

## Sweet Love 3101

### Chapter 3101: Innocence 22

“How can you learn if you don’t feel pain? More importantly, you have to be bold. Don’t be afraid. You will never learn how to walk while holding onto the railing!”

As he said this, he extended his hand towards me. “Come, give me your hand!”

I eyed him warily. “What do you want?”

“Give me your hand.”

I hesitated for several seconds before reaching out timidly. He grabbed my hand and pulled me in front of him. I swayed as he drew me towards him, my body so stiff I didn’t dare move.

“Relax a little!”

He looked at me and laughed.. “You’re usually quite fierce. You look like you dominate over everything and are not afraid of anything. Why are you so timid now that you’re on roller skates?”

I snorted a few times but did not reply.

Then he faced me, holding my hand as he glided backwards.

I gaped at him, completely amazed.

“Won’t you fall skating backwards?”

“Of course not!” He was obviously very proud of himself, as if it was rare for him to impress someone.

“Aren’t I clever?”

Focusing all my attention on my feet, I felt like a trailer as he dragged me along.

“You can try moving your feet while maintaining your balance.”

I shook my head like a broken wave drum.

Su Qi said, “Don’t be afraid of falling. Even if you fall, you have me for company.”

Given this, I grew a little braver. As he held my hand, I was able to stagger forward. I began to grasp the feel of it, and in the end, I was able to glide smoothly under his lead.

Still, there was a high price to pay for learning how to glide around!

Patches of bruises covered my knees.

By the time I walked out of the skating rink, my knees felt as though they had cracked from the falls. I grimaced in pain.

Su Qi asked, “Is it serious? Does it hurt a lot?”

Then, he squatted down to take a closer look. Immediately I shrank back in avoidance and said guiltily, "It's nothing, I'm fine now! It's getting late. Send me home!"

Su Qi smiled and stared at my face for a long time. Suddenly, she said, "So you can be shy too?"

"What do you mean by that?!"

"Nothing." Su Qi glanced at me. "Hop on, I'll send you home!"

Unwillingly, I got onto the backseat. It was a little unsteady initially, and being nervous, I immediately gripped the corner of his shirt.

He said, "You can put your arms around me if you're scared."

"No way!"

Su Qi snorted and said disapprovingly, "Do you know most girls can only dream about a chance to get onto this seat!"

"I don't care!"

"Okay, okay, great little missy! I'm the one begging you to get onto my bicycle."

Su Qi went rather fast. The bike sped along the street, into the night. I stared at the wheel at my feet, spinning at a dizzying pace.

The breeze gently lifted the corner of his shirt. On his body, I saw the interweaving shadows cast by the moonlight and street lamps. His body shielded me from the bitter evening wind so that I didn't feel so cold.

When we arrived at my block, I started to feel nervous. This was the first time I'd been home so late. I had no idea what to say when I got home!

Su Qi stuffed my bag into my arms and said, "All the homework is done! Remember to erase and rewrite it when you get home."

"How's the accuracy? There won't be too many wrong answers, right?"

"You're kidding. It's all very simple middle school homework. It's chicken feed."

Su Qi looked at me as she spoke, then asked, "Want me to walk you upstairs?"

"No, I'm fine!"

### **Chapter 3102: Innocence 23**

"No, I'm fine!"

I glared at him and urged, "Go on home!"

Su Qi nodded, as if he had something left unsaid. Suddenly, I was afraid that if he had a chance to speak, he'd say something that would make me feel awkward, so I quickly added. "Be careful on your way."

“Do you have a cell phone?” he asked suddenly.

I shook my head, frowning. “Why are you asking me about my cell phone?”

Cell phones were a luxury item for us in our secondary school days. Usually, those who brought their cell phones to school were from wealthy families. Otherwise, we would only own a cell phone when we got to high school.

I shook my head. “No,” I said.

Su Qi did not insist. He waved his hand coolly and left.

I turned around to head up the apartment, but at this point, under the street lamps, I spotted the silhouette of a slender figure on a small stone bench.

I stared, startled.

“Dongyu...”

I didn’t know how long he’d been sitting there, waiting. He would have seen Su Qi sending me back. I suddenly felt guilty.

Dongyu slowly stood up and walked towards me. There was a hint of anger and sullenness in his eyes. He looked down at me and then at the school bag in my arms. He asked in his deep voice, “You’re back late. Where have you been?”

“I...”

I looked at him and hesitated. After thinking for a long time, I came up with a lie. “I went to my classmate’s house for tuition!”

“Classmate?”

Dongyu’s expression darkened. “So, why were you with Su Qi?”

“Huh?” I panicked. “Brother, you saw us...”

Normally, I would call him by his name. I would only very cautiously address him as “Brother” when I did something I shouldn’t have or when I angered him.

“Do you know?” Dongyu suddenly said, “You’ll always look away when you tell a lie.”

I lowered my head in embarrassment. “I didn’t mean to lie to you! I... I was just afraid that you’d worry...”

I admit that I really didn’t know how to lie. The most perfect lie in my life was the one time I cried and told him that I no longer loved him and that I was letting go.

Dongyu couldn’t bear to blame me. I knew that as long as I had this expression on my face, he wouldn’t pursue the matter.

“Since you know I’d be worried, don’t come home so late in the future.”

He lowered his head and his gaze suddenly fell on my knees. A hint of heartache appeared in his eyes. He immediately squatted down and touched the bruises with his fingertips. His beautiful brows furrowed. "What happened?"

"I fell."

He looked up. "You fell? How?"

I said, "I was careless... tripped over a rock..."

Dongyu was so angry that he didn't know whether to laugh or cry. He jabbed my head with his finger. "You even trip while walking? Are your eyes positioned at the top of your head?"

When he said this, I knew that he couldn't bear to stay angry with me. With a flattering smile, I took his arm and snuggled into his embrace. "Brother, I know I shouldn't have..."

Dongyu slid his arms around me. He seemed helpless, and couldn't bear to say anything else. He merely remarked, "Do you know that I was very worried?"

He couldn't reach me, and I didn't have a cell phone. That was why he waited downstairs for me.

"I won't do this the next time," I muttered.

"Next time?"

"No, no! There won't be a next time."

"Remember! You're not to come home late!"

He took my bag from me. It was heavy but he handled the weight very easily. I could see the contour of his lightly muscled arms.

### **Chapter 3103: Innocence 24**

I held his hand and was about to follow him upstairs when I was suddenly nervous. I asked him, "Where are Mom and Dad?"

"They're asleep."

"Well then..."

I hesitated and didn't dare to go upstairs. "Will they scold me? They'll be angry that I'm home so late!"

"I told them you were tutoring at your classmate's house, they didn't say much."

"Brother, you're awesome!"

Dongyu glared at me. I didn't dare to say anything more.

I followed him up the stairs and into my own room. I'd only just taken my exercise book out of the bag when he reached for it to check through it for me as usual.. I wasn't going to let him, but he was too quick. He picked it up and flipped through it. Then he found something fishy about it.

He had always been very sharp and observant, hence he quickly noticed that the handwriting was unfamiliar. He hit me on the head with the exercise book. "Who helped you with this homework?"

"Su Qi's friend..."

Dongyu was startled and raised the exercise book like he was going to hit me with it. I shrank back my shoulders and looked at him timidly. Angry and amused at the same time, he proceeded to erase all the answers on the exercise book with an eraser!

I couldn't help but cry out in alarm, hurriedly extending my hand to snatch the eraser from him.

"Brother, what are you doing?"

"Redo it. Using your own brain."

Dongyu stared at me and reminded me, "The monthly exam is coming soon. Do you know how to answer these questions?"

"I do..."

"Show me how."

"But... it's late and I'm tired!"

"I'll accompany you."

Dongyu tidied up my workbook and took out my textbook. He flipped through it casually and had a rough idea.

I had no choice but to work bitterly through the night to finish all my homework. It wasn't until 1 am that I climbed into bed.

Dongyu came into my room after taking a shower. He saw that I was already lying on the bed, unable to keep my eyes open. He gave me a carton of milk, then glanced at my bag, which was lying on the table. He silently helped me pack my bag.

When he finally walked out of the room, my eyelids couldn't take it anymore. The moment the door closed, I fell asleep.

...

The next day after school, Su Qi was waiting for me at the school gate again.

I didn't know if it had anything to do with an adolescent boy's desire to conquer, but I thought at the time that such persistence must have little to do with liking a person.

Every day after school, he would be waiting for me at the school gate on his bicycle.

I usually ignored him and turned away, heading for home.

He would often ride his bicycle and follow behind me. Even if I had absolutely no interaction with him throughout the journey, he seemed to still enjoy it!

With him following me like this, I naturally could no longer wait for Dongyu to go home together. After all, if he saw me with Su Qi, I'd have a lot of explaining to do.

It wasn't like I hadn't heard about what kind of guy Su Qi was.

Word had it that he was a particularly dandy child.

Other than getting into fights, smoking, and drinking, he had a string of bad record.

Su Qi was so well known that even from a street away, rumors about him were all over my school.

"I heard that he dated a string of girls. Some of them he courted, while others wooed him. All in all, these girls amounted to an equivalent of the size of a class."

"I also heard that he once got a girl pregnant. Do you know what that means? That girl got pregnant, and in the end, it was he who paid for the abortion surgery! After that girl had an abortion, I don't know who said it, but the whole school knew about it. In the end, that girl probably felt shameful and immediately transferred back to her hometown to study."

#### **Chapter 3104: Innocence 25**

"Once, Su Qi secretly drove his father's car out. It was a Bentley, and I heard that they cost several million yuan each! He didn't have a driver's license, so both he and the car ended up being detained by the traffic police. In the end, it was his father who bailed him!"

"Su Qi's family is very rich. His parents are very prestigious entrepreneurs in the city. I heard that he lives in a mansion in Shuanglong. It's more than a thousand square meters with two swimming pools! The backyard is even bigger than a football field!"

...

I had a worse impression of him, but no matter how much I avoided him, I seemed to underestimate his patience.

Once a young man develops a strong interest in something, he would probably become very passionate about it. He will ignore the opinions of others and pursue it.

If they enjoyed playing basketball, they would indulge in it passionately.

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If they wished to woo a girl, they would give relentless pursuit.

They would not think too much about success or failure, perhaps they would do it to enjoy the process.

Including love.

After I grew up, I thought about it. If we had been like people who entered society and gradually learned how to be tactful, if we had learned how to let go of what we couldn't get, if we had been less persistent – be it Su Qi or myself, would we still have been like moths to a flame, chasing after our hearts' desires without any regard for our own safety?

Just like how I liked Dongyu, Su Qi liked me in the same wilful and obstinate way.

When we were young, adults laughed at us for being too naive, too innocent. We would object to it.

We thought ourselves mature. We were unruly, defiant, exuberant, rebellious. We thought our own society was the real society, the real fools were the adults.

However, it was only when we became grown-ups looking back that we suddenly realized how naive and pure our younger selves were.

From a young age, I thought that if I liked someone, I had to be fearless. However, after I grew up, I found it hard to muster up the courage to love.

I became too sensible, and understood too deeply that being deeply in love would hurt me time and time again.

Now, I would say, don't be too obsessed with love.

It brings little benefits. Only a small number of people will be happy, but for most, they will suffer the pain of lost paths.

One will always remember the pain of how he perseveres until he finally gives up.

Love – it's good enough to have half of it.

It's not everything in life.

However, it is often easier said than done.

The most I can do is talk big.

Even I couldn't get out of this predicament. It was like being trapped in a foggy swamp.

Su Qi was probably just like me back then, fearless about liking someone.

Perhaps it was his persistence that finally moved me. When he handed me an ice cream cone and I took it in passing, saying, "Thank you", I had not realized how flattered he looked.

"Are you finally talking to me?"

I smiled.

I was willing to stop ignoring him because I thought he was too silly, following me around every day like a shadow.

Since I was young, I was like Dongyu's shadow. And one fine day, someone became like my shadow just as I was Dongyu's. And perhaps it was because of this, I couldn't continue hating him.

"It's not bad to have someone accompany me home."

Su Qi smiled.

I glanced at him and couldn't help saying, "You don't seem as bad as what the rumors make you out to be!"

"Rumors?"

### **Chapter 3105: Innocence 26**

"Rumors?"

Su Qi became interested.

"What rumors?"

"There are rumors about you. People say you skip classes, smoke, drink, get into fights, and had girls who had an abortion for you. Are all these true?"

When Su Qi heard this, he first laughed mockingly then said, "Oh, these. I was wondering what sort of rumors!"

"Are these rumors true?"

"Half-truths."

"Half-truths?"

That got me confused. I did not understand what he meant.

"It's either real or fake. What do you mean, half-truths?"

"Sometimes, what you see with your eyes might not be true. What you hear with your ears might not be true either. For example, I smoke, I drink, and I get into fights. These are all true. But the rumor about the girl who went for an abortion—the truth is that I did accompany her to get an abortion, but I wasn't the one who got her pregnant."

"Who did it then?"

"Well, I can't tell you." Su Qi smiled. "I promised to keep it a secret."

"Petty!"

I muttered, "You have so many secrets."

"Who doesn't have secrets? If you really want to know, why don't we trade?"

Su Qi rode around me and stopped in front of me. He sized me up. "I'm sure you have a little secret, too. You tell me your secret, and I'll tell you mine. That's only fair."

I looked at him seriously.

After a while, I smiled at him and pretended to be mysterious. "I can't tell you!"



“Pffft!” Su Qi put on a nonchalant expression.

Turning around, I bit my lip and clutched the spot on my chest, my heart racing.

After returning home with a heavy heart, I pushed open the door to the study and saw Dongyu’s desk. The books on it were neatly arranged like always. Obviously he hadn’t come home from school.

I stood there for a long time, thinking about Su Qi’s words.

It was as he had said, everyone has their own unspeakable secrets.

And mine is related only to Dongyu.

...

I liked him.

When did I realize my feelings for him were not normal?

Was it the time when I was being bullied and he showered me, and then went to beat up that person who bullied me?

Or was it when I saw other children around him, and felt for the first time that he should belong to only me?

Or was it when Menglan said that he and I were unable to be together?

Or was it when I saw him throwing out the many gifts that he had received, and felt rather gleeful about it?

...

Who knows.

From the time I was born, how I felt towards Dongyu was unique.

It wasn’t the intimacy one would feel towards family, or the adoration towards a lover. It was a feeling that with him in my world, I didn’t need anyone else.

Would this count as liking someone?

I was a little confused about this but as much as I wanted to understand it, I wasn’t in a hurry to.

I felt that some decisions would only become difficult when there was too much clarity.

But these unusual feelings increasingly took over after one particular incident.

I remember once, at an annual sports meet, I had sneaked into Dongyu’s school to play. I found my way to Dongyu’s classroom with familiarity and just as I walked in, I saw a girl milling around Dongyu’s seat with an envelope in her hand. It looked like she was trying to slip it into his desk.

I rushed over and grabbed the envelope from the girl. Holding it in my hand, I interrogated her, “What are you trying to do?!”

### Chapter 3106: Innocence 27

The girl was startled by my sudden appearance. Patting her chest to calm herself, she then turned to look at me with a baffled expression.

“Who are you?” she muttered, blushing as she reached for the envelope I had taken from her.

I dodged her hand and asked stubbornly, “Tell me! What is this?”

“Why should I tell you! This is mine. Give it back!”

She reached out and tried to snatch it from me.

I hid the envelope behind my back and practically glared at her with hostility.

“This is a love letter, right?”

A trace of embarrassment appeared on her face as she was exposed. She gave me an awkward look before asking in a displeased tone, “Who are you?! Why are you bothering me?”

“I don’t care who you are, and you don’t have to care who I am! In the future, don’t send such things!”

Having said those words, I pinched the envelope and tore it into pieces!

She stared at me, dumbfounded. I think the love letter must have taken a lot of effort, but it had turned into a pile of debris in my hands. It’s easy to imagine how angry she was, to the point that her eyes reddened.

At this point, footsteps were heard coming from outside the door.

Dongyu had returned with a few classmates. When I saw him, I was at a loss, feeling like I had been caught red-handed.

Just then, I had acted completely on impulse. Having calmed down, I now felt that I had indeed gone overboard.

But I couldn’t control my hands. I just felt like the letter should be torn to bits.

When the girl saw Dongyu, her eyes reddened further before she quickly burst into tears, feeling aggrieved and helpless.

Dongyu came over. He glanced at me and then at her with a confused expression.

The boys behind him were equally confused.

“What’s going on?”

He asked with concern, his tone gentle.

However, subconsciously, he positioned himself in front of me. I knew that he was protecting me.

“Dongyu, who is she?”

The girl pointed at me and complained, “For no reason, she tore up something that I wanted to give to you!”

Dongyu frowned and looked back at me. "Xiachun, why are you causing trouble again?"

"Brother—"

I whispered, "I don't like other girls giving you love letters! Didn't Mom say that you're not to date?"

Dongyu was stunned for a few seconds. He was an intelligent boy, so he immediately realized what had happened.

Then I saw him bending over. He picked up a few bits of paper from the floor, and put them together with a resigned look on his face.

He glanced up at the girl. "A love letter?"

The girl blushed and looked uneasy, but she nodded nevertheless. "...uh huh."

"The box of chocolates from before was from you too?" Dongyu asked again.

Upon hearing his question, she mustered her courage and said, "Dongyu, I... I like..."

As though he knew what she was about to say, he interjected and said in a quiet voice, "Don't give me these things in the future."

As he spoke, he took out a box of chocolates.

The weather was hot and the chocolate had melted.

I hadn't noticed him bringing them home. So it turned out they had been sitting in the drawer of his school desk.

"I keep forgetting to deal with this box of chocolates. Here, I'm returning it to you."

I saw the girl's face turning red from embarrassment. Her eyes were misty, as if she'd burst into tears any moment.

### **Chapter 3107: Innocence 28**

"Aren't you going to listen to what I have to say?"

Since she had already started, she might as well be bold to the end. "Dongyu, I've only just transferred to a high school. I've like you since the first time I saw you at the school reopening ceremony! The chocolates were from me, as was the greeting card. I didn't have the courage to confess to you. I also felt that perhaps this might be one-sided and cause you to feel troubled, but... these gifts are from my heart. Must you reject them?"

Dongyu was a very soft-hearted person. At least, every time I got into trouble and he was angry with me, I would coax him and ask for forgiveness. No matter how angry he was, it wouldn't last long.

However, now, for the first time, I realized that Dongyu wasn't at all soft-hearted.

Although the girl looked like she was on the verge of tears, he remained stone-faced and spoke coldly. "Don't cry, and don't feel aggrieved. I know you like me, but I have no obligation to respond to you."

The girl probably did not expect him to be so straightforward and cruel with his words. Now that there were others present, she felt embarrassed and did not even think about the chocolates. She turned around and ran out of the classroom.

Only then did the boys started to react. They walked up and teased, "Dongyu, do you have to make her sad like this?"

"Yeah, that girl's eyes are swollen from crying!"

Dongyu glanced at them and said calmly, "Since I can't reciprocate, then I should not give her any hope."

When I heard this, I was stunned.

On the way home, sitting behind him on his bike, I circled my arms around his waist and asked curiously, "Dongyu, do you receive love letters often?"

"No."

"I remember that many girls liked you when you were in primary school."

I tightened my arms around him. "Will you fall in love one day?" I asked uneasily.

I felt his back stiffen.

Then he asked gloomily, "Is there someone you like?"

"No!"

"I don't like anyone but you," I added immediately.

"This is only for now." Dongyu smiled. "When you grow up, you'll find a boy you like. You'll get to know him, understand him, fall in love with him, and be together with him for the rest of your life."

"Of course not!"

I said disdainfully, "I like Dongyu the most. I don't like anyone else!"

Then as if trying to avoid this topic, he asked,

"What do you feel like having for dinner?"

Seeing that he had skipped the topic, I did not persist. We talked about other things.

But his words left me feeling uneasy.

*... Will he meet a girl he likes someday?*

*Will he get to know her, understand her, fall in love with her, and be together with her for the rest of his life?*

*Then... what about me?*

*What would my place in his life be if such a day were to come?*

That night, when he was asleep, I crept into his room and sat on the edge of his bed, watching him sleep.

Since we were little, I was the closest person to him.

God knew how many people envied this special status.

However, when I thought about the day when another girl would take my place, I felt indignant.

I lay down beside him. As I hugged him, a bold idea popped into my head—could I like him?

As soon as the thought hit me, my body tensed up.

The word “like” was all too familiar.

But “love” was rather foreign.

I liked him, but I didn’t know if that was love.

### **Chapter 3108: Innocence 29**

I liked him, but I didn’t know if that was love.

Was it related to the love between a man and a woman?

Su Qi and I had gradually grown closer.

Perhaps, deep in my heart, I was hoping that someone would replace Dongyu.

After all, I should not rely on him too much.

“I thought that perhaps, my world was too small, so that other than my family, there was only him. Because all my obsessions were related to only him, I found myself unable to relate to the bigger world beyond.

What about trying to reach others?

...

“Xiachun!”

Whenever school ended, Su Qi, with his handsome and smiling face, would always make a timely appearance.

I got used to dumping my school bag into his bicycle basket, then hopping onto the little backseat and having him cycle me home.

However, on that particular day, I failed my exam and was reprimanded. It put me in a foul mood when I thought about how I was going to explain myself when I got home. I furrowed my brow.

“It’s Saturday tomorrow. You don’t have to rush home today, right? Come with me, let’s have fun.”

"It's getting late. I have to go home." I clutched the exam paper and turned around to leave. My attitude was rather cold as I walked around him to head home.

Sensing that something was wrong from my expression, Su Qi caught up with me on his bicycle. "What's wrong? Are you in a bad mood?"

I glared at him, on the verge of tears.

Some people are born to excel academically, such as Dongyu and Su Qi. Even if they didn't pay much attention in class and just flipped through the books, they were able to learn without the help of a teacher.

But it appeared that I was not born to be this sort of genius.

Therefore, a few days later, during the monthly exam, I managed a "placing" in my class. I failed three out of five subjects. I was placed in the bottom few of course.

The bottom students had to face an announcement. Hence for all the wrong reasons, I was made to go up to the podium. I was reprimanded, along with other students who failed the examinations. I returned to my seat, shamed and ashamed. I almost cried.

So I wasn't in the mood to talk to Su Qi when I saw him bearing his bright smile at the school gate.

He walked up to me and, taking advantage of my distraction, snatched the exam paper from me. He stared at it. It was a huge and glaring "58" inscribed on it.

"58 only for Mathematics?"

"What does that have to do with you?" I snapped. "Give it back!"

Su Qi dodged and looked at the Chinese paper. "67? It's so easy to memorize junior high language, how did you end up scoring so low?!"

"Su Qi!" I stomp my feet, my face reddening.

He took my school bag from me and said, "Hop on!"

"Where are we going?"

"To give you tuition."

He added, "I've made arrangements to meet with Dongyu."

I was stunned for a moment. But having been told that Dongyu was going to be there, I got onto the bicycle.

Ever since the time I went home late, Dongyu and Su Qi, unexpectedly, became friends. My guess was Dongyu probably thought that since he couldn't keep Su Qi away from me, the next best form of protecting me would be to become friends with the guy.

The two of them got along considerably well. One was passionate, like a burning fire; the other was calm and cool as ice. They usually played basketball together after class.

After I failed my monthly examination, Dongyu and Su Qi took turns tutoring me. The tuition location was at the reading hall at first, but for some reason, whenever Dongyu and Su Qi made an appearance together, the library became noisy.

Being sandwiched between the two school hunks, I felt like there were many pairs of eyes staring at me from behind. It was especially uncomfortable.

### **Chapter 3109: Innocence 30**

Being sandwiched between the two school hunks, I felt like there were many pairs of eyes staring at me from behind. It was especially uncomfortable.

So, later, it was decided that tuition would take place at Su Qi's home.

It was the first time I went to Su Qi's house – a high-end condominium situated near the number 1 key high school. It was over 160 square meters. At that time, the average price of the land was over 30,000 yuan. Every inch of land was worth gold. Such a condominium was considered a luxury property!

It was such a big apartment, but he lived alone. Usually, there would be a housekeeper to cook for him and take care of his daily life. However Su Qi preferred quietness, so other than the regular cleaning time, he was the only one at home.

He said that his parents were busy with their business and rarely stayed at home..

His living room was huge – more than 50 square meters. At that time, game consoles were rare, but he had a range of them in his house, and he owned all kinds of games.

While I revised my work, Dongyu and Su Qi played video games. I could only watch enviously from the side.

The feeling of being tutored was particularly monotonous.

During that period, the joys of eating, drinking, and playing eluded me!

At that time, a Japanese-themed haunted house was launched at Ocean Department Store. It became exceptionally popular through word of mouth and business boomed.

Many thrill-seeking young students who visited the haunted house said that they just could not get enough of it. It was very interesting, scary, and exciting. They all recommended it and even formed cliques based on it.

I was afraid of ghosts, but I was very curious about the supernatural. Since I was young, I loved to watch horror movies with Dongyu, so I suggested a trip to this haunted house together.

However, Dongyu countered at once, "I'll take you there if you should come in among the top ten in class next month."

Su Qi chipped in, "As long as you do well, the treat is on me!"

I wilted. "What if I don't do well?"

Dongyu said coldly, "Then we don't have a deal."

I bit down on the pen, my ambition was finally set ablaze and I started to work hard.

However, how should one say this... motivation comes from ambition.

By the end of the semester's monthly exam, I hadn't gotten close to the top ten, but my grades were 0.5 points short of the tenth place. Dongyu didn't seem so unsympathetic. On the weekend, we met Su Qi and we went to the haunted house together.

After buying the tickets, however, I became nervous and didn't dare to go in. Su Qi saw through my timidity and couldn't help laughing at me. "You were the one who wanted to visit! But now you're standing there and don't have the guts to go in. What's the meaning of this?"

Dongyu explained, "She's afraid. She's especially afraid of ghosts."

Su Qi replied, "You're afraid of ghosts and you're taking on the haunted house?"

I was indignant. "Who said I was afraid?"

I proclaimed this loudly and clearly, but still, I dared not step in.

Su Qi waited until he ran out of patience and walked over to take my hand. I flinched, avoiding his hand, and snorted. "I'm not walking in front."

"Then I'll let you walk in the middle."

As Dongyu spoke, he took the initiative to hold my hand and lead the way. I didn't know why, but the moment he held my hand, I felt that the pitch-black door that seemed like the gateway to an endless abyss wasn't as terrifying as before. I gathered my courage and followed him.

Su Qi, who was just behind, was stunned for a few seconds. He only moved forward to catch up with us when the staff urged him on.

The haunted house was extremely narrow and decorated in the theme of Japanese style horror movies. Every detail was chilling and sent fear that seemed to seep into one's bones.

### **Chapter 3110: Innocence 31**

We walked past a hospital bed. A staff member with disheveled hair and dressed up as Sadako suddenly shouted sinisterly at me. It scared me so much that I hugged Dongyu's back tightly and shouted, squeezing him to walk forward.

Dongyu and Su Qi, on the other hand, were calm. They probably knew that it was all fake and found it difficult to get too immersed. However, I screamed the whole time. By the time I walked out through the exit, I fell to the ground as if I had just survived a disaster. When I realized that I made it through, I was still in shock. Tears fell from my eyes as I cried.



Dongyu was highly amused as he put an arm around my shoulders, patted my back, and comforted me. "Alright, alright! Don't be afraid! You're not in there anymore. You're still crying? You're a fat lot of good."

As much as he felt sorry, he found it funny. Su Qi was in stitches by now, tickled by how I had broken down in tears.

A girl in staff uniform walked over and said in a weak tone, "Are you a student from the number two key high school?"

I looked up and saw that she was looking at my uniform. I nodded, my eyes still damp with tears.

Seeing my tears, she handed me a tissue and smiled helplessly. "Is the haunted house that scary?"

"Yes!" I nodded.

However, she continued, "My name is Han Xiao and I'm also a student from number 2 key high school. I'm from Year 1 Class 9. What about you?"

When I heard that, I instantly stopped crying and said in surprise, "You're from number 2 key high school too?"

Han Xiao became the first and only friend I had ever had throughout my high school years.

Later, I found out that her uncle was the investor of this haunted house, and she would come here on Saturday weekends to work part-time when school was out.

At that time, it was not a rare thing for underaged kids to work.

Furthermore, the business belonged to her family, so she had no qualms about it.

From then on, Han Xiao and I became very close friends and we would talk about everything under the sun.

After school, I often dragged her along to the basketball court of number 1 key high school to watch Dongyu and Su Qi play basketball. After that, we would head home together.

We were the regular occupants of the the backseats of Dongyu's and Su Qi's bicycles.

Most of the time, I would sit in the backseat of Dongyu's bicycle. He'd be sticky and drenched in sweat. Even though I would be feeling hot and drenched in sweat as well, I would hold him tightly without any qualms.

Sitting in the back seat, I'd looked at the sunset. The evening light would cast mottled shadows of the trees onto his body, making it look as if it was plated with gold.

At that time, everything was wonderful.

During our first long vacation in high school, we agreed to go to Xiang Shan to swim.

Xiang Shan was a very small mountain. However, what made it famous was the huge lake beside the mountain. Its water was so clear that one could see the bottom.

At that time, although clear lakes were commonplace, not many were easily accessible.

The water of the lake overflowed to the water bank and I loved to walk in the shallow water along the shore, watching the clear lake water lapping around my ankles. It was indescribably satisfying.

At Noon, we spread a tablecloth on the shore and placed the junk food and snacks we brought on the tablecloth.

Han Xiao seemed to be feeling a little uncomfortable. Seeing how pale she was, I asked out of concern.

She seemed a little awkward and shy, and would only say that her stomach was unwell.

But at the time, I still didn't understand a process that a girl had to go through during puberty.

Until one particular early morning, I was woken up by a severe abdominal pain. The pain was so sudden, my vision went dark.