

## Sweet Love 1861

### Chapter 1861: Gu Xingze is blacklisted. (1)

Being a media darling did not mean that the artist could capture the hearts of the viewers.

A majority of the ardent TV viewers were in their middle age. Audience of this age group was unlikely to be crazy, hot-headed following. Instead, in hopes of capturing the hearts of such people, one must consistently appear in the news to increase exposure.

A national presence would equate to confirmed viewership and box-office returns. This would mean that the artist could ask for a higher pay.

An artist's earnings could go up or down like the stock market, but if one managed to become a household name, then a high asking price would be a sure guarantee.

Thus, right now, Yun Shishi needed to capture the audience's heart.

Although she was popular, her national presence was not on par. As such, her commanding price could not be compared to the A-listers.

This was why more efforts had to be invested in selecting the scripts.

Unfortunately, the scripts presented were of varying quality, and she suffered a headache going through them.

Qin Zhou, on the other hand, was a master in this area. He was extremely critical with script selection. Those of inferior quality were immediately rejected without a second glance. Many productions that he had accepted were decided after many late nights and careful considerations.

It was hard to gauge the value of a good script.

Some productions could not offer a high rate but the script was good.

Some scripts offered a high pay, but to her manager, these were worthless productions.

In the end, he accepted two drama and three movie productions, but she was astonished to learn that, with these, her schedule was full for the next three years.

With her head spinning, she studied her busy workload with mixed feelings.

*This is probably how one feels after becoming famous overnight!*

She did not know if she should smile or cry at the sight of the seven-digit jump on her bank statement and back-to-back production dates.

Her manager worked tirelessly to get her the deals thereafter.

Since she was now famous, she had become more active on social media upon her agent's request. During this period where she was promoting the movie, she would tweet on the road, before she slept, and while reading her script...

All in all, the company wanted to increase her media exposure while the show ran in the theaters.

Of course, the fans who left messages on her Weibo were much friendlier now, unlike in the past where unkind words were common.

Still, gossip would also abound after one became famous.

There were many who wondered if her perfect profile was a product of reconstructive surgery.

There were also those who believed that she could work with Lin Fengtian, an A-list director, because she had undue support.

However, there were even more who believed that she was riding on Gu Xingze's coattails when they were made a CP.

There were countless rumors surrounding her and the superstar. Most netizens, though, had no objections to them as a pair. At the very least, they looked good together. In fact, because of the 'The Green Apple,' some of his fans who had disliked her at first, eventually turned into her followers. 'The Lucky Couple' was the talk of the town.

To her, though, reading those pieces of gossip of a non-existent relationship was a chore.

The woman realized, with much resignation, that this publicity tactic was unfair to the man, and she knew that she could not escape the blame, either. She had agreed to it at first.

Although this was something that her manager had insisted on back then, she still felt ashamed of her participation in this matter.

*What a headache!*

She finally decided to make her stand clear before her agent.

"Qin Zhou, I have a request."

Cocking a brow, the man shot back a question. "What is it?"

"I hope that the team can stop branding me and Xingze."

## **Chapter 1862: Gu Xingze is blacklisted. (2)**

His hand gave a jerk before he asked with a frown, "Why?"

It was a relief for the actress to get this off her chest. "Actually, I've never been pro this tactic in the first place. I find it a chore to fake feelings for someone I'm not romantically inclined with. This'll just hurt the other party involved. Besides, I think it's unfair to boost my popularity using him."

She was not saying this because she was famous now but because she truly did not see any value in faking a relationship just to increase her popularity.

She wanted her acting skills to be the basis of her success in career instead a lowly tactic like that.

While his eyes were still fixed on the documents in his hands, Qin Zhou merely retorted with indifference, "I thought I told you that if you wanna sustain a career in this industry, you need to employ such commercial gimmicks to boost your popularity. That's how this industry works, and there's no exception—not even when you're famous! Right now, your media exposure isn't enough, so naturally, we'll need to use this method to hype your name. There's no need for you to consider fairness to either party. Besides, Xingze's exposure has gone up because of the rumors too, so both parties are winners. You aren't taking advantage of him, so you don't have to take it to heart. Plus, I made the decision to employ this tactic; it has nothing to do with you."

"..." The woman kept quiet for some time before she let out a sigh abruptly. "But I can't overcome the guilt inside me. I'm already engaged and I treasure my relationship very much; I don't want to hurt anybody, including the superstar."

"Hurt anyone?"

Her manager broke into a chuckle. "There's no such thing as hurting someone in this kinda affair. Shishi, don't be oversensitive!"

"..."

*Am I being oversensitive here?*

He glanced up at her and gave a resigned smile in the end. "Besides, I'm afraid there's no more CP for you and him even if you wanna continue with it!"

"What do you mean..."

"Why? Don't tell me you don't know what's going on? The team has stopped releasing the script for such." The man stopped what he was doing and told her the truth.

There was a hint of angst beneath his calm exterior.

"Why is that?"

She was stunned momentarily before continuing with some hesitation. "Then, what about those scripts..."

He looked confused for a second before replying, "The marketing side was behind those. The scripts weren't from us. There's something I must tell you; even though the news isn't official yet, in reality... he's been blacklisted."

"What?!"

Her eyes widened in shock and disbelief, and she probed at once. "Blacklisted? Why is he... blacklisted?!"

"I thought you knew, but it appears that you're in the dark about this! I've wronged you!" He felt a rush of relief. "You didn't know about it at all."

"I don't know..."

This piece of news was too sudden for her.

She was bewildered. Why was the actor blacklisted for no reason? When did it happen?

She had no clue at all.

Her eyes then opened wide with a sudden realization. She uttered while clenching her fists unconsciously, "I just recalled... He didn't appear in the recent roadshows! He vanished from the public's eye immediately after the movie premiere..."

### **Chapter 1863: Gu Xingze is blacklisted. (3)**

She thought that the superstar had fallen sick and was taking this chance to rest. By the looks of it, the reality might not be that simple!

*Has he truly been blacklisted? Really?*

She knew, deep down, that this was no hoax, for the news had come from her manager. There was no need for him to lie to her about such things, after all.

Still...

Why was the superstar blacklisted?

She gave her agent a perplexed look which spelled her disbelief and confusion.

"Why was he blacklisted?"

The man did not know what to say.

Tensing the corner of her lips, she probed cautiously. "Is something going on that is unconfirmed, or... has he offended a bigshot, who caused him to be blacklisted?"

"Let me ask you: Do you know Gu Xingze's identity?"

His sudden question caught her off guard.

Bewildered, she shook her head.

"Then, do you know that there's a Gu family in the capital?"

Her eyes lit up with a start, and she turned speechless.

*The Gu family in the capital?*

She had come across hearsays about that family, but her knowledge about them was superficial at best.

The Gus here started out as a mafia ring. Subsequently, they managed to turn over a new leaf and established a proper corporation in the commercial arena. Now, their power extended to the high society and the underworld. Although they could not match the Mus, their influence in the criminal world could be said to be on par with the latter.

Within the capital, the Gus were the most powerful next to the Mus.

All the underground casinos and gambling dens in the capital were controlled by that mafia family.

In a village within the capital at East Street, they had amassed a large gang.

There was a Chinese saying that highlighted the ills of offending a mobster compared to a gentleman.

The Gus might not be thugs, but whoever offended them would definitely get a taste of their cruelty!

There was a story in the past.

The son of a high-ranking, office-bearer in the capital had lost a big loan in a casino at East Street. The man refused to pay it off and, instead, boasted about his father's power to the gangsters who had come looking for him. 'My father is Dai Jianqing! There's nobody in the capital who doesn't know him, so how dare you chase me for money still?! All of you are small fries who know no better! Beware: My father may just destroy what you have at East Street if I make a complaint!'

The thugs merely laughed it off and forcefully took the arrogant man away in their car.

What had happened next terrified those who heard the story later.

According to rumors, the fellow continued his high-and-mighty attitude after being taken away. Besides attacking his abductors with supercilious words, he even boasted that he could wipe out the Gu family.

Unfortunately, his words landed on the ears of Gu Jinglian, the big demon in charge of that family, so one could guess the eventual demise of that flamboyant man.

Both his hands and one leg were chopped off without mercy.

They kept him locked and tortured for half a month before releasing him. By then, the man had turned crazy and his family had to send him to a mental asylum for treatment.

This frightening incident had alerted even the high-level bureaucrats, but none dared to say a word when they found out that the perpetrators were people of the Gu family.

When Dai Jianqing saw his son again, the latter had already lost his mind and was without three of his limbs. During one of his visits, his son let out a howl and begged for mercy, 'Don't kill me! Don't kill me! Please let me go—'

#### **Chapter 1864: Gu Xingze is blacklisted. (4)**

Witnessing this, Dai Jianqing was absolutely brokenhearted.

He gritted his teeth, dying to find out the perpetrator behind this, but when he did, he dared not speak out and could only endure it!

Eventually, in less than a year, he was exposed for all the greed, corruption, and dirty dealings he had been involved in, which led to his swift downfall!

Without much thinking, he naturally knew who was behind his fall from grace!

Though the entire capital knew of the Gu family's actions, no one dared to provoke them.

Hearing her manager's recount, the actress conveniently linked the superstar to that powerful family.

However, Qin Zhou smiled. "Shishi, let me put it this way; with a backing like the Gus, no one will dare to find trouble with Xingze, except... of course for the Mu family."

The reason behind the superstar's huge popularity was not just his outstanding singing and acting skills or his inherently gorgeous face. It was also due to the family, whom no one dared to offend, supporting him.

His father initially did not approve of him making a debut in showbiz.

For a person of the Gus to mix in the entertainment industry as an actor was dismal news when disseminated.

However, after Gu Jinglian ascended to his position, not only was there no interference, he even began throwing tons of resources onto him.

Knowing that some of the family's influence and assets were unclean, they understood the need for a clear reputation!

Although they had a listed company, it would unavoidably rouse suspicion if their profits from it were significant.

Therefore, the head of the Gu household established the Wind Investment Fund and invested a hefty sum on his younger half-brother's movie.

It could be said that this was the best of both worlds.

This was why the superstar was able to remain in showbiz for so long and could not break off the relationship of dependence with his older half-brother.

Now that the actor was blacklisted and even his older half-sibling was incapable of salvaging the situation, who else apart from Mu Yazhe could have placed the ban on him?!

When the actress heard this, she understood something at once and sucked in a breath of cold air.

"You are saying..."

Her manager knocked on the table as his expression remained neutral. "Apart from the Mus, who else could openly challenge the Gu family's prestige?"

"Why?"

She could not figure out why her husband would ban the superstar.

"You are smart. You should know why Xingze got blacklisted!"

There was a hint in the agent's gaze, and it was evident what it was.

She was taken aback as she suddenly thought of something. She lowered her head helplessly.

They sat quietly in mutual understanding.

“I... I didn’t want things to end up this way, but...”

“Do you know how much Xingze likes you? He’s been secretly giving himself to you... but I guess that there just isn’t any fate between you two! Still, that rascal seems to have been cursed. It’s like he must have you despite the countless women out there.”

Her manager smiled all of a sudden as he looked at her playfully. “I must say; you sure have a lot of charm! You’re able to leave the superstar so captivated and make you all that he thinks about!”

“...”

She remained quiet.

“You shouldn’t blame yourself, though. This issue has nothing to do with you. He’s the one who couldn’t think beyond and couldn’t let go. I warned him many times, but he just wouldn’t listen. There’s nothing that could be done at this point! I knew that such a day would come. If he didn’t let go of his feelings for you, he’d eventually enrage Chairman Mu. Your husband’s ban was something we’ve long foreseen.”

“...”

Yun Shishi shut her eyes as her head throbbed in pain.

#### **Chapter 1865: Gu Xingze is blacklisted. (5)**

“I didn’t know that that’s how he felt toward me...”

“You’re truly dumb. You mean you couldn’t tell? Why do you think that Xingze willingly used his resources to support you and let you have such an exposure upon your debut?! Why do you think that guy, who has never participated in a reality show, accepted a program like ‘The Love Diary?’”

Qin Zhou’s heart throbbed as he paused for a moment.

“You couldn’t tell? Even if it’s fake or just an act, he did it because he wanted to have you. It didn’t matter if it’s all just for show. Couldn’t you tell? The pampering and love he did for you during the program weren’t just an act.”

“Enough.”

She cut him off all of a sudden. “Why did he have to be like that? He didn’t have to accept it if he didn’t want to. Putting on a show?! I... I don’t wish for him to be that way to me! What I feel toward him is just respect for a senior—nothing more! His actions will only disturb my heart and bring about complications! I really treasure my friendship with him, but...”

“What he feels for you isn’t platonic at all,” plainly stated her manager with knitted brows.

Yun Shishi closed her eyes. “I know... but the way he’s acting will only make me feel guilty!”

Qin Zhou looked at her quietly before a smile broke out on his face. “Don’t feel guilty! If your heart aches for him, then stop meeting him! Let him forget you and minimize the feelings he has for you. Be it

how you feel toward him or how he feels toward you, it'll be nothing but a disaster. Do you understand?"

"I understand."

"Don't worry; Chairman Mu's been merciful with him and hasn't made things harder for him. He blacklisted the superstar all so the latter could stop pining for you; that's all."

When she left Qin Zhou's office, she held her arm absentmindedly.

The agent's words still rang in her head. 'Xingze's work schedule is at a standstill! The moment Boss Mu blacklisted him, none dared to invite him on to their shows. All of the production teams removed his name from their lists. I'm afraid that he won't be able to show himself in front of the masses for a long time. Now that he's been banned, he's taking this time to recuperate at home. I hope that he can be by himself to think things through peacefully!'

...

After Gu Xingze was blacklisted, he stopped updating his Weibo.

The fans were extremely sensitive. After all, his social-media updates previously had been at an average of one post a day following the screening of the film.

After ten days of zero updates, his fans were worried sick. Almost a hundred thousand comments were left under his last post, all asking their idol why he had not updated his feeds in a long time and if an unforeseen event had happened to him.

All of his fans were extremely concerned. Some even came up with the conjecture that he was suffering from clinical depression. On the last show he had made an appearance, he was very quiet and seemed dispirited. The sadness in his eyes left a thousand fans feeling as if a knife had pierced their hearts.

Someone even brought up the premiere ceremony the man attended not long ago, talking about his pale and sickly complexion. They began to worry if their idol was overworked and his body had collapsed.

There were even fans who were worried if he was involved in something dubious.

The production team of 'The Green Apple' was finally alarmed by all these and had to respond to their inquiries by officially saying that the superstar was presently sick at home and would need a long period of recuperation, so he requested not to be disturbed by anyone in the meantime.

As for their road tour and movie promotion, he would be absent as well.

His fans were utterly disappointed.

To show their support, many heroically booked the whole theater to watch the movie, causing the box-office sales to rise to a shocking extent.

**Chapter 1866: Hua Jin begs for forgiveness.**

Everyone was clear about one thing, though.

Gu Xingze might have gone off-screen this time due to his illness, but there was a high chance that he would never appear before the audience again!

All the more, Lin Fengtian could not help expressing his pity over this.

Everyone, apart from Yun Shishi, bought the story that her manager had spun for the public. Even the ace director believed that the superstar had taken ill, finding nothing fishy about it.

Meanwhile, the female artist spent the next few days in a blur, being up to her ears in work.

Her hectic schedule kept her busy as she promoted her newly released movie, filmed 'Lethal Beauty', updated her Weibo for publicity purposes, and guested on several variety shows. Her timetable was so packed that it hardly left her with any free time.

With fame came a large workload which she was momentarily unaccustomed to.

It turned out that being a celebrity—an overnight sensation, in particular—was such a taxing chore.

She was still in a groggy, sleepy state just a moment ago, but in the next second, she would be dragged to a dressing room to receive a makeover. After a great deal of effort, she presented her glamorous side before the camera and answered the interviewer's questions with a sunny face.

At the end of the interview, she hardly had time for a breather before her manager whisked her away to her next schedule—this time, to a fashion studio for a magazine photoshoot.

Thereafter, as soon as she was done filming her parts on set in the evening, she would be dragged to do script-reading by her manager.

The woman was dog-tired from having slogged her guts out.

During a break, Qin Zhou slyly asked, "Shishi, how does it feel to become an overnight sensation?"

The artist, being exhausted beyond words, could only roll her eyes and shoot him a glare, which sent him bursting into fits of laughter.

Of course, there were things worthy of joy as well.

For example, the balance in her bank account had finally hit the ten-million mark. Money kept rolling in her account for the following days after her manager clinched her several endorsement deals—two of which had advanced their talent fees on her.

She became the brand ambassador for many products with a few ones ranging from face wash and shampoo to beauty products, and the big ones ranging from luxury brand cars and departmental stores to luxury brands.

Not only that; as a spokesperson for a particular phone brand, she also had to replace her old model with the one she was endorsing for. As per the advertiser's request, she had to use their company's

cellphone at all times whenever she was in public, even when she was going through the immigration customs. It left her in a state between laughter and tears.

She let out a sigh as she reflected on her life, which had truly been fraught with ups and downs.

On this particular day, Yun Shishi rushed back to the production team for filming a scene she would have to share with Hua Jin. Ever since that spat between them, she had become considerably indifferent to the man.

They only had a handful of scenes with the idol, so there were few chances of them interacting.

Today, she had to act with him. The two bumped into each other in the dressing room.

“Shishi!”

The actor spotted her as soon as he entered the room. Filled with delight and excitement, he headed straight for the seat beside her and lightly nudged her after settling down. “You haven’t been on set these days. Were you busy with the promotions of your new movie?”

The woman paid him no heed.

Desolation flashed across his eyes as he asked sheepishly, “What’s wrong? Are you still angry with me over that matter?”

She continued ignoring him, however.

Her continued silence got him all panicky, and feelings of remorse surfaced on his face. “Forgive me, alright? I really know I’m in the wrong! I’ll stop teasing and making fun of you!”

Only then did her face soften a little.

Truth be told, after such a long period, her anger toward him had dissipated considerably.

Thinking back, the man was obviously just joking around, and she could blame no one but herself and her naivety for buying his story.

*Forget it!*

### **Chapter 1867: You are not really engaged, are you?**

“That’s enough! I’m not angry, okay? Stay away from me and don’t come pestering me.”

She then pushed him away, her face filled with disgust.

“That won’t do! I like sticking close to you.” Happiness streaked across Hua Jin’s eyes upon hearing that she was no longer angry with him.

“By the way, I watched your movie!”

“Oh, okay.”

"I even booked the whole theater and treated the crew to your movie for the sake of supporting you!" He cooed in an attempt to coax her.

She remained indifferent about it, though. "Oh."

"Why are you being so aloof?!" He was somewhat dissatisfied with her lukewarm reaction. "Don't you feel the slightest bit moved when I'm being so supportive of you?"

In response, she made an exaggerated, amazed expression at him and gushed, "I'm so touched!"

She held the expression on her face for a second before it returned to neutrality. "Does that satisfy you now, kiddo?"

The doleful idol whined, "Woo... How heartless of you! The look in your eyes tells me that you're not at all touched by my actions."

"..."

"Your acting is marvelous, though! After watching your movie, I realized that you look uniquely charming in a school uniform!" The man was dishing out compliments while cajoling her.

It made her merely exasperated, alas. "Just speak your mind if you have something to say! There's no need for you to keep buttering me up!"

"What do you mean by buttering you up? Can't you think on a brighter side and accept a simple compliment?"

"How's that a simple compliment? As the saying goes, 'one who is unaccountably solicitous is hiding evil intention.' I bet you're up to no good again!"

Her accusation hurt him. With his lips in a pout, he stared at her with his glistening eyes, as though in silent protest.

The woman no longer paid him heed and proceeded to do her things.

Nevertheless, the actor continued chattering away at the side. "Oh, my! How capable you are to be hitting the hundred-million mark in ticket sales on your debut piece! I dare to say that your movie will surely set a new box-office record."

"..."

"You'll be an A-lister with a bright future ahead!"

"..."

*There's no need to flatter me to this extent, surely?*

*Besides, the high box-office sales aren't based on my sole effort.*

*Bluntly put, the combined audience appeal of Gu Xingze and Lin Fengtian is enough to warrant such results. I can only be considered the icing on the cake at most. I'm more than happy to receive recognition from the audience. I don't dare to wish for more.*

Words continued flowing out of his mouth like a torrent. “Not only do you have such superb acting skills, you also have naturally good looks. If you achieve such great results on your next few movies, you’ll be hitting the billion-mark in ticket sales in just a few years!”

“...”

“I have a feeling that you’re going to get the award for ‘Best Rookie Actress’ at the Golden Phoenix Award!”

“...”

Deeply annoyed, a frown settled on her glabella as she applied her makeup while looking in the mirror.

As Hua Jin peered at her, his gaze suddenly landed on the diamond ring on her finger. He was thoroughly surprised by the sight of it.

“Why are you wearing a ring on your ring finger?”

“Pardon?”

He spaced out for a few seconds before he broke into a smile.

“What a fool you are! You’re neither engaged nor married, so why are you wearing a ring on your ring finger?”

All of a sudden, the female artist turned to look at him.

“What does it have to do with you?”

He felt even more aggrieved than ever. “I’m only being concerned!”

As he spoke, he reached out for her hand. “You can’t just anyhow wear it on your ring finger! Should any reporter capture this image, they’ll surely publish articles about you and speculate that you’ve secretly gotten married!”

Deftly avoiding his hand, she retorted, “Don’t touch me!”

“You’re not really engaged, are you?” He jested half-heartedly with a smile as he carefully probed.

### **Chapter 1868: Yes, I am engaged!**

The actress’s lips, however, curled into a light arch as she breezily responded, “Yes, I’m engaged.”

Her reply left the idol stunned for several seconds.

“C-Come again?”

His expression had frozen and his eyes had gone blank.

Turning her head over, she stared right into his eyes and solemnly repeated herself. “Yes, I’m engaged.”

He went into a momentary daze before a wide beam spread across his face. "You're pulling my legs, aren't you?"

"Do you think I'll crack such a joke like you? Need I lie to you?"

With that, she turned to look at the mirror and continued applying makeup on her face.

A deafening silence ensued right after.

It went on for such a long period that even the woman felt somewhat uncomfortable. She turned her head quizzically to look at her co-actor, only to find him silently staring at her. He never spoke a word throughout.

"What's wrong with you?"

The man creased his brows upon hearing the question but was unable to articulate a response. Somehow, he appeared to be somewhat forlorn.

"You're looking off. Are you feeling alright?"

"Shishi, are you really engaged?" he asked again, still feeling somewhat in disbelief. His eyes, though, were brimming with prudence.

Feeling a little defeated by him, she answered helplessly, "Hua Jin, I'm not lying to you when I said I'm engaged. It's true."

"Ahhh!"

His eyes bulged with incredulity as his lips quivered slightly. He tried speaking several times, but all that came out was just silence.

Just then, a phone rang.

The actress immediately went to the side to answer the call.

"Hello?"

Mu Yazhe's deep, baritone voice rang from the other end. "Are you still on set?"

A gentle smile graced her face as she patiently explained, "Yep! There's a scene that we need to reshoot today. As I'm recently crammed with many other works, we're a little behind schedule."

"I'm back already, and I'm missing you a little. What time will you be home?"

His magnetic voice resonated crystal clear in the quiet room that Hua Jin, who had no intentions of eavesdropping on their conversation, could vividly make out the tender words coming from the phone.

*...She's really engaged?!*

*It should be her fiancé speaking with her now, shouldn't it?*

*How's it possible?*

*I thought...*

With the phone in hand, the woman gently coaxed her man, "Wait for me there, alright? I'll head straight home once I'm done here."

"Okay! I'll wait for your return no matter how late you come home."

"Alright!" Her lips hooked up into a sweet smile as she proceeded to end the call. When she moved to return to her seat before the dressing mirror, she found her co-actor in a strangely quiet mood.

He had his head bowed, so his eyes were buried in the shadows of his fringe, making it unclear what exactly he was feeling. His shoulder blades seemed to be strangely stiff, though.

She was stumped for a second before she asked out of concern, "What's wrong?"

"..."

*He's in such a perky mood earlier, so why is he being so listless now?*

*What a freak!*

The actress uttered her rebuke inwardly, but the moment she settled down before the dressing mirror, the man shot right to his feet and left the dressing room without a word.

As she stared blankly at his departing figure, she muttered under her breath, "Weirdo!"

It was ten o'clock in the evening when the production team carried out the night shoot. Night had already fallen, and the weather was at its coldest during this period.

The north's sub-zero degree temperature at night was a little too harsh for Yun Shishi to endure.

Wrapped up in an oversized military jacket, the exhausted woman dozed off several times while waiting for her turn on set. Her head even drooped down once.

Her co-actor was seated beside her, though he remained bizarrely quiet.

Throughout, Mu Xi was working nonstop. The busy assistant would be pouring hot tea for her charge one moment and then asking the log-keeper when it would be the actress' turn to shoot next.

*How frustrating!*

*Why isn't the shoot starting?*

## **Chapter 1869: I have someone waiting for me at home.**

Though the oversized military jacket was draped on her flimsy filming outfit, the actress was still shivering from the cold.

Just then, her assistant came storming back and stomping her foot in rage. "Shishi, it won't be your turn anytime soon. Right now, the director is giving Lin Zhi a good dressing-down for her incompetence and for slowing the filming progress. No one dares to utter a word due to the tense atmosphere on set. We

don't know how long it's gonna take, so why don't you return to the dressing room first to hide from the wind? It's freezing out here. We don't want you catching a cold."

"It's fine." She shook her head as she wrapped her hands around the cup of hot beverage. "It might end anytime soon. The director is bound to fly into a rage again if he can't find me when it's my turn to act."

Mu Xi felt exasperated and heartache for her. "The weather is so cold, though, and you have a weak body constitution. What happens if you fall sick because your body can't withstand the cold?"

The artist, however, said, "I'm not the only one waiting—everyone else is, too, but I don't see them complaining about it. Let's just patiently wait for our turn!"

"That's true; if you go seeking comfort in the dressing room, someone might start spreading rumors of you saying that you're being self-important!" As she spoke, the assistant shot Lin Zhi's aide, who was standing nearby, a meaningful glance.

The two assistants snorted upon noticing the other looking over.

Being assistants of the main lead and the supporting character, they naturally never saw eye to eye and were at loggerheads with each other. As such, conflicts often arose among them whenever they met one another on set.

In any case, the rookie actress had already decided to remain on her spot as she waited patiently for her turn.

Still, one could really not help but be impressed with the female lead's dilly-dallying and her slow progress. Three or so hours had already passed, yet she was still not done filming that one simple scene.

Her low tolerance level for the harsh, cold weather condition had the actress shivering throughout the filming. Her voice even trembled when she read her lines, which infuriated Gu Shaoyang so much that he gave her a harsh tongue-lashing in front of the rest of the crew.

When Mu Xi witnessed this, she warned her charge in a hushed voice, "You'd better be at your best condition later! With the director in a foul mood, you'll be flayed alive if he vents his anger on you!"

"Understood! I'll try to wrap things up in one take."

The artist thought, *My man is at home waiting for my return; I'll have to give it my best shot and strive to finish the shoot in one take.*

Meanwhile, her co-actor remained silent throughout the wait, and no one knew what was on his mind.

It was already midnight by the time Lin Zhi finished doing her scene.

She had an oversized military jacket draped on her as well when she made her way back to the waiting room under the escort of her assistant. Nevertheless, her nose had turned all red from standing in the cold for hours.

The assistant snickered to her charge when she noticed that. "Look at her; her reconstructed nose is about to fall off from the cold!"

"Watch your words, Mu Xi!"

“He he. Alright!”

Moments later, the log-keeper came over to notify them. “Please get ready for your scene. Filming will commence in ten minutes.”

“Got it. Thanks!” replied the actress.

The log-keeper returned a smile before rushing elsewhere to inform the extras about it.

When it came to her turn, the rookie actress fully concentrated on her acting. Everything was on point, be it placement, line-reading, facial expression, or acting.

The filming ran smoothly until it was Hua Jin’s turn to act. The problem laid with him either being distracted or having forgotten his lines.

He did not have many lines for that scene, though, and given his usual capabilities, he could easily get through it with one take.

This time, however, he had three bad takes in just a span of half an hour.

The director exploded in fury right there and then.

“Just what is wrong with you?! What’s with your line-reading and positioning? Have you no eyes to see where you’re going?! Has the cold weather rendered your tongue stiff and cold, too?! How many repeats have you done for those few lines?! Are you bent on making us suffer the cold with you?!”

#### **Chapter 1870: Get lost if you do not want to act.**

Hua Jin, however, merely tucked his head and gave a few dull hums as acknowledgment. He could not even bother to give the director a cursory reply.

Gu Xiaoyang wanted to continue scolding him, but he got hold of himself when he glanced at the actor. Apparently, he was concerned about offending this person. Nothing would come out well with him being overly critical with this guy. Moreover, he had berated him in public; his anger could be considered as somewhat vented.

As such, he swallowed down whatever anger he had left and, after taking several, deep breaths, lectured him. “Act your part well from now on!”

“Okay. I got it, director.”

The idol’s lackadaisical and careless response, which sounded like provocation, evoked the director’s suppressed anger again.

Furious, he charged over and pressed up against him as he regarded the latter with a threatening glare. Speaking in a voice that only the two of them could hear, the former spat, “Wipe the thought from your mind that your strong backer excuses your ostentatious behavior in the production team! Your supporter may be why you’re able to enter this team, but it doesn’t mean that I have to be at your mercy! Pull up your socks or get lost if you don’t want to act properly!”

"I'm staying." An evil smirk spread across the latter's face and he blew a breath at the former. "Kick me out of the crew if you can, director."

"You!"

The director clenched his fists in anger and, after several rounds of attempting to exercise forbearance, turned to leave abruptly.

Yun Shishi could not make a head or tail of this sudden development and was quite dumbfounded at how the scene had unfolded. She then studied her co-actor, who was arrogantly standing there with a frown. He seemed to be feeling indignant. She could tell that he was purposely making things difficult for the director.

As such, she walked to him and patiently asked, "Can you act properly?"

The moment she spoke, his tone somehow softened as he smilingly replied, "I did act properly!"

"Was that the result of proper acting then? Be it your positioning or line-reading, nothing was right at all! How many times have you repeated your few lines?"

The man pouted, feeling somewhat displeased by her admonishment. "I'm not in good form."

"You're given plenty of time to get into the right condition, yet you're telling me now that you're in no good form? Don't you find yourself being unprofessional and half-hearted like this?"

Their interaction had the rest of the production crew curiously looking over. They were startled to see the rookie actress speaking to the beloved idol in such a manner.

It was no secret to them that the idol had a powerful backer; hence, no one dared to offend him even when he threw his weight around here.

Even the firm and unyielding director had to speak with him in a slightly humble and careful tone.

Trust the rookie actress to call him out in public just like that!

Everyone else witnessing this secretly marveled, *How gutsy of her!*

Hua Jin kept mum, though.

Still, that did not stop her from criticizing him. "Please stay focused and put more effort in your acting. It isn't the first or second time that this has happened! Everyone here is tired, especially the director, who's been involved with the filming for the entire day. Can't you empathize with them? Is it necessary for the rest to suffer with you on this cold night?"

The actor only responded with: "I'm feeling down."

"Feeling down?" A heated laughter burst out from Yun Shishi. "Everyone has to suffer with you just because you're feeling down? Aren't you being quite selfish here?!"

He stared at her, dumbfounded, before suddenly posing a question in an extremely strange tone, "Are you rushing to end the filming to go home?"

"Pardon?"

“You have someone waiting for you at home, so you are anxious to finish the shoot and go back to accompany that person, right?”