

Stay At home 2211

Chapter 2211: Because of Poverty

Mag had finished cooking a whole table full of dishes when Mala finally brought out the pig tongue salad.

Looking at the brightly colored, nicely sliced and plated pig tongue salad, Mag nodded slightly.

He had watched how Mala cooked this dish earlier. It wasn't bad overall and she did whatever she should do. It was very well done.

He could see that she had been practicing hard.

Mag was very satisfied with this disciple.

Mala stood next to the table with her hands behind her back as she nervously said to Mag, "Please taste it."

Mag picked up a piece of pig's tongue with the chopsticks. He put it under his nose and smelled it first. He raised his eyebrows before putting the pig's tongue into his mouth.

The slightly crunchy pig tongue was covered with red oil and spicy sauce. It was thoroughly marinated and it got increasingly fragrant as he chewed. It was indeed not bad.

Mag put down his chopsticks and nodded at Mala with a smile. "Not bad, but it's about 1,000 plates away from being able to be sold in the tavern. There's a problem with the making of the red oil. It tastes slightly charred and there's still room for improvement for the pig tongue's texture. You need to practice more before you can thoroughly understand it."

"Yes, I got it!" Mala listened to Mag seriously before nodding solemnly.

Eiffie also picked up a piece of pig tongue and interrupted. "I think it's good enough to be served in the tavern as a side dish. The customers will have nothing to eat while they sit at the table when Saipan Tavern reopens if this dish is not available as well."

Amy said happily as she chewed on the pig tongue, "It's so delicious. Big Sister Mala's culinary skills have improved."

"We need to have a certain standard when we operate a tavern," Mag shook his head and said to Eiffie, "Quality can decide the difference between one tavern from the others. I hope Saipan Tavern can always be that beautiful and exquisite existence. Making do is a kind of poison. Once you start it, you will lose your baseline."

Eiffie looked at Mag quietly for a while before she nodded and said, "I understand."

Although he had washed his hands off the tavern, Mag still hoped Saipan Tavern could always maintain its standard.

Eiffie left after lunch.

The first thing she needed to do after taking over the tavern was to recruit a new batch of employees.

Even though Saipan Tavern already had six service staff members, it was far from enough.

After all, not everyone could multitask like Mag. They need to have cashiers, servers, cooks and...

It wasn't practical for Saipan Tavern to reopen for business immediately. She needed to rebuild a group of staff.

"Let's go watch the opera in the afternoon today." Mag cleared away the cutlery and said to all of them.

Amy's eyes lit up as she asked, "Are we watching Miss Black Cat?!"

Annie was also looking at Mag with anticipation.

"Yes. The Black Cat Opera House has already moved to our street. Let's go over right now." Mag nodded with a smile. He picked up that big bag of clothes and led his family and Mala over to the nearby Black Cat Opera House.

Soon, Mag came to Building 101. This venue, which was once a circus, looked brand new after it was cleaned up.

A simple wooden sign hung on the door and it said: Black Cat Opera Troupe.

There was a drizzle in Rodu last night, so the paint had faded off slightly.

Mm...

They still looked poor even after changing locations.

It was indeed rare to see such a poor opera troupe.

The door of the opera house was semi-open, but a wooden plaque hanging on the door had the timing written on it. The afternoon show started at 1 p.m, which was 30 minutes from now.

"I forgot to mention that it's not time yet," Mala shrugged and said with embarrassment.

"It's fine. I happen to have something to discuss with Miss Vicki," Mag replied with a smile and then walked in first.

Mala quickly caught up with him.

Irina brought the two children in. Annie was even carrying a picture book.

It was a little dark in the theater. The sunlight that shone through the small windows couldn't provide enough light.

Perhaps because they were poor, other than the stage, no other areas had oil lamps. The oil lamps were not lit up right now, either.

The stage in the center had been simply modified. The newly painted surface made it look like an opera house.

However, the seats below the stage were too simple. Only long benches were set up, which looked messy and crowded.

Watching opera in such conditions wouldn't be a particularly good experience.

The people in the opera troupe had just had lunch and were about to rest when they heard some sounds at the door. They all looked towards it.

"Hello, the afternoon show has not started yet. Please come back again later." Old Man Mi went forward to greet them.

Mala jumped out and said, "Old Man Mi, this is my master. He's here to look for the maestro."

Old Man Mi walked closer and finally saw Mag's looks clearly. With shock on his face, he said, "It's you, Sir!"

It was all because of this benefactor that the Black Cat Opera could move here from the dilapidated small courtyard and slowly become famous.

Not only did he provide them with a venue, he even gave them enough money to tide over through the hard times. Everyone in the opera troupe remembered his kindness.

Old Man Mi turned around and shouted, "Maestro! That benefactor is here!"

Everyone in the opera troupe crowded over and smiled when they saw Mag and his family.

They had a deep impression of this family, mainly because the two young maidens were so cute that they were unforgettable.

Vicki, who was wearing a black Lolita dress, quickly strode out from the backstage. She stopped in front of Mag and smiled. "You're finally back."

"I heard that your opera troupe has already begun its operations when I came here today. I intended to watch one performance, but it seems like I have come too early," Mag also replied with a smile.

Mag was rather respectful to this maiden who had a dual personality because you never knew what personality she would take on in the next moment.

"It's indeed not time yet, but please take a seat here. I still haven't thanked you properly regarding the theater." Vicki led Mag and his family to the maestro's office at the back.

Although it was called the maestro's office, it was just a small and shabby office. It only had a wooden table that had one of its missing legs replaced and two long benches.

Vicki's seat was an old wooden chair. Perhaps it was used as the boss' chair.

"The theater is still at its start up phase, so it's a little shabby. I've embarrassed myself in front of you," Vicki said openly without any tinge of shame.

"We've got a place to sit, so it's pretty good." Mag's review of her became more favorable inwardly.

Vicki bowed to Mag and gratefully said, "Thank you for providing a venue for Black Cat Opera and giving us so much support."

"Don't mention it. It's your talent that touched me." Mag smiled and waved his hand. "Moreover, isn't this a business that is beneficial to the both of us?"

Vicki smiled too, but she didn't feel any less grateful towards Mag.

Mag's investment and support for their opera troupe was equivalent to being life-saving. It pulled them out of the mud and back from the brink of disbanding.

Vicki would always remember that kindness.

"I came for one more thing today. Annie has already illustrated the story of Miss Black Cat. Can you check if it is up to your expectations?" Mag said.

Annie came forward and passed the picture book in her arms to Vicki.

Chapter 2212: He Had Really Offered Her Too Much!

"It's already done?" Vicki was astonished. After all, it had only been a few days. She reached out to take the picture book.

On the cover was Miss Black Cat who was trying to scale over the city wall to escape in the night.

Miss Black Cat climbing over the wall seemed to have a certain underlying meaning. It wasn't just a wall that she was scaling over, but the binding rules of the world.

Outside of the high walls, was freedom.

Vicki stared at the picture book's cover in a daze for a long time before she finally smiled.

The picture was intricate and beautiful and the Miss Black Cat looked very much like her. Most importantly, choosing the scene of her scaling over the high walls in the dark as the cover suited her thoughts perfectly.

Then, she opened the picture book and read through it seriously.

The storytelling of the picture book was slightly different from the opera's. Some of the sequences were switched, but it didn't affect the storytelling at all. Instead, it suited the picture book's way of storytelling more.

Some of the contents were removed, as the opera had very long singing parts and the picture book simplified them. It made the story more concise and it moved at a faster pace.

Vicki finished reading half of the picture book in about 10 minutes. She closed the picture book gently like a treasure before standing up to seriously say to Annie, "Thank you so much for giving this story a brand new life."

Annie was slightly stunned. Then, she revealed a happy smile and said with sign language, "It's you who created this story and I am very honored to have been able to illustrate it."

"It's so excellently drawn and has completely exceeded my expectations. I like it very much and am very satisfied with it." Vicki reiterated.

"Thank you." Annie smiled reservedly, but it was obvious that she was very happy.

Mag curved his lips slightly into a smile. He guessed it felt rather good to be acknowledged by the original author.

It seemed like drawing comics was indeed very suitable for Annie. It allowed her to gain more recognition.

“Since Miss Vicki is very satisfied with Annie’s illustrations, let’s discuss the licensing of the picture book’s copyright,” Mag said to Vicki.

“Does Mr. Hades intend to print out this picture book?” Vicki asked.

“Yes. I think this is an excellent picture book. Be it the core of the story, or the drawing style, they are both very excellent.” Mag nodded. “Furthermore, I’m trying to launch a picture book business, and I think this book is quite a good start.”

Vicki looked at Mag and pondered.

In the Underground City, copyright was a very important thing and there was a series of stringent laws that protected licensing.

An excellent work usually could get rather good licensing revenue.

However, on the Norland Continent, the laws in this area weren’t well-covered. Although there was an awareness of copyright exclusivity, there weren’t many reference cases regarding such licensing that crossed genres.

The story of Miss Black Cat had a special meaning to Vicki, but Annie had really drawn it so well that it showcased the core of the story perfectly.

If this story was spread in the form of picture books, it would have rather good results and sales. It should be able to bring some popularity to the Black Cat Opera House.

Moreover, she was very in need of money right now. Be it the opera house’s renovation, or the recruitment of new actors, she needed a big sum of money urgently.

“How does Mr. Hades intend to collaborate?” Vicki asked.

Although she wasn’t sure of Mag’s background, she simply felt that he was a trustworthy partner.

Mag directly said, “Regarding the exclusive copyright licensing of Miss Black Cat’s picture book, I have two choices for you:

“One, a 5,000,000 copper coins outright buyout, which means I give you 5,000,000 and I’ll get the picture book’s copyright of Miss Black Cat and I won’t be paying you any fees in the future.

“Or two. After deducting the cost according to the sales, I’ll give you 20% of the profit. This is a long term revenue and has an unknown and an uncertain outcome, but it might bring you some unexpected rewards.”

“5,000,000 copper coins!” Vicki’s brain went blank.

This was, without a doubt, a huge sum to her, who was always thinking about how to use one copper coin to support the whole opera troupe.

Even after making a trip back to the Underground City, she still didn’t want any help from her family.

She thought Mag might offer tens of thousands of copper coins and even decided to agree to deal at 100,000 copper coins.

That 100,000 copper coins could do a simple upgrade for the opera house. At least she could replace those shabby long benches, upgrade the lighting and get a firm bed for each troupe member.

She never expected Mag would offer her a high price of 5,000,000 right away!

One had to know that before this, Miss Black Cat was still a story that nobody knew and was purely for self-entertainment.

Even now, it was only popular among the Romo Street's neighbors.

Mag had really offered her too much...

Mag looked at her smilingly. He didn't hurry her.

He could see that Vicki's identity wasn't simple. However, she had a stubborn character, so he didn't know what decision she would make.

"Did you say 5,000,000 copper coins?" Vicki asked Mag with uncertainty.

"Yes. This is the best price that I can offer currently." Mag nodded. This was already way above the copyright fees of all the picture books in the market right now.

Did Vicki still find it lacking?

Mag raised his eyebrows slightly. Miss Black Cat was indeed quite a good story. It was very refreshing in the current picture book market where it was full of cheesy love stories.

He could consider offering more.

"Do you think it's too little?" Mag asked.

"No, no, no!" Vicki shook her head. After realizing Mag seemed to be mistaken, she quickly explained, "5,000,000 copper coins is too much. I mean do you need to reconsider it? Just as you said, it has a great uncertainty."

Although the opera troupe really needed money right now, Vicki didn't want to cheat Mr. Hades.

He had rescued the Black Cat Opera Troupe from the mud and given them a new environment to grow in.

"I'm a businessman, so I make every decision after thinking about it thoroughly. Since I offered you 5,000,000, it means that you're worth this price." Mag smiled. He began to like Vicki even better.

This maiden was young but she had very good values.

Vicki saw Mag didn't look forced, so after thinking for a while, she said, "Then I'll choose option one, the 5,000,000 copper coins to buy the copyright of Miss Black Cat's picture book."

She could do a lot with 5,000,000 copper coins and she earned it with her own ability, so she could use it on the opera troupe without any stress.

“Are you sure you don’t want the long term revenue option?”

“Yes. The opera troupe needs a sum of money urgently right now. I think it is a better choice.” Vicki nodded with conviction. Perhaps the long term revenue might have given more room for imagination, but the opera troupe needed an immediate sum of money more.

Chapter 2213: Black Cat Opera Troupe’s Troubles

The signing of the contract went very smoothly. Mag had already prepared the contract in advance. The two of them signed, put their thumb prints on the contract, and the contract was valid.

Mag took out the banknote that he had prepared in advance and gave it to Vicki as he explained, “This is the Buffett Bank’s banknote. You can use it to exchange for cash at the Buffett Bank directly.”

“Alright. Thank you very much.” Vicki got up and bowed deeply to Mag.

Mag was the benefactor that she had met at the lowest point of her life.

“Don’t stand on ceremony. After all, I’m one of the Black Cat Opera’s shareholders. I hope the opera troupe can become better too,” Mag said smilingly and brought a package over. “There are a few clothes here. I saw that some of the actors’ clothes are rather old, so I custom-made a batch of stage costumes for them. I based most of them on Annie’s comics.”

“This is so kind of you.” Vicki opened the package and her eyes lit up when she saw all the opulent clothes.

The clothes that the actors were wearing now were almost all made by themselves.

They had no choice, as custom-making a single costume would cost at least a few thousands copper coins.

Initially, the first thing that she was going to do after receiving the money was to change costumes for the troupe members. She didn’t expect Mag to have prepared it for them so considerately.

Mag continued on. “Your dress is a little more complicated so it’s not done yet. I’ll send it to you in a few days.”

Vicki’s black lolita dress was rather old too, but since it was black and layered, it didn’t look too obvious that it was old.

“I-I’m fine...” Vicki blushed when she heard that Mag wanted to give her a dress.

“I’ll let this theater to your opera troupe for five years at the price of one copper coin and I’ll reserve the two adjacent buildings for you guys too. If you want to expand the venue, feel free to look for me.” Mag looked at his watch. “It’s almost time for your performance, so we’ll go wait outside. I guess you guys need some time to change into your costumes too.”

“Mr. Hades, thank you and your family for supporting Black Cat Opera.” Vicki stood up and bowed to Mag and his family.

Mag waved his hands and left the maestro’s office.

Vicki gathered the troupe members backstage and distributed the clothes that Mag brought to them.

Old Man Mi looked at the new opulent costume in his hands and exclaimed in surprise. "Maestro, when did you custom make new costumes for us?"

"Yes. This fabric feels so comfortable. It must be very expensive, right?"

"Woah! It fits perfectly!"

Everyone was chattering and expressing their satisfaction with the costumes.

"I didn't custom make them for you all. It's a gift from Mr. Hades," Vicki said with a smile. She didn't expect Mr. Hades to be so considerate that everyone's costumes fitted perfectly.

"Woah! This boss is simply too nice! Not only did he provide us with a venue, he even prepared the costumes for us."

"Yes. If it wasn't for him, we would still be starving in that dilapidated yard."

"But, Maestro, you didn't sell us away as well, right?"

All of them couldn't help asking Vicki questions while they lamented.

They had gone through a lot of hardship in the past two years, so they knew there wouldn't be kindness that came from nothing.

"Mr. Hades has invested in our opera troupe, so he's one of the opera troupe's bosses. However, he won't be interfering in the theater's operations, so you guys don't have to worry. I won't increase the control of the opera troupe," Vicki said with a comforting smile.

All of them heaved a breath of relief. After all, Maca Opera had tried to swallow them up earlier and poached a few of their members.

Now, they had one more boss, but it wouldn't have any influence on the opera troupe. Instead, they seemed to have found a reliable supporter.

Ibaka looked at the remaining costumes and said with a complex expression, "The remaining costumes should be for Bao and the rest, right?"

All of them looked at the six or seven pieces of clothing left in the bag and thought of their former companions. They all became a little sad.

"Why are we still thinking about those ungrateful people? They are no longer one of our Black Cat Opera troupe members when they leave," Old Man Mi said angrily.

"Don't say that. Bao has gone through thick and thin with us too. The opera troupe was already in a desperate situation. Even if they had stayed, I had thought of bringing you all to join Maca Opera too. After all, our survival is the most important thing." Vicki shook her head slightly. "I'm going to talk to them in a few days. I hope all of you can accept them if they're willing to come back."

Every troupe member was brought back by Vicki. They lived together for two years as she turned them from noobs into professional opera actors. Their relationships and the effort she put in made it hard for her to give up on any of the actors.

Now that she had money and an opera house, it was time to invite all the troupe members that were poached, back.

The opera troupe lacked manpower severely and one person had to take on two people's jobs, which decreased the opera's level of completion.

If she could get all the troupe members that had left, back, this situation would be greatly alleviated.

Moreover, she also needed to consider having a plan to groom opera actors in the long term. The lifespan of an opera actor was short and a professional opera troupe needed to have fresh blood constantly.

Ibaka sighed. "Yes, Four shared a bed with me on the night before he left. He tossed and turned and got up to drink water a few times. He asked me softly if we would have more food to eat if there were fewer people around."

All of them fell silent. That period of time was indeed hard and all of them had thoughts of leaving before.

Vicki clapped her hands and said, "Alright. Let's change and prepare to go on stage."

Outside of the theater, Pascal said to the young master next to him with a flattering expression, "Young Master, I finally found out that the Black Cat Opera has moved over here."

Bobby, who was dressed in luxurious clothes, looked at the wooden signboard that was hung up high with a frown. "Didn't you say that they couldn't go on for long? How did they move to Romo Street all of a sudden and have such a big opera house?"

Pascal's expression froze. His eyeballs shifted around quickly as he said, "I guess they moved in on their own. Didn't Romo Street become deserted for the past two years? This was once a circus and it was abandoned. They most probably moved in on their own, just like that abandoned yard previously."

"It's possible too." Bobby nodded. He knew the Black Cat Opera's situation very well. They didn't have money for food, so they couldn't have the money to rent such a huge venue.

"Be polite when you go in later, but you must get Vicki to join your Maca Opera." Bobby straightened his clothes and walked into the opera house.

Pascal patted his chest and said, "Of course, of course. Don't worry about it!"

Chapter 2214: The Arrival of a Young Mistress!

Bobby walked into the theater and the surroundings that suddenly turned dark made him a little disoriented. He tripped on a chair's leg and almost fell down.

“Be careful, Young Master!” Pascal quickly reached out to hold him, but he was secretly feeling happy inwardly.

It seemed like his guess was correct. This Black Cat Opera was still as poor as ever.

The performance was about to start and yet the theater was still pitch dark. They couldn't even bear to light up a lamp.

Although they changed the venue to an indoor one, he guessed not many people would want to come to such a theater. This opera troupe most likely still survived by eating dirt.

However, the few actors that he poached from Black Cat Opera were really good to use.

Not only were they professional, they didn't eat much or want much. They had basically become the main support of Maca Opera.

Although Bobby paid quite well, what made him go after Black Cat Opera so relentlessly was because he wanted to poach the remaining actors.

As for that uncontrollable woman, it would be best if Bobby could bring her away.

He couldn't help but be scared when he thought of how she scratched him bloody that day.

He didn't understand why Young Master Bobby liked such a type?

Perhaps he had a fetish and liked to be beaten up?

“Don't let people know that we know each other.” Bobby pulled his hand away from Pascal and arranged his clothes.

“Sure, sure.” Pascal nodded smartly and quickly walked two steps forward.

The opera house was rather big. After all, it had taken over the previous location of a circus.

However, even though those long benches were neatly arranged, it still looked very miserable.

Apart from a few people sitting in the front row, the entire venue was empty. It looked very deserted.

Bobby swept a quick look across the theater and sighed secretly.

The Black Cat Opera was still deserted even after it shifted to Romo Street.

One had to know that there were two taverns who had just received the gold awards at the liquor tasting and attracted plenty of attention on Romo Street. He had gone to Titan Tavern for a drink with his friends earlier.

He was still worried that Vicki had found a financial backer when Pascal brought him here today. Looking at the situation now, it appeared it was the way Pascal had described.

He was sure that the Black Cat Opera simply took over this building and used it as a temporary theater.

“Miss Vicki is a maiden with a noble character. She must have her reasons for doing such a thing. For her to end up suffering like this, I'm simply too useless.” Bobby was deep in his self-reproach.

“Usually, there aren’t many people watching the afternoon show, but the maestro insists on having two shows a day,” Mala explained to Mag.

“Hmm. It’s good to have more practice.” Mag nodded. His gaze swept over the empty opera house and landed on Pascal and Bobby, who had just entered the theater.

“Father, isn’t that the maestro of that opera troupe that made us sleepy?” Amy asked softly.

“Oh yes.” Mag smiled too. He remembered the man walking in the front too, it was the maestro of the opera troupe that they had gone to for the first time.

If he remembered correctly, it was called Maca Opera. Its actors were quite amateurish, their performance was very slipshod and their singing was sleep-inducing.

The only good point was that it was really very nice to fall asleep to.

If he had released a viewing guide, it would say: please bring your own pillow and blanket.

Speaking of which, he should be Black Cat Opera’s competitor, so what was he doing here? Trying to cause trouble?

Mag looked at the young master in luxurious clothes behind him. He heard their conversation earlier, so looking at it, this should be the boss.

As Black Cat Opera’s behind the scenes shareholder, Mag sat tight and prepared to watch a good show.

What a joke. Miss Black Cat wasn’t a kitten who could be easily bullied, since she could lead a group of dependents and survive at the bottom of society.

In comparison, that young master looked like the real weakling.

Pascal walked over to the stage and looked around. He went straight backstage after he failed to see anyone.

Bobby found a seat in the first row. He looked calm but he couldn’t help shaking his right leg, which exposed his perturbed emotions.

An angry yell sounded behind him as soon as Pascal pulled open the curtain, “Sir, this is the backstage... You darn fatty! What are you doing here again?!”

Pascal’s hand trembled and the curtain fell away from his hand. He couldn’t help taking two steps backwards.

“This maestro is weak.” Mag frowned slightly. He was scared by one of the actors.

The curtain was pulled back again and Mister Ibaka in black opulent clothes stepped out. He looked awe-inspiring when he glared at Pascal.

Mister Ibaka played the role of Miss Black Cat’s father in the opera, who was a rich old master.

Ibaka, who was already immersed in his role, crushed Pascal with his presence. Pascal actually didn't dare to answer him at that moment.

"Who's that?" Bobby was also sizing up Ibaka carefully. This man in grand clothes had a certain prestige and he looked even more majestic than his father.

"Y-you're the actor that played the master?!" Pascal only recognized Ibaka after looking at him for some time. Apart from feeling amused, he also felt angry that he was actually frightened by a small actor.

Right then, an energetic voice spoke up from behind the curtain and an elegant lady dressed in opulent clothes walked out. She reproached Pascal with a severe gaze, "Ha. Where did this imbecile come from? How dare you make trouble here?"

Pascal was terrified by this reproach. Even a noble lady might not have such an overwhelming presence, so he couldn't help but size her up again.

Even though Maca Opera had never been popular, he had seen many people from the upper society too. He was rather sensitive to how the rich were dressed. This woman's attire and pose were much more noble than many noble ladies.

A gentleman at the side chuckled and said, "Yo. The actors all have new clothes today."

Pascal only regained his wits at that moment. This was no noble lady, either. She was just an actor who was used to playing a rich lady.

Pascal didn't expect to be frightened by two actors twice in a row. He couldn't help being furious and angrily said, "Y-you two, get lost!"

"Get lost! Ha..." Someone sneered and the curtain was pulled up. Vicki walked out and coldly said to Pascal, "Who the heck are you?"

Even though the petite Vicki was standing among the actors, her presence couldn't be concealed.

That arrogant gaze was just as if a noble young mistress was looking down at rotten scum on the ground.

It was just like... the arrival of a young mistress!

Chapter 2215: He Looks Just Like a Dog

Once, Pascal had proudly looked down on the poorly dressed and pale members of the Black Cat Opera. That was his self-opinionated idea of a winner's superiority.

However, looking at all the beautifully dressed actors, who all had a healthy glow now, around Vicki, that superiority dissipated completely.

He even began to feel inferior under their stares.

It was obvious that the Black Cat Opera had most likely found a wealthy sponsor.

Just the opulent costumes alone would have cost tens of thousands of copper coins to custom make.

Hence, this theater must be rented by them instead of illegally occupied.

Pascal quickly smiled brightly. "Ahem, Maestro Vicki, why do you sound so distant now? Didn't we have a couple of friendly conversations before? I'm Pascal, the maestro of Maca Opera. A few of your companions are even our troupe members now. Even if you have found a rich sponsor now, you cannot turn your back on us."

The situation was quite different from what he had imagined. The promise that he had made to Bobby earlier was most likely going to fail. He had to try again. After all, his sponsor was looking at him from behind, he had to do something.

Mag curved his lips into a smile gradually as he watched them. The development was quite different from what he anticipated.

However, this maestro was rather observant and knew how to adjust his tactics to the situation. He wasn't a hasty pig, but he really needed to improve on the way that he talks.

Meanwhile, Bobby couldn't help shaking and clenching his fists when he heard Pascal's words and saw the actors in opulent clothes.

He was so angry that he was trembling and he suddenly felt flushed with an icy cold sweat.

He felt as though he was suddenly plunged into an icy world stark naked and the real world had left him behind.

Did she... finally go and look for other sponsors?

In order to let the actors have opulent costumes, food and a stage to perform and stay...

But why didn't she go look for him? Instead, she went looking for someone else?

He felt pain.

He opened his mouth, but he couldn't speak.

However, it was fine that he couldn't speak. Everyone in the opera troupe was very angry. They instantly exploded after they heard Pascal's words.

They were just remembering their friends who had left them in those difficult times earlier and this culprit came to show off here.

Ibaka said to Pascal coldly, "I'm not hitting you because I want to give the audience a good impression."

The noble lady at the side, chimed in. "But you'd better not let us see you outside of the theater, otherwise, your face will be split open. I promise."

Pascal took two steps back in fear and he went pale.

These people... were scary after they had full bellies!

"Actually, I came to discuss with Maestro Vicki about our collaboration. We're all in the same business. Everyone knows that there are only two opera troupes in Rodu. Now, nobody understands opera and if we can cooperate and let more people know what opera is, we can increase the market share. Isn't that great?" Pascal said to Vicki seriously.

“Ha, not only do others not know about opera, I don’t think you know about opera either,” Vicki said coldly.

She wasn’t looking down at Pascal, but given Maca Opera’s standard, they were maligning opera instead.

The audience went to watch the opera with great expectations, but they had a good sleep instead. After that, they only remembered the good sleep and nothing else, so who would pay to watch opera in an opera house again?

This chap, whose brain was only filled with how to earn money from the audience’s pockets, was in fact, the cancer in the opera world!

“You can insult me, but you cannot insult my professional skill!” Pascal said sternly.

“Discussing opera with you is insulting to this art form.” Vicki pursed her lips.

“Y-you...” Pascal was furious, but there was nothing he could do.

The Black Cat Opera group was living a rich life now, he could no longer see the desire for food in their eyes. It was obviously not practical to try to lure them into joining Maca Opera.

With Vicki’s attitude, it was impossible for these two opera troupes to merge.

Pascal said with a flustered exasperation, “Don’t think everything will be fine just because you got yourself a rich sponsor! You have to serve that rich man in the future, so you won’t have much time to perform on stage!”

Vicki turned cold and a hint of killing intent appeared in her eyes.

However, before she could speak, a low voice spoke up in the audience. “Shut up! You shut up!”

Bobby stood up suddenly and flipped the bench over. He clenched his fists and looked at Vicki with a tortured expression.

Pascal immediately chickened out when Bobby spoke out, and he cowardly said, “Young Master Bobby, s-she has already gotten together with someone else...”

“Get out of here!” Bobby roared at him.

Pascal immediately stood to the side quietly.

Mag and his family already began to munch on melon seeds as they watched the show unravel in front of them.

Bobby’s expression interchanged from pain, to relief, to confusion and understanding. The opera actors present even marveled at him.

Bobby said to Vicki lovingly, “Miss Vicki, so you actually knew so many rich friends. Why didn’t you tell me before? You must be afraid that I will overthink it, right? You always think of me. You’re so good to me and I like you more and more.”

“That works too?!” Mag raised his eyebrows and glared, as he tilted his head to look at Bobby.

“Ha, is this the so-called ‘deeply in love’ trope?” Irina also asked smilingly.

“No... *this can only be called a bootlicker...*” Mag said inwardly.

Vicki showed a slightly disgusted expression. She looked at Bobby coldly. “I already made it very clear that I don’t like you. Can you please disappear from my vision? I won’t let you off if you use such scums to irritate me again.”

Bobby stumbled two steps back, clutched his chest and said with a pained expression, “Don’t push me away! I just want to see you every day. You can choose the location, be it the forest, the desert, the lake at night, the grassland, the sea or the street’s entrance in the early morning. As long as it isn’t in my dreams again.”

1

“Go back and sleep early. You can have everything in your dreams,” Vicki answered coldly.

Bobby looked at Vicki in a stunned manner, his feet rooted to the ground. His tears already began to fall from the corner of his eyes.

He heard the sound of something breaking. Perhaps, it was his heart.

“Maybe he is better and more suitable for you. Go then, I’ll set you free...

“However, you have to remember that if one day you want to come back, I’ll be here waiting for you. Always.

“Your body is weak. Ask him to be gentle, or my heart will ache,” Bobby sobbed as he said.

“Get lost!” Vicki grabbed a stool at the side.

“Calm down, Maestro!” All the actors grabbed onto her.

“Let’s go, Young Master.” Pascal also helped Bobby out quickly. Bobby stumbled on his way out, looking very lost...

“He looks just like a dog,” Amy looked at Bobby’s back and said.

Mag nodded in agreement.

He ended up with nothing after all this bootlicking.

Chapter 2216: We Came To Eat Here for Free Again Today

Bobby left the theater with Pascal’s help. He really looked like a dog with his broken hearted expression.

Mag looked at Vicki, who had put down the stool and regained her calmness. He smiled.

This maiden was very clear-headed. She rejected him clearly, but the bootlicker was too persistent...

Mala went to the entrance to help sell the tickets. As the all-rounder in the opera theater, she could receive guidance from all the actors for free by helping to sell the tickets.

Ten minutes later, Miss Black Cat started and there were just 10 or so customers in the whole theater.

However, the actors who had just changed into their new costumes, still gave the audience a great opera show.

“This opera is really interesting.” Irina looked at the actors bowing on the stage with a smile. She didn’t go when they went to watch the opera previously. It was her first time watching an opera today.

“The elves can sing and dance very well. It might be a great idea if we can form an elven opera troupe.” Mag suggested seriously. This was the elves’ tradition and they would hold bonfire parties on the empty fields at the textile factory every night if the weather permitted.

Mag also liked to watch the beautiful elves danced gently as they sang mesmerizing songs.

Of course, it was the children’s request.

Irina pondered seriously for a while before nodding. “This is a good idea. It would be even better if we could write an opera based on the Night Elves.”

“We have to talk to Maestro Vicki regarding the script. There’s no one more professional than her in this area,” Mag said as he flicked a glance at Vicki, who was walking towards them.

Vicki approached them and smilingly asked, “Mr. Hades, are you and your family satisfied with the performance?”

“It was a marvelous performance.” Mag nodded. The actors in their new costumes made the performance look even more natural and convincing. “But, where are some of the actors? Why are there so many people missing?”

The opera troupe had 15 to 16 people, but there were only nine of them on the stage today, including Mala whose role had no dialogue.

Vicki smilingly said, “They have lost their way temporarily, but I believe they will return very soon.”

Mag nodded thoughtfully. He believed that had something to do with Pascal, which was why the opera troupe people were so angry at him.

However, even when they were short of so many people, Vicki and the actors still put on a completed opera.

“Big Sister Vicki, you guys must be very rich, right?” Amy asked curiously.

Vicki was slightly stunned before she smilingly said, “Does Ay think that I look like a young mistress from a rich family?”

“Yes.” Amy nodded with conviction.

“Perhaps.” Vicki nodded with a smile, but didn’t clarify further.

“The performance in the evening will start a little later. I would like to give you and your family a treat to thank you for your assistance to the opera troupe,” Vicki said.

“Why don’t we eat at my place? I will cook and it’s more comfortable to eat at home.” Mag suggested.

“Will it be too troublesome for you?”

“Don’t worry. I rather like to cook.”

“Then, I shall go eat at your place,” Vicki replied with a smile.

Mag and his family returned to the tavern first. He got Mala to inform Eiffie to come over for dinner as well.

Irina walked one round in the tavern before she opened the back door to look at the plants which were growing well in the backyard. She lamented. “I can’t bear to leave her after only staying here for a month.”

Mag walked behind her and smilingly said, “Then, we shall come back to stay here for a few days every month. We can keep it as a holiday home.”

Irina’s eyes lit up and she said with a smile, “This suggestion is not bad. We can trim the plants once every month, which is just nice.”

“New mission: Strengthen neighborly relationships! As the saying goes, ‘an afar off relative is not as helpful as a near neighbor’. Could the Host please cook a meal for your neighbors to promote close neighborly relationships!” Amy, who was tying little ponytails for Ugly Duckling, suddenly received a mission from the system.

Amy was unmoved and she snapped back, “Stupid System, this action will only destroy neighborly relationships, alright?!”

2

“...” Life Experience System.

“Why don’t you change the mission to weaken neighborly relationships? I will only have to insist on cooking a meal for them daily and it will be achievable.” Amy continued on.

1

“As a chosen host, how can you give up so easily?! Good neighborly relationships needed to be maintained. This is also a part of life experiences. Could the Host please complete the mission...”

Knock knock.

Someone knocked on the door.

Amy got up and ran to the door. She grabbed the door handle on her tiptoes and pulled the door open.

“Wow! You’re so pretty today, Big Sister Eiffie. Ay likes it so much. I want a hug from you!”

“Really? Ay is also very cute. Come, let Big Sister hug you.” Eiffie smiled brightly as she scooped Amy up and kissed her on her rosy cheeks.

“Favorability from Eiffie +99!”

“...” Life Experience System.

The young system... was still taught a lesson by the juvenile host.

“Mission to strengthen neighborly relationships is canceled...”

1

A row of small words drifted across her mind silently.

Eiffie brought Mala over too. She was following after Eiffie with two bottles of liquor.

As the lady of the house, Irina politely said with a smile, “You just need to show up. Why are you still bringing us gifts?”

“We feel rather embarrassed to come eat at your place every day.” Eiffie hugged Amy and laughingly answered, “One of them is brewed by me, while the other is the cellar-aged liquor brewed by my father.”

Other than feeling envy for Mr. Hades’ beautiful wife, Eiffie could not feel jealous of her at all.

After all, she was simply too beautiful. Even she couldn’t help staring at her as a woman.

In comparison, it felt like Hades was the one who had taken advantage of her.

Moreover, both of her daughters were clever and adorable. Although they were still young, it was already obvious that they would turn out to be as beautiful as their mother.

It was a pity that she couldn’t even be his concubine.

“No, no. I am Eiffie! How can I be a concubine?!” Eiffie dispelled the messy thoughts from her head and corrected her morals again.

Vicki came too. She was also holding onto a little box.

“Maestro!” Mala greeted her enthusiastically.

“Mala, Miss Eiffie, you guys are here too?!” Vicki was a little surprised. She knew Eiffie too because of Mala.

Besides, Titan Tavern was the most popular tavern on Romo Street now and Eiffie even recommended the opera house to many of her customers.

“Yes. We came to eat here for free again today.” Eiffie nodded with a smile. She felt that she seemed to have gotten used to coming here for a free meal.

She felt a little desolate when she recalled that Mr. Hades and his family wouldn’t be coming back for a long time.

She didn’t know if it was because she couldn’t come here to eat anymore, or if it was because of something else.

Chapter 2217: There Were Tears In Her Eyes

Vicki passed the gift she brought over to Irina. The lights were dim previously so she could not really see what Irina looked like. Now that she got a closer look, Vicki could not help but praise her. "You're really beautiful."

Her skin was smooth and supple, her features were perfectly carved and her bust was full... such beauty and a figure was something even women could not resist but instead like.

No wonder little Amy and little Annie were so beautiful and cute. She could not really understand when she saw Mr. Hades at first but now, the mystery was solved.

They had completely inherited their mother's perfect genes.

"You are too. It would be better if you could grow a little taller." Irina received the gift with a smile. She glanced at Vicki's bust and held herself back.

The corners of Vicki's mouth twitched a little. Although she was a little pissed, she let the matter go on account of Irina's beautiful face.

She was just too beautiful.

"Mm. I think I will still grow taller. After all, I am still young and small." Vicki nodded. Age was her biggest advantage.

After all, she looked around the same age as Annie.

"Mm, still a little too small." Irina nodded.

Vicki: "..."

She was trying very hard to stand with her chest out to prove that she was not small.

"It's alright. I'll find a day to come and tell you a good method, it's guaranteed to make you grow quickly," Eiffie whispered softly to Vicki with a smile as she put her arms around her.

Don't touch me... Vicki turned her head but could not help but reply softly, "Does it really work?"

"Tried and tested." Eiffie smiled a very meaningful smile.

Vicki looked into the abyss of her eyes for a while and quickly smiled. "I'll follow your arrangements."

The women continued chatting. The atmosphere was rather harmonious.

Mag was cooking in the kitchen. He turned back to look at Irina and smiled.

Irina did not have many friends. Perhaps it was due to her status, other than Firis, she did not have a single close friend at all. Therefore, she seemed a little distant from others when conversing.

However, after stripping herself of the identity of a princess, she was rather friendly when talking to others with the status of the lady boss of a tavern.

This was great.

One might be able to oversee the mountains high up in the clouds, but it is too boring and lonely up there.

Walking down from the clouds and into the world would enable one to experience emotions and become more alive.

Mag made quite a lot of dishes. There was grilled fish, red braised beef, beggar's chicken and a few other dishes from Mamy Restaurant's menu that had been improved.

Mamy Restaurant was famous after all...

Mag did not want them to link him and the restaurant together so he did a simple change and even brought them over by saying that he was self-taught.

"Gulp."

Vicki looked at the delicious dishes on the table and could not help but swallow her saliva.

What kind of immortal is this? He could actually cook up such a feast alone in the kitchen and the food actually looked very delicious!

Initially, she did not hold high expectations when Mag said he cooks at home. However, she could not really reject it since her sponsor was the one who suggested for her to join in.

She did not actually expect this feast.

She had never felt such a craving for food, even when she attended a high-end banquet in the Underground City.

After all, the food that looked exquisite did not really taste that good. Moreover, the food did not smell this good as well.

"Mr. Hades, please inform me if you were to open up a restaurant one day. That way I would have a place to settle my three meals a day," Eiffie told Mag seriously.

Although Mala was still learning a thing or two from Hades and her cooking did improve, her standard was still nowhere near that of Hades'.

She could not help but feel a little upset that she could no longer get free meals that were this scrumptious anymore.

"Actually, my cooking skills are just mediocre. If you really want to try good food, you can go to the Mamy Restaurant that has opened in Chaos City. Mr. Mag's cooking is the real deal," Mag said with a smile.

Irina glanced at him. He's even praising himself?

"Is Mamy Restaurant very famous?" Vicki asked curiously.

"Extremely. It was said to be the best restaurant in the Norland Continent and the chef, Mr. Mag, is also the most charismatic man in the whole of the Norland Continent!" Mala replied.

She glanced at Mag and said, "Of course, my master is still better."

Mag nodded. He was enjoying this double praise.

"I guess I could try it out if I'm free." Vicki nodded.

"It's rather far away from Chaos City. I heard that it would take you a month to reach there," Mala said. It was such a pity that it was so far away. Otherwise, she would have gone over to try it.

"Alright, everyone must be hungry. Let's eat," Mag said with a smile. No matter how thick-skinned he was, he could not stand so much praise.

Mag gave Amy and Annie two pieces of chicken and started eating the grilled fish.

Vicki only picked her chopsticks up after Mag. She picked up a piece of red braised beef that was in front of her.

The beef was cut into cubes. The color was very alluring and the rich fragrance assailed her nostrils. Vicki, who had been eating army rations for days, let her guard down in an instant.

She couldn't take it anymore!

She put the large piece of red braised pork into her mouth, stuffing her cheeks.

She could not be bothered about how she looked anymore. She bit into the red braised beef and the juice squirted out in her mouth. The exquisite texture made her taste buds dance for joy. Her soul had ascended.

This feeling of satisfaction...

How blissful!

She chewed on the meat and swallowed it.

"This... this is too good!"

Vicki had tears in her eyes.

Even though she was born into a wealthy family and had tried countless delicacies in the eyes of commoners, no food had ever given her such a sense of satisfaction.

It was just a normal piece of beef that could be bought at a few copper coins a kilogram but Hades had made it into a delicacy.

After having the red braised beef, she finally knew that this was the taste of meat!

Vicki looked at Mag differently. To her, he had changed from a wealthy middle-aged man into a good man with superb cooking skills.

A man who can cook is a good man, right?!

If there was a man who would make such delicious red braised beef for her every day, she would be willing to marry him!

After having three consecutive pieces of meat, Vicki ate a few mouthfuls of rice. She finally felt her hunger being satisfied a little.

After that, she set her eyes on the roast chicken that had been cut up.

The roast chicken was tender and its skin was slightly yellow. The oil on the skin was reflecting light and it appeared to be a little charred and crispy. However, the meat was still tender and juicy.

She picked up a piece of chicken and ate it together with the skin.

The skin was very fragrant. On top of that, it did not get stuck in her teeth. The meat was indeed tender and juicy. On top of that, the flavour had infused very well into the meat.

This bite was a very different experience from the red braised beef.

“Ah~”

Vicki opened her legs slightly and could not help but moan.

1

This was fantastic!

Chapter 2218: It's Hard Not To Fall For Him

The delicious roast chicken had a huge impact on Vicki and it even made her lose her self-control.

After swallowing the chicken, she quickly closed her legs together and blushed.

This...

It's so embarrassing!

As a young mistress with a very good upbringing who had received a high-class education, she actually had such a reaction in front of other men.

“It's good, right?” Effie looked at her with a smile. Her reaction was not any worse than when she first tried Hades' cooking.

It seemed as though those delicacies had some sort of magical power. No matter how hard you try to control yourself, you would still be unable to when you try the food for the first time.

“Delicious.” Vicki nodded. It was an undeniable truth.

“Mr. Hades' cooking is too shocking. It is praise-worthy.” Vicki looked at Mag seriously and said, “If you open a restaurant, you have to let me know.”

“Sure.” Mag nodded with a smile.

After trying the roast chicken and grilled fish, Vicki felt that she was a woman who changes her mind easily because her preferences seemed to be changing instantly and the change happened only because she tried the next dish.

Perhaps it was because the food was too good. The dining atmosphere was very harmonious and there was laughter and conversations; everyone became so much closer.

“Vicki, is your troupe preparing another opera other than Miss Black Cat?” Irina asked curiously.

“Yes. We have around five other operas prepared.” Vicki nodded. She shrugged helplessly. “However, we recently lost some of our actors, so we only have enough people for Miss Black Cat.”

“Did the fat Maestro in the afternoon poach them?” Mag interrupted.

“Actually, I am not too angry over this. After all, they were starving with me but they would at least have food with him.” Vicki smiled and said with an open mind, “Humans are like that. You can’t possibly make others starve for your dreams.”

Mag nodded. This was another reason he admired Vicki.

“Speaking of new scripts, I am recently intending to write a new script based on the war this time.” Vicki’s eyes seemed to shine when she talked about the opera.

“This war? What can you write about? The collection of peach trees and glutinous rice?” Eiffie asked with a tilt of her head.

“The scene of everyone chopping down their peach trees and piling them by the street was rather impactful. However, does that mean that we all will have no peaches to eat next year?” Mala added in, feeling pity for the peaches.

Mag and Irina smiled. To ordinary folks, the most impactful thing would be the collection of the peach trees and glutinous rice.

Although it had been two days since the war ended, the soldiers at the frontline might not have returned home yet. The details of the war were only spreading around specific class levels.

However, the legend of Alex saving the world once again had begun spreading around the various teahouses and restaurants. The stories were all very exciting and even Mag could not help but exclaim in awe when hearing them.

Vicki, as an art creator, probably heard related news and thought of writing a script on the war.

“No, no, no. The peach trees and glutinous rice collection were only part of the war and could only be considered a small part under the logistics team. The real excitement is the war that happened on the ice sheets.

“All of you might not be able to imagine the scene of hundreds and thousands of skeletons swarming over. The giant dragons dropped many explosives and tens of thousands of human archers shot raining arrows... that scene was more than just awe-inspiring!

“Of course, the most touching moment was when Alex slashed the skeleton dragon in one blow and lured the devil into the spell formation, and used a pre-arranged teleportation portal to escape, successfully sealing the devil to end the war.

“Alex was too cool! You can’t find another man like that in the world!”

Vicki was very agitated when she spoke and in the end, she even looked like a little fan girl.

“How does this lass know so clearly about what happened on the frontline?” Mag raised his eyebrow and looked at Vicki in surprise.

The details were accurate and there were parts that even most of the frontline soldiers didn't know of.

This was also why the rumors in the teahouses had spread so rapidly.

"Have you fallen for him?" Irina asked Vicki with a seemingly gentle smile.

"It's hard not to fall for him." Vicki nodded.

Mag glanced at Irina carefully and felt danger looming.

Vicki quickly said, "Of course, it's impossible for me though. Princess Irina is also super beautiful. She's comparable to you, Big Sister. I'm afraid only a beautiful and powerful woman like her is a match for Alex."

Mag heaved a sigh of relief for this lass.

1

"Really?" Irina smiled and retracted the knife that she had already pulled out halfway.

Of course. She was the only one who could be comparable to herself in terms of looks.

"Maestro, how did you know so much? You weren't around two days ago. Did you go to the frontline?" Mala asked curiously.

Vicki froze. She felt that she had been a little too rash and said too much of what she should not have said. Now, it would be difficult to pull the wool over their eyes.

Mag and Irina exchanged glances.

"Ah... how is that possible. I can't even lift up a sword, much less be at the frontline to be a human sacrifice." Vicki laughed awkwardly and said, "I went to visit my relatives two days ago and happened to run into one of them who returned from the frontline. I heard my stories from him."

"*She's lying.*" Mag and Irina could both tell.

A person's small actions and expressions could reveal a lot.

If one would calculate based on the timeline, it was indeed possible for Vicki to appear at the frontline on the ice sheets, only, the identity in which she appeared was unknown.

She was the young mistress from a wealthy family. Why would she have to go to the frontline? This was not a joke and even a 10th-tier powerhouse could die.

"So you are intending to write a script related to Alex?" Mag asked with a smile and did not expose Vicki's lies.

"I was just thinking about it... after all, it's very difficult to find someone who could act like him. On top of that, the scene is too grand. You have no idea how scary the devil was. It's really very difficult to represent it on stage." Vicki shook her head.

"In that case, if someone got you to write a script, would you do it?" Irina asked.

“No one has done that so far. After all, there are only two opera troupes in Rodu currently. Of course, if it was an interesting concept and story, I might just give it a try,” Vicki said with a smile.

Irina nodded slightly and had a rough idea.

After dinner, Eiffie and Vicki made their way back. Titan Tavern and Black Cat Opera House had to open at night too.

Chapter 2219: Black Cat Opera Needs You

Black Cat Opera’s first performance after changing their costumes was a huge success. The suitable and fitting clothes, beautiful singing and exciting plot wowed the audience. Even in the dilapidated opera house, they still gave the audience an excellent opera performance.

After the show, Vicki led all the actors in taking a bow.

All the audience stood up and clapped. The applause lasted for a long time.

Meanwhile, in a corner at the last row, a few inconspicuous audience members looked at this scene with tears in their eyes.

“Maestro’s dreams have finally come true. It’s great,” said a young man smilingly.

A middle-aged man sighed and lamented, “Yes. Unfortunately, it has nothing to do with us. If we had held on for a little longer, we would be on the stage with them.”

“Let’s go. It’s time to go back.”

The few of them lowered their heads and followed the crowd out to the door, looking a little desolate.

They had gone through the toughest time together, but they chose to be deserters just as dawn was coming.

However, it still made them emotional and tearful when they saw their former companions act out the opera that they had practiced so hard for on stage.

“Since you are here, do you still want to leave silently?”

They had reached the door and were about to leave when a voice spoke up from in front of them.

All of them looked up and saw Vicki at the door.

“Maestro,” all of them called out instinctively.

Then, all of them lowered their heads in shame, unable to meet Vicki’s eyes.

“What do you think about today’s show?” Vicki asked smilingly.

“This is the best show I have seen. Your performance is mesmerizing,” Four looked up and said seriously.

The few of them also nodded. Today’s opera performance made them feel excited.

Perhaps, it was the enhancement of the costumes that made them feel that everyone had done excellently today and created an exciting opera.

Bao lowered his head and gently said, "I'm sorry, Maestro. We didn't even say goodbye when we left."

The others also looked self-reproachful and avoided Vicki's eyes.

They were all rescued by Vicki from dire situations and they had all been working towards the same dream, helping and encouraging one another. However, the few of them became deserters.

"I have never blamed you guys for that. I don't know how I would have let you guys go if you'd come to say goodbye to me." Vicki looked at all of them with a smile. "At least, you guys have food to eat when you're there. You would only have starved hopelessly if you stayed on."

All of them looked increasingly ashamed.

"However, everything is different now. We have our own opera house, new costumes and an audience who appreciates our performance. Moreover, we have food every day and we have meat for every meal." Vicki stepped forward and said to all of them seriously, "Come back. We need you and Black Cat Opera needs you."

"Maestro!"

All of them looked up and stared at Vicki in disbelief.

They had imagined being scolded or sneered at by Vicki, at the very least, she wouldn't want to see them. They had never imagined that Maestro would ask them to come back?!

"Yes. Four, Bao and Little Seven, come back. It's very tiring for us to act in so many roles. Moreover, only you guys play your roles best." Ibaka appeared next to Vicki.

The other actors who were still wearing their costumes, walked out from the side door. They came over to Vicki and said to Bao and the rest, "Come back, we need you guys."

"Everyone..."

Bao and the rest finally couldn't help but cry.

The audience who was about to leave, halted their footsteps when they saw this scene. Some even spoke up for them.

Bao wiped away his tears and said, shaking his head, "Maestro, even though we would like to come back very much, I'm afraid we can't."

Four and the rest also revealed a desolate look in their eyes.

"Why?" Vicki looked at Bao and frowned, "Did Pascal force you guys to sign something?"

After a moment of deliberation, Bao said with guilt, "Pascal made us all sign a contract when we joined Maca Opera. We have to stay in Maca Opera for three years. If we try to leave, we'll have to pay 50,000 copper coins of liquidated damages for breach of contract."

"50,000 copper coins!"

All of them in the opera troupe sucked in a cold breath.

To the opera troupe which was just beginning to get on its feet, this was, without a doubt, a huge sum.

Even though there were many people who came tonight, they only collected 3000 to 4000 copper coins. After deducting their expenses, they wouldn't have too much money left.

There were eight of them, including Bao, so 50,000 copper coins for each of them would be 400,000 copper coins in total.

Obviously, this wasn't something that the Black Cat Opera could afford now.

Vicki waved her hand and said with conviction, "You guys go back first and I'll personally go to Maca Opera to bring you all back tomorrow. You don't have to worry about money."

"But Maestro..." Bao panicked a little.

"Since you called me Maestro, follow my instructions. Don't hem and haw." Vicki frowned and her presence immediately increased.

Bao only felt a chill down his neck. He instinctively shivered and kept quiet.

Vicki stepped to the side and said, "Alright, let's stop blocking the door."

All of them also quickly stepped to the side to let the audience go out.

Bao and the rest returned first and the audience left too.

"Maestro, do we really have the money?" Ibaka asked Vicki. He was already holding the money bag in his hands, "I still have the wage that you gave us yesterday. Why don't you take it first?"

"Me too. I only ate a bowl of noodles with it and the rest is still here."

"I bought a piece of clothing, but it was only 30 copper coins. The rest is here."

All of them took out their money and came forward.

Vicki looked at the tattered money bags in their hands and smiled. She pushed Ibaka's hands back and said to all of them, "Money is not an issue. I can resolve it. These are your wages, put them away. I'll go get them back tomorrow."

All of them looked at Vicki. After some hesitation, they put away the money.

Maestro never lied to them. This was their consensus.

Since she said it was fine, then it was definitely fine.

"I'll go buy some quilts for them tomorrow. Little Seven is afraid of the cold."

"I'll get Little Seven a pretty dress. The little maiden loves to dress up. She has even talked about it in her dreams a few times."

"Four's clothes are already tattered. I'll go buy a big coat for him tomorrow."

“We’ll be able to perform other operas if everyone is back. The audience will definitely like it if we rotate the shows.”

Everyone chimed in as they started to fantasize about their future.

Vicki had a smile. She was suddenly very grateful to Mr. Hades for giving her a choice today. It gave her the ability to bring her troupe members back.

Chapter 2220: Attention Attracted by the Little Mermaid

“What? How is this even possible?!”

In ‘Perfect Food’'s editorial department, Hector stared at the completely identical picture books with shock.

These were sent by Garlan from Chaos City with the fastest flying steeds. As the boss of ‘Perfect Food’, Hector was also a picture book lover.

Garlan wasn’t sending him a gift to butter him up. After all, Garlan knew that such prim and proper picture books were not what he liked.

Hector, who had shelves full of colored picture books at home, wasn’t shocked over how beautifully drawn ‘The Tale of The Little Mermaid’ was. Instead, he was shocked that these two picture books were identical!

This was a colored picture book!

According to Garlan, there were 1,000 identical copies in Chaos City. They were being sold at Mamy Restaurant at 1,000 copper coins per copy.

What did this mean?

Usually, people would think about how to buy a few more copies and then sell them for more at another place, earning from the price difference.

With Hector’s professional insight, this picture book could be sold for 50,000 to 80,000 copper coins in Rodu’s colored picture books market.

The drawing style was exquisite and the story was interesting. Many rich young mistresses would like it.

They could buy it at 1,000 copper coins and sell it for 100,000 copper coins before the news spread to Rodu.

Garlan was asking him to help him sell it...

But of course, it was far more than that; 1,000 identical colored picture books meant that someone had already solved the problem of color printing in Chaos City.

This was, without a doubt, a subversive news to the paper media.

Imagine it, if colored pictures could be inserted into ‘Perfect Food’, what kind of impact would it create in the gourmet magazines’ market?

If this cost could be lowered, the price could be controlled, then he couldn't imagine the growth of 'Perfect Food' magazine.

Hector's breathing slowly became labored when he thought of this.

However, Garlan had sent back bad news at the same time. Mag declined to work with 'Perfect Food' exclusively. Instead, he signed a contract with 10 gourmet magazines at the same time.

This meant 'Perfect Food' had lost its advantage of exclusivity and the previous miracle of the 1,000,000 issues wouldn't be repeated either.

However, if they could get the secret of wealth of color printing without other gourmet magazines knowing, he could already foresee the numerous changes the industry was going to face. Countless opportunities were hidden there.

Just printing some of his prized picture books after censoring some of the inappropriate pictures would be enough to shock the picture books' industry and earn him buckets of gold.

The good news was these picture books came from Mr. Mag and they were drawn by his daughter.

The not-so-good news was Mr. Mag was obviously not a man who could be easily fooled. Selling 1,000 copies of picture books every day at 1,000 copper coins each allowed him to earn 1,000,000 copper coins easily.

Hector wasn't sure that he could make such a man share his secret of wealth.

Hector walked to his office's door and said to his secretary, "Help me book a travel ticket to Chaos City tomorrow. I want the fastest flying steed."

"Yes, Boss."

"Interesting. How did Mr. Mag do it? He actually solved a problem that couldn't be resolved for years and he did it so beautifully! Is it magic? It doesn't seem like it."

In the Buffett Manor, Scheer was reading a picture book on the sofa with her legs propped up comfortably. She was marveling at it.

It was her rare rest time and the picture book was gifted to her by her servant. It came from Mamy Restaurant and Annie.

The story was interesting and the drawing style was very intricate too.

The comfortable color and drawing style gave her an enjoyable 30 minutes.

However, what interested her the most was the picture book itself.

It was a colored picture book and a mass produced colored picture book at that too.

Such a thing had never appeared on the market before.

The reason was very simple. No one was able to print colored prints up until now.

Some had tried before, but what they created was rough and the colors were limited. Hence, the combination was unusually ugly and it wasn't even as good as black-and-white, which provided some room for imagination.

Someone had said before, if anyone could resolve the issue of color printing, they would grasp the secret of wealth of the paper media.

Now, this person has appeared.

Scheer caressed the picture book with upturned lips.

1

Mr. Mag had indeed never disappointed her before. From the steam train to the color printing now, it was easier for her to accept the latter because of the former.

The Buffett Family didn't have many businesses in the paper media industry, but everyone knew the importance of a wide-spread media platform. It was the same to the Buffett Family.

She had sensed that this industry was going to be subverted and a new player was going to emerge soon. Perhaps, she could have a chance to plan in advance this time.

"I wonder if Mr. Mag will decide to do it himself this time, or sell away the technology like before?" Scheer murmured before she turned to say towards the door, "By tomorrow morning, I want to see the information on the best people in the media on the Norland Continent."

"Yes, Young Mistress," the secretary respectfully answered from the outside.

"Quick! Send this book to Rodu and get Old Fang to print 10,000 copies!"

In a living room at the north of Chaos City, a middle-aged man passed a picture book that was wrapped up in layers of cloth to a young man.

"Father, this... isn't very nice, right?" the young man said with a frown.

The middle-aged man leaped up and knocked him on his head. He said as though he had expected better from him, "What do you know, kid? We do this for a living. What's not nice about it? Others will print it even if we don't. There's no point for us to print it if it is available everywhere."

The young man covered his head and aggrievedly said, "B-but, we're printing 10,000 copies right away. What if we can't sell it? These aren't restricted books that they cannot buy on the market."

1

The middle-aged man rolled his eyes and said, "What do you know? It contains instructions on how to cook red braised pork, personally drawn by Mamy Restaurant's boss' daughter. Do you know how many copies of the previous 'Perfect Food' were sold because of Boss Mag's eggplant with garlic sauce's recipe? 1,000,000 copies! You fool! Don't even say 10,000 copies, I may have to print even more copies."

“But...”

“But your a** ... Go now!” The middle-aged man gave him a kick.

The young man went out quietly.

Mag had no idea that ‘The Tale of The Little Mermaid’ had attracted so many people’s attention. He had already begun to plan how to promote the sales of ‘Miss Black Cat’.

This time, he intended to release it in Rodu first and fixed the price at 2000 copper coins per copy.

The price was double that of the ‘Little Mermaid’'s, but it had more than twice the pages and Annie’s drawing was far better in ‘Miss Black Cat’ than in ‘The Little Mermaid’ after practicing for a period of time.

Furthermore, his target audience were those rich and free people who appreciated the arts. They were the opera house’s target customers.