly followed by a smile as he poked her forehead with a finger. "You cheeky girl, nothing gets past you. All right, you've seen through me."

Huang Guoqiang had spent enough time with Xu Xiyan to know that she could be trusted. He opened up to her, revealing to her his deepest secrets.

Chapter 495: Hooked A Big Fish

Xu Xiyan thought for a moment and asked, "I hope you don't mind me asking, but how much do you love Ms. Qi? Do you like her, or are you hopelessly in love with her?"

Huang Guoqiang was embarrassed by her straightforward question. He scratched his head. "You cheeky girl... how am I supposed to answer something like that?"

"This is very important, Director Huang. If you truly love Ms. Qi, I can help you win her affections. But if you aren't serious about her, then forget it. See you around."

Xu Xiyan got to her feet, but Director Huang stopped her. "Hey now, what's the hurry? I haven't replied!"

Xu Xiyan returned to her seat. She watched him calmly as she waited for his answer.

If Huang Guoqiang's love for Qi Liya was sincere, Xu Xiyan was fairly certain she could help bring them together.

Huang Guoqiang's expression grew solemn. He said earnestly, "I love her with all my heart. In fact, I want to marry her."

Xu Xiyan let out an inward sigh of relief. She put on a serious face and began describing the grim situation Qi Liya was in. "You love her with all your heart, but I'm afraid things are looking bad for her, Director Huang."

“What do you mean?”

Huang Guoqiang's heart constricted when he heard Xu Xiyan say that things were looking bad for Qi Liya.

“Um...”

Xu Xiyan sighed deeply. She checked to see that they were alone, and then told Huang Guoqiang in a hushed voice what Qi Liya's medical report said.

Huang Guoqiang was stunned. For a long moment he sat there, unable to speak.

After a long silence, he finally recovered himself. His face was full of sorrow; it was obvious that he was worried about Qi Liya's health.

Xu Xiyan watched his expression carefully as she added, “Director Huang, are you still able to accept Ms. Qi, knowing what she has to face?”

Huang Guoqiang looked at her and said sadly, “Jing Xi, as long as she's willing to take me for her husband, I will love her and cherish her for the rest of my life. I would never leave her.”

This was true devotion.

Xu Xiyan had been waiting for Huang Guoqiang to say this.

Now the million dollar question was: how was Qi Liya going to react to this heartfelt confession?

Xu Xiyan was kept extremely busy in the following days. Aside from her acting gigs, she performed in a string of concerts, posing as Xue Yating.

The violin performances were a hit. No one in the audience realized that the “Xue Yating” they had come to see was actually Xu Xiyan in disguise. Xue Yating kept to her promise; she wired Xu Xiyan's share of the profits into her bank account without delay.

Xu Xiyan returned to Peijing to discover that the city was now livelier than usual, thanks to a recent bombshell: word had just got out that Huo Jingtang, vice president of Yunhai Entertainment, and Xu Xinrou, Juxing Entertainment's top actress, were getting married.

The reporters had snapped photos of the two of them holding hands. Xu Xinrou's agent had then confirmed that the two were dating, and would be tying the knot soon.

Xu Xiyan was not surprised by the news. She was, however, vaguely impressed that Xu Xinrou had hooked a big fish like Huo Jingtang.

But Huo Jingtang wasn't a good man by any stretch of the imagination, and Xu Xinrou was just as bad, if not worse.

The two of them were bad enough on their own; throwing them together was a recipe for disaster. Xu Xiyan was now genuinely worried for Huo Yunshen and his company, Yunhai Entertainment.

Xu Xiyao stepped out of the airport, and saw that Huo Yunshen's car was already waiting for her outside. Yi Xiao hurried over, took her suitcase from her, and placed it in the trunk as Xu Xiyao stepped into the car.

In the back seat was Huo Yunshen and his daughter; they had waited in the car for what seemed like an eternity. As soon as Ying Bao saw that her Mommy had returned, she launched into a fervent display of her longing and affection. She hugged Xu Xiyao around the neck and kissed her repeatedly on both cheeks.

"Mommy, Mommy, did you miss me?"

"Yes, I did!"

"What about Daddy then? Did you miss Daddy?"

"Of course I missed him too!" Xu Xiyao looked up at the man in question; he was sitting beside her with a faint smile on his face. Their eyes locked, and they smiled at each other.

Chapter 496: Dying To Be Alone With Her

The car began to move. Huo Yunshen and Xu Xiyao sat close together. Ying Bao sat between them, on top of their laps, basking in the warmth of both her parents.

Huo Yunshen extended an arm and draped it over Xu Xiyao shoulder. The touch of his large, masculine hand was electrifying; Xu Xiyao felt a current run through her, and her limbs and extremities grew numb.

The hand moved gently downwards to rub her back. Huo Yunshen had not said anything, but when Xu Xiyao turned to look at him, she saw the burning passion in his eyes.

She had missed him, but he had missed her a million times more.

"Absence makes the heart grow fonder"—she had only been away for a few days, but Huo Yunshen felt as though he had not seen her for years.

He had missed her so much he thought he was going crazy. He wanted to pull her into his arms and kiss her long and hard, but their daughter was watching.

The little girl had also missed her mother very much. As soon as they returned home, Ying Bao clung to her mother like a koala, refusing to leave her for even a minute.

Huo Yunshen wheeled himself past the living room several times. Mother and daughter were playing together in the living room; it frustrated him to see the beautiful, delectable woman so close at hand, yet out of his reach.

In order to enjoy his "benefits" as soon as possible, he racked his brain and came up with an idea.

"Cherry, do you want to go play with Feimo? Daddy can send you over to his place!"

Cherry enjoyed Tang Feimo's company very much. Her eyes sparkled as she said, "Ooh, I want to play with him! But Feimo said he won't be at home today!"

Huo Yunshen: "..."

Huo Yunshen returned to his room and called Tang Yichen. "Where are you?"

"I'm driving my family to Jingshan for a day trip. We're on our way there now," Tang Yichen answered.

"Old Tang, I want you to come back, right this moment. Report to Shengshi Yujing within 30 minutes, and bring your son, Feimo, with you," instructed Huo Yunshen.

Tang Yichen was close to flipping out. It was the weekend, the only time he was able to take his family on a vacation. He was already halfway to his destination—and Huo Yunshen wanted him to go back?

Tang Yichen thought Huo Yunshen was being absolutely unreasonable. "Why? It's the weekend, I deserve my time off!"

"I'll let you take a day off some other time. Do this for me, and I'll owe you one. But if you don't come back, I'll send your wife that photo of you hugging that lady when you were drunk. Choose wisely."

Huo Yunshen hung up without waiting for a reply.

On the other end of the line, Tang Yichen stared helplessly at his phone. He had not expected Huo Yunshen to remember that specific incident. It had been a complete misunderstanding: Tang Yichen had had a little too much to drink during a dinner with his clients, and had accidentally fallen on top of a young lady after bumping into her. Unfortunately for him, Huo Yunshen had taken a photo of it to use as blackmail material.

It was an honest mistake, and he hadn't done anything wrong; nevertheless, he did not want his wife to misunderstand. Sometimes, an explanation just wasn't enough. The best way to avoid a misunderstanding was to—

Tang Yichen obediently turned the car around and sped towards Shengshi Yujing. He managed to arrive within 30 minutes.

He knocked on the door to Apartment 101. The door opened, and Tang Yichen presented himself and his son to Huo Yunshen. He asked, "I'm here, Old Huo. What's up?"

"Nothing." Huo Yunshen turned around and called for his daughter. "Cherry, Feimo is here. Go play with him!"

Upon hearing that, Ying Bao immediately rushed down the stairs. She happily went out with Tang Feimo.

Tang Yichen's eyes almost rolled out of their sockets and onto the floor. "That's it? You ordered me to drive back here within 30 minutes just for this?"

"This is extremely important," Huo Yunshen said nonchalantly. "These children are budding flowers, our nation's future pride and joy. Take good care of them. If anything happens to them, I'll hold you responsible!"

Tang Yichen was a smart man. He could tell from Huo Yunshen's strange behavior that: A) his Little Xixi had probably just returned from an outstation trip, and B) he was now dying to be alone with her.

Tang Yichen chuckled. He asked, "Oh, is the lady back home? Want me to teach you a few tricks?"

“Buzz off! I don't need your tricks!”

Bam! Huo Yunshen mercilessly shut the door in Tang Yichen's face.

Chapter 497: Siren Call

He did not need Tang Yichen's lame tricks. He was pretty sure those “tricks,” whatever they were, would end up hurting him instead of helping him.

Upon returning to the living room, he found that Xu Xiyan was no longer there. He looked all over for her, and finally heard the sound of running water from the bathroom.

He could see, through the misty glass, the vague outline of Xu Xiyan's alluring figure. It was like a siren call. Huo Yunshen swallowed heavily as warmth pooled in his lower abdomen.

He had fantasized about throwing her onto a bed and ravishing her so many times now he had lost count.

But alas! The wheelchair got in his way. He could not act out his fantasies so long as he was in it.

The sound of running water stopped, and Huo Yunshen quickly wheeled himself away.

Xu Xiyan walked out of the bathroom and into the living room, drying her hair with a towel. She saw Huo Yunshen sitting in the living room, reading a magazine, and asked, “Mr. Huo, did Ying Bao leave with Feimo already?”

“Yeah.” Huo Yunshen lifted his dark, sultry eyes and stole a glance at Xu Xiyan from over the magazine. He could feel a nosebleed coming on.

Xu Xiyan had just showered, and was now dressed in a thin nightdress with a low neckline. From where he was sitting, he had a clear view of her cleavage.

And—this almost killed him—she wasn't wearing a bra. He could see the perfect shape of her breasts through the thin fabric of her pajamas. It was too much for him; he suddenly realized he had yet to touch them...

His eyes glazed over. The front of his trousers was becoming a little too tight to be comfortable. Huo Yunshen put down the magazine and extended a hand towards her, “Jing Xi, come here.”

“What's up, Mr. Huo?”

As soon as Xu Xiyan was near enough, Huo Yunshen seized the opportunity to grab hold of her arm and pull her onto his lap.

Xu Xiyan fell onto his lap. Their eyes locked as the rest of the world dwindled away around them.

Huo Yunshen gently caressed her rosy lips with his calloused fingers. “Isn't it time for you to stop calling me ‘Mr. Huo?’ I'm sure a lot of people would be confused by it. People might even complain...”

“Who's been complaining!? Tell them to own up—I'll beat them half to death!”

Huo Yunshen's chest rippled with laughter. He tapped her on the nose and said, "Don't change the subject. Call me something else."

Xu Xiyan had been so used to calling him "Mr. Huo" she had not given any thought to it.

She found it immensely embarrassing to have to change the way she addressed him now.

What should I call him?

"What do you want me to call you? President Huo?"

"Call me that and I'll bite you, don't think I won't!"

As punishment, he lowered his head and nipped at her delicate collarbone.

Xu Xiyan felt a current run through her whole body. She hunched her shoulders reflexively. "How about I call you Huo Yunshen?"

Huo Yunshen was evidently not satisfied with that; he lowered his head and bit her earlobe. Xu Xiyan quickly said, "Fine, I'll call you Yunshen. Is that okay?"

That was much better. Huo Yunshen let her go, but continued to pin her with his intense gaze. "Okay. Try it."

"Yunshen."

Oh yes. Her voice calling him by his given name was music to his ears.

He wanted to hear it again, so he pretended not to have heard. "I can't hear you."

"Yunshen!"

"I still can't hear you."

"Yuuuun Sheeen."

"Hmm? Is there something wrong with my ears?"

He was being silly now, but he wanted to hear her call his name, again and again.

Xu Xiyan lost her temper at that. She reached out and mussed his hair with both her hands. "Oh jeez, now you're just messing with me! You know what, I'm not going to call you Yunshen anymore. From now on, I'll call you Uncle Huo."

He was five years older than her, so "Uncle" did not seem too far off the mark. Besides, wasn't it popular nowadays to call the male leads in Korean dramas "Uncle"?

"Uncle Huo? What... are you saying I'm too old for you?"

Chapter 498: Jackpot Of All Jackpots

Huo Yunshen inwardly cried. He wished now that he had never started this conversation in the first place.

He had wanted her to address him in a more intimate manner, but this had backfired and she was now making fun of his age.

Xu Xiyan laughed so hard she had to catch her breath. She added teasingly, “Heh, so now you know. I have plenty of young, handsome men around me—you know, what they call ‘little fresh meat.’ Bully me again, and I’ll go hook up with one of them.”

“Don’t you dare!” said Huo Yunshen, his voice shrill with sudden panic at the thought. His fingers attacked her waist, tickling her ruthlessly as he said, “This is what happens if you don’t behave yourself!”

“Hahaha...”

Their joyful laughter echoed throughout the apartment.

The playful teasing went on for a few minutes. Huo Yunshen could not restrain himself any longer; he leaned closer to her, desperate for an intense make-out session.

Xu Xiyan had already guessed what he was thinking. “You want to kiss me, don’t you?”

“Of course.”

He wanted to go beyond kissing her—he wanted to devour her.

There was a sly look in Xu Xiyan’s eyes: an idea had just occurred to her. She jumped off Huo Yunshen’s lap and sat on the sofa across him, striking a sexy pose. She crooked her finger at him as she said seductively, “Come on, Uncle, get on your feet and walk over to me.”

Huo Yunshen: “...”

He did not know why, but the seductive way she said “Uncle” made his heart flutter; it plucked a string deep within his heart, sending a thrill through him.

Huo Yunshen’s eyes glazed over as he took in her alluring pose and seductive expression.

Huo Yunshen’s mind was racing: was she saying that if he wanted to touch her, he would have to stand up and walk over to her?

Watch me!

Huo Yunshen pushed himself out of his wheelchair and onto his feet. He had practiced this in the rehabilitation center more than ten thousand times.

Standing was easy-peasy for him now.

“Excellent! Now try to take a step, Uncle. Come here.”

Xu Xiyan’s gentle, coaxing guidance was music to his ears. Hmm, thought Huo Yunshen, I guess being called “Uncle” isn’t so bad!

But walking was not so easy for him. Huo Yunshen did not have crutches with him; lifting his legs without any kind of support was a huge challenge.

Xu Xiyan saw his hesitation, and added, "If you can walk over to me, I'll let you have your way with me tonight."

Huo Yunshen: "..."

That was the jackpot of all jackpots. He could hardly believe that this lovely lady was tempting him with such an incredible reward.

Motivated by the thought of being able to do whatever he wanted to Xu Xiyan, Huo Yunshen mustered all his strength to lift a foot, and painstakingly moved it forward.

"Okay, very good, that's right, don't stop now." Xu Xiyan sat up and watched his legs as she guided him, step by step.

One step.

Two steps.

Three steps...

Huo Yunshen was now sweating profusely. His shirt was drenched, but he did not let it deter him; he clenched his teeth and concentrated on moving forward.

He finally reached a sofa and supported himself on its back. It was much easier going now that he had something to lean on.

He stopped for a moment to catch his breath. Xu Xiyan walked over to him and helped him wipe the sweat from his brow with a small towel. She asked, "My dear Uncle, you're making amazing progress! What do you think? Can you take a few more steps?"

"Yeah."

Xu Xiyan's lithe figure seemed to be wriggling seductively before his eyes. He had come so far, he wasn't going to blow it now.

He kept his teeth clenched as he struggled onwards, but just as he crossed the halfway mark, he lost his balance and fell towards the glass coffee table.

Luckily for him, Xu Xiyan was quick to react. She caught him just in time, and the two of them rolled onto the carpet.

Xu Xiyan was on top of him.

The way she stretched the entire length of her body out on top of him was extremely suggestive. Xu Xiyan smiled coyly and said, "Uncle, you only made it half-way through your mission. I'm afraid I can't let you go all the way with me—but I'll let you do some things to me."

Huo Yunshen swallowed. That meant that—aside from the last "step"—he could do anything he wanted with her, right?

Chapter 499: Kissed Her Passionately

“I'll succeed next time.”

Huo Yunshen flipped them around and pressed her into the carpet.

He slipped a hand around the back of her head as he lowered his face to hers and kissed her passionately.

His other hand had moved to the parts he had been fantasizing about. They felt heavenly under his fingers. He wished Xu Xiyan would offer this “reward” all day, every day.

His wish was granted: in the following days, as long as she was back in her house in Peijing, Xu Xiyan offered up all kinds of “benefits” and “rewards” every day. With the help of her persistent seduction, Huo Yunshen's legs grew stronger with each passing day.

The first step had turned into several steps, and now, Huo Yunshen could walk a few dozen steps on his own. Every new step was a huge improvement.

Xu Xiyan firmly believed that if she continued her “training,” Huo Yunshen would soon be able to free himself from his wheelchair.

It was now the day of the finals for the children's talent show.

Xu Xiyan found the time in her busy schedule to participate in a parent-child performance with Ying Bao.

The theme they had chosen for their performance was “Frozen.” Xu Xiyan wore Elsa's sky-blue ice gown, while Ying Bao acted the part of a lively and adorable Anna.

The two of them were so beautiful they looked like they had just walked out of a fairytale.

Elsa and Anna were sisters in the original movie, but Xu Xiyan and Ying Bao had rearranged the story so they were mother and daughter.

In order to keep her identity a secret, Xu Xiyan wore a mask that obscured the upper half of her face.

Their performance included both singing and dancing. To make things more interesting, they had put on roller skates for their choreography, and looked like swans elegantly dancing upon a frozen lake. It was breathtaking.

Xu Xiyan and Ying Bao sang “Let It Go,” the theme song for “Frozen.” Ying Bao's voice, although childish, was crisp and clear.

Xu Xiyan sang the climax of the song. Everyone in the audience could not help but be moved by her stunning voice.

During the climax of the song and their performance, Xu Xiyan lifted Ying Bao into the air and performed a 20-rotation spin. This was an extremely challenging move, but she pulled it off.

With the final note of the song, mother and daughter struck a pose on the stage. The audience got to their feet and cheered.

The choreography was impeccable, and their lovely singing voices had melted the hearts of everyone in the hall. Ying Bao was awarded the highest score among all the participants; she was the champion of the talent show.

The host who had “turned gay” because of her walked onto the stage to interview her. He asked with a smile, “Cherry Baby, you little cutie pie! What will you do with your cash prize?”

Ying Bao smiled sweetly at the camera before saying, “I wanted to use the money to buy the best Daddy in the world, so Mommy and I can live happily ever after with him. But I don't have to do that now, because I already have the best Daddy ever!”

The host had learned after the previous interview that the little girl before him had, until recently, been raised by a single mother.

In order to cheer her up, he boldly asked the little girl, “Well, what about me? Will you buy me? Do I have the honor?”

The little girl did not pull her punches: she shook her head with complete conviction. The host clutched at his heart sadly. “But why? Am I not handsome enough for you?”

The little girl cocked her head and looked at the host as she considered it. She smiled and pointed to the dimples on her cheeks. “You don't have dimples. I like uncles with dimples.”

The host dug his fingers into his cheeks. “There, I have dimples on my cheeks now. So, how about it?”

The little girl smiled and shrugged. She patted his shoulder comfortingly as she said with a serious face, “Don't be sad, Uncle. You can't be my other Daddy, but there are plenty of other good men in the world!”

“...” The host could not decide whether to laugh or cry. The little girl seemed determined to turn him gay!

Chapter 500: Can't Figure Her Out

The talent show ended with the humorous interview. Sitting in the audience was Huo Yunshen; he had once again put on a disguise to watch his daughter and Xu Xiyan perform on stage.

On the way home, Huo Yunshen gave Xu Xiyan and Ying Bao each a present.

Xu Xiyan received a beautiful bouquet of lavender roses. Lavender roses symbolized romance, true love, rarity, and uniqueness. The bouquet expressed how much Huo Yunshen loved and cherished her.

Ying Bao received an adorable doll made in her own image. It was custom-made, specially ordered by Huo Yunshen. This was the only one in the entire world.

"Wow...I love this present so, so much! Thanks, Daddy!"

Ying Bao was so happy she kissed Huo Yunshen on the cheek.

"I love my present, too. Thanks, Uncle."

Xu Xiyan kissed him on his other cheek.

Huo Yunshen's heart swelled with happiness with each grateful kiss.

There was nothing more rewarding than a kiss from the woman he loved most.

Ying Bao heard her mother suddenly call her father "Uncle" and was puzzled. "Mommy, when did Daddy become your uncle?"

Like most children, Ying Bao was too young to understand the other, much more adult meaning of "Uncle." Xu Xiyan patiently explained: "Oh, that's because Daddy is a few years older than Mommy. That's why Mommy can call Daddy Uncle!"

Ying Bao was a precocious child who was quick to apply what she had learned. She scratched her head and said, "Oh, I get it now. Daddy is a few years older than Mommy, so Mommy calls him Uncle. Daddy is many, many years older than me—can I call Daddy Big Uncle?"

Ying Bao was pleased with the title she had just come up with. "Big Uncle, Big Uncle..."

"Hahaha... no, not Big Uncle (Da Lao Shu). You should call him Old Uncle (Lao Da Shu)!"

Xu Xiyan laughed so hard her stomach hurt.

Huo Yunshen: "..."

Was it Big Uncle (Da Lao Shu) or Old Uncle (Lao Da Shu)?

Big Uncle (Da Lao Shu) sounded a lot like Big Mouse (Da Lao Shu)...

Huo Yunshen could not muster the strength to correct them. He wondered if their relentless teasing about his age was actually aging him for real...

Huo Yunshen looked at the open joy on their faces, and his heart softened. So what if they called him "Grandpa" next? He would gladly accept his fate with a smile and happy tears in his eyes.

After the talent show, Xu Xiyan returned to the set for "Root of Evil" and shot seven consecutive fight scenes with the villain, played by the secondary male lead, Ma Haodong.

Neither of them held back. By the time they were done with the fight scenes, they were both completely exhausted.

Ma Haodong collapsed onto a recliner, too tired to move.

Xu Xiyan walked over to him and handed him a bottle of water. Ma Haodong accepted it and thanked her.

"What's wrong, Brother Dong? You seem a little off today," asked Xu Xiyan as she sat on the recliner next to him.

Throughout the day's shoot, Ma Haodong had made a lot of careless mistakes, resulting in many retakes. He seemed a little absent-minded, which was completely unlike his usual professional attitude.

"You noticed?" asked Ma Haodong morosely as he sat up from the recliner.

"It's written all over your face: I. Am. Super. Pissed. Off. Today. So. Don't. Try. Me!" said Xu Xiyan, emphasizing each word.

Ma Haodong would have rolled his eyes if this had been anyone else, but this was Xu Xiyan, and he had only the utmost respect for her. "I swear, nothing gets past you. Yes, that's right, I'm pissed."

"What's wrong?"

"What do you think?" Ma Haodong sank back into the recliner and sighed.

Xu Xiyan thought about it—the only one who could make Ma Haodong this upset was Xiao Yuqian.

"Is Qianqian angry with you again?" Xu Xiyan asked.

Ma Haodong's expression was one of abject despair. "I wish it were that simple. She's become so unpredictable lately, I can't figure her out. I feel like she's been secretly doing things behind my back."