

Sweet Love 4161

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Fortunately, his mommy was silly and sweet. He could easily coax her. Otherwise, he would probably lose his ear.

Little Yichen was secretly delighted and settled down as well. Yueyao reached for the fries, clearly wanting them. Youyou immediately got her a piece of french fry. When Little Yichen saw this, he too got her one and presented it to her as if presenting a treasure.

Two pieces of fries were now placed before her, one held in Youyou's hand, the other held in Little Yichen's hand. Without hesitation, Yueyao grabbed Youyou's hand and ate the fry with relish.

Fortunately, Little Yichen was not a puppy. If his ears had been long enough, they would have drooped by now.

"Doesn't the fry from me taste good?" Little Yichen looked at her pitifully, like a puppy wagging its tail. "Why don't you want my fry?" he whined.

Yueyao said in a childish voice, "Your hand isn't as good-looking as Little Big Brother's."

"..."

Was that even a reason!? Little Yichen looked at his hands, then at Youyou's. They weren't exactly the same, but they did not differ by much!

"Which part of it doesn't look good?" Little Yichen was indignant and pouted, but he was also deliberately teasing Yueyao.

Yueyao immediately reached over with her oily hand and turned her brother's palm face-up. She pointed to the rough calluses that had grown on his palm and said, "Look, it doesn't look as good as Little Big Brother's hands right here."

Youyou frowned slightly at this. The only major difference between Little Yichen's hand and his own was probably the palm. Youyou's palm was clean and pristine, but Little Yichen's palm was inevitably calloused from the training at the special training camp that Mu Yazhe had thrown him into as a child.

Little Yichen looked at this and suddenly smiled. "But I can protect you!" he said to Yueyao. "In the future, if anyone dares to bully my little sister, I can take them down with one hand!"

Yueyao was so amused that she laughed, showing her cute little front teeth. It made her look like a naughty little rabbit. Little Yichen could not help looking at her fondly.

Several times, looking at Yueyao like this, he had the urge from deep within, to want to give her the best of everything in the world. However, after thinking about it, wasn't this cute sister the best?

Little Yichen asked again, "Do you want this fry, then?"

"I want ... that!" Little Yueyao pointed at the tomato sauce.

The boy immediately squeezed a little ketchup and dipped the fry in it.

When Yueyao saw this, she got excited and said, "More! More!"

She knew the sauce was delicious, but until now, she hadn't been able to pronounce the word "ketchup" skillfully.

Little Yichen taught her, "This is 'ketchup'."

"Ketchup ..."

"Yeah, that's right." The boy brought the fry to her mouth.

Yueyao's mouth immediately fell open, afraid that the sauce would get on her lips. She was a cleanliness freak. However, no matter how big her mouth was, it was still too small and the sauce stained the corner of her lips.

"Aiya..." Yueyao frowned. "It's been dirtied!"

Little Yichen immediately picked up a tissue and coaxed, "I'll clean you up. Don't move."

The girl obediently kept still. Pouting, she waited for him to wipe her clean.

Youyou found this scene amusing and was at a loss for a reaction. "Stop wiping it. You'll get more on your mouth later. Can't we wipe it off together?" If he were to wipe her mouth now, she'd only dirty it again and he would have to clean her again later.

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Yueyao refused to give in, however, and said solemnly, "No... If I don't wipe it clean now, it'll get on my skin. It's so uncomfortable..."

"Hahaha!" Yun Shishi burst out laughing. Now that Yueyao was older and more articulate, she was slowly asserting her own ideas. It was quite fun. Looking at this scene with a smile on her face, she suddenly started to worry.

Sometimes, the happier a person is, the more they worry that such happiness would be too short-lived.

She knew very well that no one's life would be smooth sailing.

The happier one is, the more uneasy one will feel. And the more uneasy one feels, the more one cherishes.

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After dinner, the twins took Yueyao for a walk.

In the past, Yun Shishi would worry, but on second thoughts, with Little Yichen around, she was sure he would do his part to protect Yueyao and Youyou. And so, little by little, she began to feel more at ease for the twins to take their little sister for a walk.

She was about to wash the dishes when her cell phone rang. She walked over and reached for the phone, expecting to see a call from her husband, however when she checked the screen, it showed an unfamiliar number. Initially, she intended to ignore it thinking that it was a harassment call. But seeing that it was an international number, she was a little puzzled and picked up the call.

“Is that Shishi? It’s Alice.” The speaker on the other end sounded serious and went straight to the point.

Yun Shishi nodded and replied, “Yes...”

“Hua Jin usually calls me at this time of day, but he hasn’t called today. I tried reaching him, but no one answered for a long time, so I’m just wondering what’s going on?”

Upon hearing this, Yun Shishi’s heart, oddly, missed a beat. Alice had agreed to put Natalia in Hua Jin’s care on the sole condition that he would cooperate with her to keep an eye on the girl. Not that it’s meant to “spy on the prisoner”. Rather, it was because Natalia’s second personality is not well-understood at this point. Therefore, the actor had to work closely with Alice. He had to report Natalia’s condition to Alice every night. However, he had not contacted her today.

Alice was worried. “I hate to trouble you, but Gong Jie isn’t here either. Look, if it’s convenient for you, would you go and take a look at what the situation is?”

Yun Shishi agreed immediately. “All right. I’ll go right now.”

“Uh huh. Take care and drive safely.”

Yun Shishi hung up the phone, got onto her feet, and left instructions with the nanny to let the twins know, when they returned with Yueyao, that she needed to attend to some matters. Then she hurried out the door with her coat.

Hua Jin’s villa was not too far away, Yun Shishi was there in 20 minutes. She parked the car, walked to the door, and rang the doorbell.

There was a butler and nanny in the villa. The butler came to open the door. He knew Yun Shishi and greeted her respectfully. “Good day! May I know...”

“Is Hua Jin at home?”

“Young Master is at home.” The butler looked puzzled. “May I help you?”

“I wish to see him...”

Yun Shishi started to walk into the house, looking rather hurried.

The butler stopped her. “Young Master is still resting.”

“Resting?” Yun Shishi did not understand. “It’s not even night yet. He’s gone to bed so early...”

“Not that he’s gone to sleep. Rather, he hasn’t woken up since last night.”

“...”

Yun Shishi widened her eyes and exclaimed, “What? Hasn’t woken up!? He’s been sleeping since last night?”

“Uh huh.”

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“What’s going on?” Yun Shishi’s expression grew grave. “Is he ill?”

“No.” The butler reported truthfully, “I was also worried that he might be ill. However, we’ve taken his temperature and it’s normal. And he seems well. He’s just become especially lethargic.”

“Lethargic...” Yun Shishi repeated the term to herself, and for some reason her eyelids began to twitch.

Recently, Gong Fan had also become especially lethargic. It had never been like this before. Ever since that day when he had an afternoon nap, he had not reappeared.

The split personality condition was a very complicated one. She wouldn’t know how to get him to manifest unless she had access to a psychiatrist or a psychiatric authority.

!!

What was going on? First it was Gong Fan, and now it was happening to Hua Jin. What exactly had happened to the two of them?

Yun Shishi could not understand it. “Anyway, I’d like to see him.”

“Alright, let me take you!”

She was about to step inside when a peculiar voice came from behind her. “Eh? Shishi?”

The familiar voice made her turn around at once. She realized it was Qin Zhou and Liang Yin. They were looking equally puzzled.

“Oh, What brings you here?” They spoke almost in unison.

Yun Shishi gave a sort of a half smile. “I came to see Hua Jin.”

“What a coincidence.” Qin Zhou smiled as he walked towards her. “I called him and heard he was unwell, so I came to see what’s going on!”

“He told you he was feeling unwell?”

“Uh huh.” Qin Zhou nodded. “I called him to discuss the termination of the contract. He mumbled something vague and hung up. I was a little worried, so I thought I might as well pay him a personal visit!”

Yun Shishi noted Liang Yin, who was standing off to the side, and smiled politely at her. The girl seemed at a loss. Even though it was not the first time they had met, Yun Shishi was such a gentle and beautiful woman that she could not help feeling terribly self-conscious in her presence. She returned Yun Shishi's greeting with unease.

"There's no need to be so formal with Shishi! She's an alright person with no airs. Just treat her like an ordinary person!" Qin Zhou said.

Liang Yin felt even more uneasy upon hearing this.

Yun Shishi smiled. "It's nothing. A friend of Qin Zhou's is a friend of mine! But now's not the time for chit chat. Let's go and see Hua Jin first!"

Liang Yin was also worried about Hua Jin, so the three of them stepped through the doorway. There was no one in the living room. The nanny was cleaning and was startled to see them.

The butler stepped forward and said to her, "Is Young Master still resting?"

"That's right..." The nanny recovered and immediately said, "He's still in his room. He hasn't woken up yet!"

"Let's go up and take a look!" Yun Shishi exchanged a look with Qin Zhou and instructed Liang Yin to wait downstairs. The two of them hurried upstairs.

When they came to the bedroom door, Qin Zhou knocked and called out a few times. When there was no response, he opened the door and went in.

As soon as they opened the door, they saw Hua Jin getting out of bed, seemingly about to walk over. The latter was also stunned for a moment when he saw them.

"Why... why are you here?"

Seeing that the actor was safe and sound, Yun Shishi let out a sigh of relief, and her tense brow finally relaxed a little.

"I'm glad you're okay!" She had been anxious thinking that he was sick and nobody was looking after him! Seeing this wasn't the case now, she was relieved!

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Seeing Yun Shishi and Qin Zhou's expressions change from nervousness to relief, Hua Jin was even more puzzled. "Look at you guys making a fuss. One would think I have some terminal illness!"

"How would we know?! The butler said that you've been asleep since last night and haven't woken up. Alice said too, that she had tried calling but her calls had gone unanswered. We wouldn't have been so nervous otherwise!"

Qin Zhou frowned. "I thought you said you were feeling unwell."

His words warmed the actor's heart. So these two fellows had rushed over because of this matter!

"I'm fine, don't worry. It's just that... I do feel a little uncomfortable... I don't know why, but I can't seem to wake up..." He put a hand to his heavy head and sat down unsteadily on the edge of the bed.

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Qin Zhou walked over to him, and noticed that he was strangely pale. "What's the matter? You look awful."

Yun Shishi noticed it too, and felt a little distressed.

The actor shook his head. "I guess I've been tiring myself out recently and haven't rested well." He said this to reassure them, but the fact was, even he had no idea why he had become lethargic and in such a bad state of mind.

"Eh?! Where's Natalia?!" Hua Jin suddenly remembered.

Yun Shishi was curious to hear him mention Natalia too, but said, "She should be in good hands with the nanny, don't worry. When we first came in, things were looking normal. She's probably well taken care of. You, on the other hand... Should I take you to the hospital for a checkup?"

Hospital?

Hua Jin looked horrified. "I'm not going to the hospital!"

"Why?"

"There are so many people in the hospital. If I made an appearance there, it could spark some sort of news!"

Upon hearing this, Yun Shishi suddenly exchanged a look with Qin Zhou and burst out laughing. Hua Jin was terrified of going to the hospital, not because of the doctors or the injections.

Something very interesting had happened previously. Hua Jin had gone to the hospital for a checkup because of a bad flu. In the end, he attracted the attention of fans. Because the hospital was overcrowded, he had sat in a chair at the entrance of the proctology department, wearing a mask and waiting for his lab results. He was so dazed from being ill that he didn't notice the fans who were secretly watching him, taking photographs. He even felt smug for a moment that he had been so successful in his disguise he hadn't been recognized.

Eventually, the stolen shots of him sitting at the entrance of the proctology department with a mask on was posted online. Many people who saw this could not help having their imagination run wild.

"Is Hua Jin the bottom party?!"

"Could the rumors be true? Is Hua Jin really gay?"

"No way?! Hua Jin oppa has a boyfriend?! And he's the bottom party?!"

"It's not a surprise that Hua Jin is the bottom party. What's strange is that... the rumors are true?! And how unrestrained is he to go to the hospital..."

“Is he going to be okay?!”

...

The actor finally realized what had happened. After he recovered, he went online and saw these comments and rumors. He almost spewed blood.

These fans’ ability to imagine things was too terrifying! He only had a bad flu. How did the situation blow up like this?! The hospital was overcrowded, and there were no other seats. He was too sick to stand, and his head hurt, so he found a random seat and sat down. He didn’t even notice the words “proctomy department”...

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Given this experience, hospital visits had cast an indelible shadow over him. He avoided them.

“Don’t worry! It’s nothing serious.” The actor wasn’t sure what had caused him to be so lethargic, but he knew one thing for sure... It had nothing to do with his body.

Yun Shishi felt equally helpless. However, seeing how insistent the actor was, there was nothing she could do.

“You do remember that incident!” Qin Zhou snorted and casually threw a stack of newspapers in front of him. “Then you might as well explain your request to terminate your contract with Huanyu and this news!”

His tone was rather unfriendly and he seemed quite angry. Hua Jin had practically left without saying a word. Even the filming was hastily wrapped up. Then there was that inexplicable phone call to tell Qin Zhou that he had decided to retire and not take on any more events for the time being. He was also willing to take all responsibility for the breach.

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Qin Zhou was taken by surprise. He asked Hua Jin for the reason but the actor didn’t elaborate, he had only expressed regrets. It had not been easy all these years for Qin Zhou to groom him. Now that Hua Jin had announced his semi-retirement, Qin Zhou even doubted himself and the system he built. Why did his artiste quit for no reason?

This did not apply to Gu Xingze of course. But be it Yun Shishi or Hua Jin, one had retired for family reasons, the other for some unknown reason...

In his confusion, he saw another piece of breaking news in the media. The paparazzi had taken pictures of Hua Jin walking around the mall with a girl. He was seen holding Natalia’s hand and taking her to the children’s section to buy toys...

Coincidentally, the reporter was also shopping at the mall. He recorded this on his cell phone and had rather effortlessly created a sensational piece of news that rocked the entertainment industry...

“Hua Jin’s illegitimate daughter exposed?!”

“Popular actor appears in the bustling mall, holding the hand of a mixed-race girl. Their relationship is mysterious...”

In addition, the news that Hua Jin was planning to retreat temporarily from the entertainment industry was spreading like wildfire. Therefore, everyone speculated and suspected that Hua Jin had an illegitimate daughter and was being blackmailed into getting married. Therefore, he planned to get married, retire from the entertainment industry, and let go of his acting career...

Hua Jin gaped at the hyped up report in the newspaper, his face almost contorted.

“What sort of rubbish!”

“I was about to ask you!” Qin Zhou was displeased and said, “You didn’t even tell me that you had an illegitimate daughter?! Even if you had some matters that cannot be spoken about, I wouldn’t blame you if you had said so! But to retire without saying anything... Do you have any respect for me?”

“Uh...” The actor was speechless. He said with a throbbing head, “Actually... I don’t know how to sort out this relationship, but the child really isn’t mine.”

“Not yours?” Qin Zhou sounded skeptical. “Really?”

“Don’t you know me?!” The actor looked aggrieved. “Am I the type to mess around?!”

“Well... no, I guess.” Qin Zhou changed the subject. “You’re a delicate little flower. You don’t have the ability to devastate others, you can only be devastated by others.”

“...”

The actor clutched the blanket to his chest, aggrieved. “That’s outrageous! I’m a good boy. I won’t do anything kinky! Don’t judge me like that!”

“Alright then...” Qin Zhou looked all solemn again. “So the background of this child is...”

The actor was about to explain when Yun Shishi said helplessly, “As a matter of fact... er... I’m partly to blame for this.”

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“Your responsibility?!” Qin Zhou looked even more amazed.

What on earth was going on?

Yun Shishi started to explain, “My brother entrusted this girl to Hua Jin’s care. She has a split personality and needs to be adopted and treated. Initially, I wanted to adopt her, but as you know my family situation... Yueyao needs to be taken care of. With Youyou and Little Yichen and now Lisa, I’m too busy to do anything else. So, in desperation, I entrusted this matter to Hua Jin.”

Qin Zhou turned to look at Hua Jin in surprise. The actor looked as aggrieved as a kitten. Actually, Yun Shishi felt really guilty about it. Even though her brother had compensated Hua Jin handsomely, asking him to take care of a child was depriving the man of his life. It didn't matter if Hua Jin volunteered. After all, the actor had had no experience with children. No matter what, it was a liability. But he silently accepted it.

Yun Shishi was surprised that he was willing to take care of Natalia and even retreated from the entertainment industry to do it.

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She gave Qin Zhou a brief explanation of what had happened, and as he listened, he got the gist of the situation.

"I understand now. I came over today to settle the termination of the contract." With that, he tossed Hua Jin a document.

The actor opened it and read through the document. He looked astonished.

"What's the matter?" Qin Zhou raised an eyebrow. "Any objections to the termination letter?"

"Why is the penalty column blank?" The actor blinked. "You..."

"You want me to fill it out?" The man shot the actor a frosty look. "If we were to play by the rules, you'd have to pay the company at least an eight-figure sum..."

"Eight figure..." The actor sucked in his breath.

Although Gong Jie had promised to cover the penalty, he was still stunned to hear the amount.

Then again... Qin Zhou actually wasn't asking for compensation, surprisingly...

"Good man..." Touched, the actor covered his mouth as tears streamed down his face. "Great Qin, you're such a..."

"Shut up." Qin Zhou seemed a little frustrated, still. He was also a little dejected. He had been planning to focus on promoting Hua Jin as the top seasoned actor, but in the end, this disappointing person wanted to semi-retire. And to think that it was all because he had to take care of the child...

What an odd reason. However, for the sake of his own boss, Qin Zhou had to allow this.

"Forget it!" Qin Zhou said with a wave of his hand. "If you're still willing to film in the future, I'll find you resources. If you don't want to, stay at home and be a newbie dad."

"Thank you, Great Qin!" Hua Jin almost wrapped his arms around the man's trousers to cry.

"It's not as though I can really bear to terminate the contract!"

"Don't!" Qin Zhou pushed him away in disgust. "Hurry up and terminate the contract! I've had enough of you."

The actor was dumbfounded. Where was the promised comradeship!?

“Here you go. A pen.” Qin Zhou tossed him the pen.

The actor took the pen and dutifully signed the termination letter. Strangely, he felt rather disappointed as he signed his name.

Although he had indicated his wish to leave the entertainment industry and had had enough of it, he actually felt a little reluctant and hesitant to leave.

The entertainment industry was a big part of his life. It gave him his loneliness, his glory, he suffered belittlement, and earned his infinite halo.

Now that he was really leaving... he actually felt a little desolate.

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Yun Shishi’s heart ached when she looked at Hua Jin’s forlorn expression as he signed the termination letter. She understood the complex feelings he had towards the entertainment industry. It wasn’t home, but it was home. Of course he felt a certain reluctance to leave.

Yun Shishi was quick to reassure him. “Don’t feel bad. If you can’t bear to go, you can always take come back when you come across a good script!”

The actor smiled. “I’m fine. Just being melodramatic. After all, I’ve been in the entertainment industry since I was a teenager, so...”

He smiled again briefly. “It’s okay.”

He paused as a thought struck him. At the thought of Natalia, he frowned and said, “Oh, Natalia...”

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Yun Shishi found his mention of Natalia odd.

“Where is she? I don’t think I saw her.”

“She should be in her room!”

The actor looked puzzled.

He wasn’t sure when it was that it had happened.

He just felt that he had been asleep for a long time. When he woke up, his head was throbbing, but he couldn’t remember what had happened.

He could vaguely recall Yun Shishi’s departure with Youyou and Little Yichen. However he remembered nothing of what had happened after.

Hua Jin came to Natalia’s room and saw that it was empty. He was about to leave when he spotted a beautiful crystal ball on the table. Before he could take a closer look, he heard the voices of Yun Shishi and the nanny outside.

“Young Miss is in the back garden!”

“Back garden?”

“I saw her earlier, playing on the swing in the back garden!”

The actor came out. The nanny greeted him respectfully when she saw him. “Young Master...”

“Is she in the back garden?”

“Yes.”

The nanny looked relieved when she saw him. “You’re finally awake. I thought you were feeling unwell!”

The actor waved his hand and said, “I’m fine. I’m fine. I’m going to check on Natalia.”

Yun Shishi stopped him abruptly. “I actually came because I was worried about you. You weren’t answering your phone. I was worried if something had happened.”

The actor was unimpressed. “What’s there to worry about?”

“Alice called you, but you didn’t answer. She has to have a handle on Natalia at all times. You understand.”

Frowning, the actor nodded. “Yes. I’ll call her back later.”

Yun Shishi nodded, reassured. She exchanged a glance with Qin Zhou and said, “I’m going home, then. I have three little ones waiting for me.”

“Alright.” Hua Jin turned to his manager. “And you?”

Qin Zhou raised an eyebrow. “Why? You’re in a hurry to get rid of me on my first visit?”

“No! I have no intention of driving you away.” Hua Jin assured the man.

Qin Zhou cleared his throat and glanced at him. “You haven’t given me a proper tour of your new home!” As he spoke, Qin Zhou looked around and exclaimed, “The villas here must be expensive, right?! It seems like you’ve managed to build up some savings over the years!”

The man had his doubts nevertheless. He had good knowledge of the actor’s income and no matter how he worked the figures, he just couldn’t figure out how Hua Jin could afford a villa here. But he didn’t pry. After all, it was someone else’s private matter.

Hua Jin froze at Qin Zhou’s remark. He really wanted to explain to the man that he had not purchased this villa himself. However, with Qin Zhou, there was just no way he knew how to explain it clearly. And if he didn’t explain it clearly, the man would inevitably overthink things.

With Qin Zhou, there was just no way he knew how to explain it clearly. And if he didn't explain it clearly, the man would inevitably overthink things. Hence, he did not specifically explain the origin of this villa.

"Forget it. I don't expect you to ask me to stay and serve me tea." Qin Zhou was here with the intention of handing him the termination letter personally. Now that the actor had signed it, the settlement document was in effect.

He had other matters to attend to, and had to take Liang Yin to a dinner appointment later.

Hua Jin walked Yun Shishi downstairs and was surprised to see Liang Yin sitting on the sofa.

"What brings you here?"

When Liang Yin saw Hua Jin, she immediately put down her teacup and stood up to greet him. "I heard you were feeling unwell, so I came to see you!"

"Oh, here to see me ..." The actor put on a disgusted expression and remarked, "If you're here to see me, why have you come empty-handed?"

Liang Yin was speechless for a moment.

The actor walked over and lowered his voice. "How are things going with you and Qin Zhou?"

At his question, Liang Yin's face reddened and she said angrily, "Hey, lower your voice!"

"I'm speaking very quietly as it is."

The actor glanced at Qin Zhou and saw that the man was talking to Yun Shishi. He was obviously not paying attention to them. He turned to Liang Yin and continued, "As the saying goes, the pavilion closest to the water enjoys the moonlight first. Now that I've terminated my contract, Qin Zhou will definitely focus all his attention on you. This way, you'll have more opportunities! But girls shouldn't be too proactive. Be reserved, understand?"

"Are you really going to terminate your contract?"

"Why? Can't bear to see me go?" Hua Jin chuckled. "I'm just fulfilling my dream ahead of time. Look, isn't it nice to not have to work and be able to travel all over the world?"

"Have you become a kept man?" Liang asked.

The actor's lips twitched violently at the suggestion. "Kept man?"

"Qin Zhou said you couldn't afford a villa here with all the money you've made over the years. You must have found a sugar mummy."

Damnation!

Hua Jin was furious at Liang Yin's words! Qin Zhou actually slandered him behind his back?! Kept man?! Was he that kind of gigolo!?

"I'm leaving, Hua Jin!" Yun Shishi suddenly interrupted his thoughts and waved at him.

The actor's face broke into a smile as he walked to the door. He waited till she was gone from sight before turning to the man beside him with a resentful expression. Qin Zhou felt an incredibly resentful glare directed at him. He was a little surprised why Hua Jin was glaring at him like that. Behind him, Liang Yin was snickering.

Qin Zhou was flabbergasted and asked, "Why are you glaring at me like that?"

"Nothing!" Hua Jin said in a huff, "I thought you have matters to attend to. If you're busy, I won't keep you."

"..."

This was a serious dismissal! Qin Zhou was puzzled by the actor's sudden change in attitude. However, it was getting late and it was indeed time to leave.

He turned to Liang Yin and said, "Let's go then! We're in a hurry."

"Okay." Liang Yin stood up and walked over to Qin Zhou. When the man saw that Hua Jin was still wearing that resentful expression, he muttered something about being baffled and left.

It wasn't until the two of them had left that the actor realized... In his current state, he seemed no different from being a kept man. However, the person who kept him was not a sugar mummy, but the most terrifying man in the Hurricane Group...

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"Forget it! Why worry myself over such nonsense!" The actor took out his cell phone and sure enough, saw a number of missed calls. A number of them were from Alice.

But... How did he sleep through so many missed calls? He recalled that his cell phone had a loud ringtone. Besides, it was just sitting by the pillow. Was he sleeping so soundly? Did he really not hear such a loud ringtone going off? Could something really be wrong with him?

In the midst of his confusion, he suddenly realized, his phone had been switched to silent mode. He had no idea when this had happened.

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He was all the more stunned. His phone had always been kept in the ringing plus vibration mode. How did it get switched to silent mode? No wonder he hadn't been woken up by the many calls. Had someone been fiddling with his phone?

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Hua Jin had no time to dwell on this, he dialed Alice's number and headed for the back garden. The call was answered almost immediately.

At the other end, Alice sounded nervous. "Hua Jin?"

"It's me."

"Whew..." Alice was clearly relieved. "Why haven't you answered any of my calls?"

"I fell asleep ..." Hua Jin explained, "I accidentally muted my phone, so maybe that's why I didn't hear the calls coming in!"

Alice was taken aback and muttered, "A false alarm. Next time, don't turn your phone to silent mode. Be careful about that. I'll be worried if I can't reach you."

"Uh huh."

"How is Natalia now?" Alice inquired, sounding rather worried.

The actor happened to walk out onto the terrace. From his vantage point, he could see Natalia swinging in the back garden. The child seemed to be enjoying herself. She could keep herself occupied even though she was alone.

He replied, "She's fine. Now, she's there alone, playing on the swing."

"You... didn't notice anything odd about her, did you?"

"Odd?" The actor shook his head. "Not really..."

After a pause, he suddenly changed the subject. "Anyway, does Natalia really have a split personality?"

"Uh huh. Why do you ask?"

"So far, no one, not even you, has witnessed her second personality?"

Alice sighed helplessly at that. "I haven't known her for long, but her condition is different from Youyou's. Her second personality was created by an outsider, not a creation of her own mental world."

"How is that different from Youyou? Aside from the fact that one is self-induced and the other is induced by an external party, I don't see a difference."

"You're wrong." Alice answered, "A self-induced split personality has a strong sense of belonging to its own body. It's independent. But what others create, you can't rule out that it's being controlled externally."

"Being controlled?"

"Since Natalia's personality was created by an external party, there already exists an element of manipulation in itself. I have to suspect, then, that her alter ego can be controlled. It's not of the same nature."

"I can't say I understand completely..." After all, the actor was particularly unfamiliar with the field.

Alice groaned for a moment, then tried another explanation. "In the beginning, Professor Romanka created Natalia's split personality by locking her up in a laboratory for research. I suspect he was trying to achieve a terrible vision he had from years ago."

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“Terrible vision?” Somehow the actor felt his blood run cold at Alice’s words.

She said unhurriedly, “Do you know about the society of personalities?”

Society of personalities? The unfamiliar term left the actor befuddled.

He said bluntly, “I’ve never heard of it.”

“It’s normal for you not to understand. A society of personalities sounds complicated but actually, it’s very simple.”

Alice explained it to him. “A society of personalities is made up of the many different identities and personalities residing in one body. Each personality has its own role. Among the personalities, there will be one that assumes a leadership role who manages the other personalities. Such a personality also has the right to banish other personalities.”

“Are there any cases like this?”

“Yes...” Alice continued, “so Professor Romanka hoped that by creating a society of personalities, he would cultivate a leadership personality. The aim was to eventually banish all the personalities, leaving only the primary personality, thereby completely curing the multiple personalities disorder. He’s always wanted to conquer this field, but I think he was too eager for quick success with this vision. If, in the end, these personalities became uncontrollable, then this so-called society of personalities would become a real disaster.”

“...”

The actor listened, horrified at the thought. “Society of personalities?! How can that be? Since they are personalities, They must each have their own independent mind. Aren’t you afraid they’ll rebel?”

“I’ve reminded him about that, but he was adamant. In fact, he started the experiment on his own in private. I objected strongly to that, but, you know, he wouldn’t listen to my opinion.”

“Then ... how did you manage to take Natalia from him?”

“Because...” Alice gave a somewhat sinister smile. “I found evidence that he was using underage girls for illegal experiments. Besides, I threatened to discredit him if he didn’t hand her over. He got scared. That’s why he handed her over to me. But ... even if Natalia is under your care now, I have to monitor her at all times. No one knows what her second personality is like. If it turns out to be a dangerous personality, I have to take her back.”

The actor nodded in agreement.

Alice sighed. “Worry about yourself first. If you develop affections for the girl, you may not be able to bear parting with her when that moment should come.”

“I will take good care of her since Gong Jie entrusted her to me. And I’ll be sure to cooperate if and when you need to take her back.”

“Uh huh! Then, please report her situation to me at any time. I’ll leave it in your good hands!”

“Small matter.”

After a few more exchanges of pleasantries, the actor hung up.

He stood on the terrace and looked in the direction of the swing, but suddenly realized that Natalia was gone.

“Where’s the girl!?”

It was only just then that he saw her sitting on the swing and playing by herself!

In the midst of trying to figure out what was going on, Natalia’s seductive voice came from behind him.

“Are you looking for me?”

“...”

Startled, the actor whirled around to find Natalia standing behind him, with an angelic smile and her hands clasped behind her back. “When did...”

“Earlier, I saw you standing here talking on the phone. I guessed you must have been looking for me, right?”

The girl smiled and continued, “So, I just came over instead!”

Chapter