

## Sweet Love 4171

### Chapter 4171: The Other Side 140

"You..." The actor looked back in the direction of the garden swing. It was also some distance away. Did this lass know how to perform flash stunts?

"How did you ... get here from there?"

The girl looked at him like he was an idiot. "Of course I walked! Did you think I flew? I don't have any superpowers!"

The actor muttered under his breath, "I didn't see you walking over."

"You looked very serious while on the phone call earlier." Natalia asked curiously, "Who was on the phone?"

The actor was silent for a moment, then said, "It was... a friend."

Natalia preferred not to be too close to Alice and had much displeasure over her probing behavior. Therefore, the actor avoided mentioning Alice in front of her. Natalia didn't like Alice, he knew this little secret.

Still, Natalia managed to guess. "Oh? Alice?"

"How ... how did you know?"

"I can see from your expression that you don't want me to know who it is. In that case, it must be that evil woman."

"Evil woman..." Somewhat exasperated, the actor knelt down in front of her. "Alice isn't an evil woman," he tried to persuade her. "She's just a doctor treating your condition."

Natalia immediately looked crestfallen. She pursed her pink lips tightly and corrected him with a solemn expression. "I'm not sick. I'm not a patient. I don't need her watching over me. I'm not a prisoner!"

She seemed angry. Many people said that she was ill, and treated her like a sick person, but she did not feel that she was sick. She'd seen sick people, and she could not identify with them. She did not understand. She was fine and healthy. Why did everyone treat her as though she was a sick person! She did not like those looks of pity or sympathy! It was as if she was seriously ill! She was not!

"Alright, alright, you're not!"

"Actually, I know." Natalia took a deep breath. "You and Alice have an agreement. You're responsible for spying on me, aren't you?"

The actor was speechless. What he hadn't known was that Natalia would be sensitive and observant enough to notice such things, even at such a young age.

Natalia saw his expression and felt a sense of loss, even disappointment. She had begun to feel closer to Hua Jin gradually, and had even developed affections for the actor. But just as she was about to open her heart to him, this knowledge disappointed her!

She looked around coldly and said with little expression, "This beautiful garden exists only so that I'd feel less lonely while I'm in this prison. You say you're keeping me company, but it's only because Daddy can't bear for me to be alone, right?"

The actor was at a loss for words.

"Sometimes I wonder why I feel a little uncomfortable when you look at me as though you want to be friends with me. You pity me, don't you?"

Natalia's pointed questions made the actor nervous. Indeed, he pitied the child, but not purely because he liked her. He wasn't all that fond of kids. He even thought that if in the future he were to be alone and single, then he would want to be earning lots of money and have no kids.

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He even thought that if in the future he were to be alone and single, then he would want to be earning lots of money and have no kids. He would be active in charity. He would donate his excess assets to children who were either seriously ill or poor, but he would never think of adopting.

He had accepted Gong Jie's terms only out of duty and much helplessness. Not that he really liked Natalia.

"I know you don't like me very much. Since you don't like me, I won't force you to like me. So please don't force yourself to like me too!"

Natalia smiled as she spoke. "Still, I will live in harmony with you!"

With that, she turned and walked back into the room. He watched her go in silence. Suddenly, he was overcome by a strange sense of helplessness.

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"How could that be? Didn't your relationship with Natalia improve significantly during the trip to the amusement park?"

...

Late at night.

On the balcony, the actor was on the phone, leaning back against the railing as he lamented to Yun Shishi. "Perhaps I really don't have what it takes to be a newbie dad. I've tried my best to build a relationship with her, but this child is so sensitive. With just a look, she completely dismissed me as a person. She's only six or seven, but the workings of her mind are already so exquisite and mature!"

Yun Shishi smiled at that. "In this respect, he's very similar to Youyou."

"Are they similar?"

"The boy has always been sensitive and delicate, even as a child. How far could he go? He could tell if someone liked him or hated him with just one look. Natalia is the same."

The actor sighed helplessly. "I don't mean to dislike her. It's just that, you know, she showed up out of the blue. Overnight, I went from being a singleton to a newbie dad. Although I'm just an acting dad, my status had changed so fast that I couldn't adjust my mentality!"

"I can quite understand that!"

Yun Shishi continued, "But, think about it. You haven't been through the preparation process. Unlike the one in my family who had been constantly preparing for everything from getting ready for pregnancy to conceiving and nurturing the baby. A man's paternal nature is actually different from the maternal nature. Motherhood is innate. Perhaps when she's childless, she feels an inexplicable stirring whenever she sees someone else's child. On the other hand, for men, some don't even realize their role as a father until the child is five or six years old. That paternal nature generally awakens later."

"I want to get to her," he said sincerely.

"You want to get to her because you promised Alice you'll work closely with her to monitor this child, right?"

"..."

"When you finally want to get to her because you wish to do it from the perspective of a father wanting to get to his daughter, the child will also be sincere with you." After a pause, she smiled helplessly and said, "This child, I think, is more vulnerable and sensitive, a little extreme in her thinking even. It's difficult to get along with her, to get to her."

"See? Isn't that right?" The actor pleaded for help. "Then what should I do? I don't want her to be on the guard against me like I'm a wolf. She says she's not a sick person, but she doesn't know her own condition."

"You may not understand, Hua Jin."

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"You may not understand, Hua Jin."

Yun Shishi smiled. "A smart, sensible boy like Youyou wouldn't want to be treated like a patient either. Like Natalia, he's strong in character. He can be indifferent to any scorn, but he doesn't take well to pitying looks. She'd be unhappy if you treated her like a patient. Because she doesn't think she's a patient, rather, she's just a little different from the others. Think about it. Natalia grew up without a

home or a sense of belonging, so she's stubborn. The only way she can properly protect herself is if she's armed like a hedgehog. In fact, you can understand that, can't you?"

Yun Shishi, too, had grown up in a welfare home. She was not as aloof as Natalia. She was stubborn, but unwilling to grow those prickly thorns. Even though she had been hurt many times over, she was willing to face the world with a smile. Because, when she was a child, someone had once told her something.

Who that person was, she could not remember now. All she could remember was that the person said, there was only one kind of heroism in the world, and that was to recognize the darkness of reality and still be passionate.

She wanted to be this hero. Natalia was different. She could only protect herself with her prickly spines.

The actor looked thoughtful.

He replied solemnly, "I understand..."

As a young man, the actor had often felt strange stares from all sorts of people around him. They belittled him and did not think much of him. However, he had long forgotten those looks.

He only vaguely remembered one time when he'd been physically injured. He'd been taken to the hospital and a doctor had examined him. The doctor had looked at him with an expression of pity and sympathy.

That look almost made his heart bleed. It wasn't that he was disgusted by it. It was a sort of unfamiliar feeling. And he didn't like it.

"I got it."

Yun Shishi asked, "It's late. Is she asleep?"

"Yeah, asleep. ... I guess. I didn't go to her room. I'll sneak around a little later."

"Yeah, it's getting late. I've got to go tell bedtime stories to Youyou too!"

"Okay. Good night."

After ending the call, he placed the phone casually on the railing and looked up, feeling a little lost.

He stared into the night. It made him think back to the many times in his youth, after he'd been beaten up, when he had also secretly stood under the night sky, looking up and muttering, as if to God or himself.

When exactly would these times of darkness end? Life was really full of dread and darkness back then. He even felt that sometimes he had the courage to die, but not to live.

But now, those dark memories were blurry and behind him. Time really would erase everything. Unconsciously.

Late night.

Hua Jin walked quietly to the door of Natalia's room, turned the knob, and opened it before entering. Natalia was asleep on the bed, but the whole room was bathed in a purple glow.

He couldn't help being curious. The purple light was eerie and intense, but he didn't remember buying a purple light fixture. This purple light source seemed to be emanating from the corner of the bed.

Curious, the actor walked to the head of the bed, discovering that the light source was coming from a crystal ball.

A crystal ball? Was it a lamp?

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A crystal ball? Was it a lamp?

Curiously, he held up the crystal ball. He vaguely remembered seeing it in her room earlier in the day, but he hadn't expected it to glow. Was it a lamp?

The actor examined the object but found no switch for the light source.

Well then... How did this crystal ball glow?

Studying this magical crystal ball, he suddenly noticed that there was a swirl of lingering mist within the ball. He gently placed his hand on the surface of the ball. The mist nimbly gathered itself at his palm. Through the thin crystal ball, it turned, condensed, and scattered as he moved his hand around the surface...

What was this!? He had never seen anything like this magical crystal ball. The mist inside seemed to have a soul.

Puzzled, he turned to look at Natalia who was lying in the bed. She was sleeping quietly beneath the covers, so quietly she seemed lifeless.

His gaze shifted back to the crystal ball. He couldn't help feeling suspicious.

...

"Crystal ball?"

"Uh huh." The actor told Alice about the crystal ball.

For some reason, Alice was silent for a long time. "You said the crystal ball was purple with mist in it."

The actor described the crystal ball again.

Alice's breath caught in her throat. "How is that possible?" She seemed to be muttering to herself.

"What's the matter?"

"Impossible." Alice said grimly, "Such a crystal ball doesn't exist."

"But I saw it with my own eyes."

“Impossible.” Alice frowned, her tone grave. “Such crystal balls are usually used for hypnotherapy. It’s something that only experienced hypnotists would have. How... how could she own something like that!?”

For some reason, the actor winced. He scratched his brow and stared at the bare wall for a moment.

“Is there really such a thing as hypnosis?” The actor didn’t seem convinced. As far as he knew, such crystal balls only existed in the world of magic, an object used in divination. In reality, it was actually used for hypnosis? “There is really such a thing as hypnosis?”

Alice said coolly, “Do you want me to perform it so that you can experience it?”

The actor was even more surprised. “You know hypnosis!?”

Alice fell silent. It seemed Gong Jie had not given the actor a proper introduction to her background. Hua Jin was actually unaware that she was an experienced hypnotist.

“If you don’t mind, I can show you what hypnosis feels like.”

“That’s fake, right?” The actor was unimpressed. “If I have a strong will, how would you be able to hypnotize me?”

Alice rolled her eyes. “How else do you think I erased Youyou’s memory?”

“But you didn’t succeed either.”

Alice fell silent.

“So, you don’t seem to be a very successful hypnotist!”

The woman ground her teeth in fury! Was this guy asking for a beating?! “Okay, I’ve taken note of this. Just be more careful, whatever you do.”

“Well then...” The actor asked curiously, “What should we do with that crystal ball?”

“Just pretend you don’t know about it.” After a pause, Alice said with genuine concern, “You’re so stupid, I’m really worried that with your IQ, Natalia will run you over.”

“Enough. I won’t allow you to doubt my intelligence.”

“You doubt my ability in hypnosis. I doubt your intelligence. Alright then, we’re even.”

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A few days later, Huanyu called for a media conference regarding Hua Jin’s retreat from the entertainment industry. The actor made an appearance as well.

There was an air of finality, as though perhaps this would be his last appearance for the time being. He was dressed in a white shirt and black trousers that matched his English suit. He looked dignified and composed.

He had always dressed in an almost gender-neutral style. Now that he had suddenly emerged in a suit looking very gentlemanly, people were not used to it. He hadn't wanted to come, but in order to show his sincerity, at least to his fans, he decided to make an appearance and make the announcement public.

Qin Zhou and Ji Lin were also present. Before the press conference, Ji Lin had humiliated Qin Zhou.

"I think there's something wrong with you." Ji Lin stared at Qin Zhou coldly.

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The latter looked flabbergasted. "What do you mean?"

Ji Lin said seriously, "Look, most of the artistes under you have retired."

Qin Zhou did not respond. Was that his fault? He glanced coolly at Hua Jin who was standing by the side. The latter twitched his lips guiltily in an awkward but polite smile.

"I can't keep him. What can I do?"

Ji Lin continued, "I heard that you signed up a newcomer recently. Planning to promote her?"

"Uh huh. Her name's Liang Yin."

"Ooooooh..." Ji Lin's next remark was choking. "Through unspoken rules?"

"..." Qin Zhou cleared his throat. "I'm not into any of this nonsense."

"I've seen pictures of that girl. She's good-looking... Has the makings of a big star." For Ji Lin to say that someone had the potential to make it big, then it's more than likely that it would happen.

When Hua Jin heard this, he immediately stood up and patted his chest. "I was the one who recommended Liang Yin to Qin Zhou!"

Qin Zhou and Ji Lin looked at him coldly.

The actor immediately fell silent, unable to utter another word. "Er... forget I said that."

Ji Lin seemed displeased when he saw Hua Jin. "I heard you have an illegitimate daughter?"

The actor was speechless for a moment.

"There's no such thing, okay?! Lord Ji is starting to listen to rumors?"

"I don't know if they are rumors, but I know that your semi-retirement has caused a lot of financial damage to the company. Don't go thinking that I don't know about how you've gone through the back door and aren't paying a penalty for the breach of contract." Ji Lin's words made Qin Zhou and Hua Jin tremble.

The actor said awkwardly, "Although I've quit the entertainment industry, I can still work for the company for nothing!"

"Working for nothing? You're certainly dedicated." Ji Lin was famous for his sharp tongue that outdid Qin Zhou's.

In Huanyu, even Mu Yazhe and Qin Zhou may not match up to Ji Lin when it came to delivering caustic remarks.

The actor didn't dare cross him, let alone get into a disagreement with him. Besides, he was in the wrong for what had happened, so he said nothing.

Ji Lin did not really intend to be mean to him. He gently patted the actor's shoulder and sighed. "Forget it. You've worked hard in Huanyu. Consider it early retirement. After all, you've worked harder than anyone else for so many years."

With that, Ji Lin walked up to the podium. The actor stared silently at Ji Lin's back. For some reason, his heart throbbed. Although Ji Lin had a sharp tongue and looked like an iceberg, he was actually very soft-hearted.

Sometimes, he would even reveal a gentle side. For some reason, Hua Jin was touched.

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He knew how tired and exhausted the actor was after so many years in the entertainment industry. All else aside, as a friend, he sincerely hoped that the actor would be able to leave such a foul place as the entertainment industry.

Qin Zhou walked over to him and raised an eyebrow. "I have a feeling your Weibo is going to explode after this press conference."

"I think I can already imagine that," Hua Jin said.

There was a difference between male artistes and female artistes. The universality of female artistes seemed lesser than that of male artistes. After all, the target crowd of the entertainment industry was women. And women lose their tendency to be rational rather easily. If they knew that their idol was stepping back from the entertainment industry, most of them would be devastated.

Somehow, news of the actor's departure from the entertainment industry seemed to spread like wildfire. Qin Zhou suspected that a Huanyu insider had released the news. No outsider would have been privy to this matter.

The news that Hua Jin was leaving the entertainment industry quickly spread among many of his fans. But no one wanted to believe it. They would rather believe the news from some time ago that he had an illegitimate daughter, perhaps even a secret marriage, over the news that he was bidding farewell to the entertainment industry and retreating from their sight.

Idols.

Sometimes, an idol, under many circumstances, may become a spiritual anchor for fans.

It would be hard to adapt to a sudden loss of spiritual sustenance.

The press conference was about to begin. The media representatives took their seats.



Many media outlets had also received news that Hua Jin might be quitting the entertainment industry, but they were not sure if the press conference was to clarify the rumors or to really announce his withdrawal from the entertainment industry.

The press conference commenced.

Qin Zhou was concise and gave a short opening speech. Then, he announced publicly that Hua Jin, an artiste under Huanyu's original banner, would temporarily leave the entertainment industry for personal reasons.

The actor stood up and bowed slightly. Through the camera, he apologized to his fans and promised that even though he would no longer be part of the entertainment industry, he would update his life on his personal blog account. He would also be involved in charity activities in the future, in the name of the Hua Jin Fan Club.

A reporter stood up and asked a curious question. "Is your withdrawal from the entertainment industry related to the previous rumors that you had an illegitimate daughter?"

There was an uproar.

Many people were aware of the rumor that Hua Jin had an illegitimate daughter, but no one expected someone to raise this question in public.

For a moment there was awkwardness. But the actor faced it squarely. He said truthfully, "I'm sure many people saw the photos secretly taken by your media reporters. I'm here to explain this."

"That girl is not my biological daughter, but an orphan I adopted. However, I want to give her a warm home. At the same time, I want to protect her from the attention of the outside world."

"I'm sorry that this news has had some negative impact on the public, but I also hope that in the future, media reporters will not intrude on my personal life. It's okay for you to secretly photograph me. The child is innocent. I want her to have a positive environment to grow up in, an undisturbed childhood, in summary."

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Hua Jin had quit the entertainment industry!

This matter was made official at the Huanyu press conference!

Many fans broke down.

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No one had ever imagined that Hua Jin would quit the entertainment industry. This news shook the entertainment industry. Hua Jin's fans, in particular, could not accept this. As fans, they were already used to seeing their idol every day. Whether it was on variety shows, movies, or TV shows, the actor made frequent appearances.

Hua Jin was a solid popular young actor with good acting skills, there were not many young actors with such potential. His acting skills definitely ranked him among the top A-list celebrities. His temporary departure from the entertainment industry was indeed a considerable loss.

The day after Hua Jin announced his retirement from the entertainment industry, Weibo's server crashed. News of #HuaHua's withdrawal from the entertainment industry# quickly dominated the headlines of major media websites. Because of the huge amount of traffic data, the entire server was temporarily paralyzed. Many users could not log in.

There were even some anti-fans who made groundless accusations and attempted to slander Hua Jin, saying that he had decided to leave the entertainment industry because he had a secret relationship and now the woman demanded marriage for their child's sake.

Weibo went wild. Huanyu's official website exploded as well. The recent reposts and comments on Hua Jin's personal Weibo account quickly broke seven figures and headed for the tens of millions.

The public once again witnessed the effect of Hua Jin's terrifying popularity.

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Somehow, many media outlets found out where the actor lived. However, there was no way to break through the layers of security Gong Jie had put in place.

Hua Jin also saw from the Internet that many media outlets were lying in wait at the entrance of the villa, in order to capture his first movements after leaving the entertainment industry. This was big news. No one wanted to miss it.

Lately, Natalia's situation was considerably stable. But, the actor thought, he had to protect Natalia. He absolutely could not expose her to the media.

Otherwise... Gong Jie would surely slit his throat!

In the midst of trying to dodge the paparazzi, Yun Shishi's call came in.

"Your brother-in-law is on annual leave. Why don't we go to Saipan together? You could bring Natalia."

"Saipan?" The actor hesitated.

"But there are paparazzi hovering around. I'm afraid I'd be surrounded the moment I step out."

Yun Shishi was speechless. "Don't tell me... you haven't been out since the press conference!?"

The actor was amazed. "How did you know?"

"... forget I even asked." She was silent for a long moment. "It's all right," she said abruptly. "Don't worry. Your brother-in-law will take care of all this. Since it's rare for him to take time off, and since you've been in the country for a while, why don't we take a vacation together and relax?"

"Okay." The actor agreed.

"However, I still have to seek Natalia's opinion."

"How has Natalia been recently?"

“Not bad, but she’s become less talkative.”

“It’s hard not to be depressed when you’re always at home. Especially when you’re somewhat grown up. Surely it gets boring when you don’t get a chance to hang out.”

“Really?”

“Uh huh. Anyway, that’s the deal. Have a chat with her about it.”

“Okay.”

...

“The beach?”

Natalia was momentarily stunned to learn that they were going to the beach for a vacation.

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“What’s the matter?”

Hua Jin tensed up instantly. “You’re not keen to?”

“Not that I don’t want to, but...” Natalia hesitated. “What’s the beach like?”

When it came to places she had never visited, she didn’t immediately look forward to the experience. She wasn’t like other children who would be filled with excitement at the mention of the beach. Instead, she felt an inexplicable sense of unease.

It was an uneasiness of being in an unfamiliar territory.

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Hua Jin smiled and described the place to her. “The beach is a place that leads to the open sea. The blue sea, the blue sky. From afar, the sky and the sea seem to meet on the horizon. There’s the golden sand and warm sun. You can sunbathe on the beach or drift in the water. Actually, going to the beach is a way to relax. So, would you like to go?”

Natalia’s eyes brightened faintly at his description, as if through his words she had been able to paint a beautiful picture in her mind. “It sounds like a very good idea.”

“Uh huh!”

Natalia flashed a rare smile and said, “Sure!”

Hua Jin looked into her smiling eyes. For a moment, he was deeply moved by her pure and innocent smile. There was something so untainted and beautiful in Natalia’s smile. It was an unsullied beauty, the purest goodness in the world.

He squeezed her little hand involuntarily. “Then ... let’s go together, shall we?”

“Sure.”

The itinerary was finalized.

On this trip to Saipan, Yun Shishi and Mu Yazhe brought the entire family... Little Yichen, Youyou, Lisa, and Yueyao. Yun Shishi had never taken Yueyao overseas until now that she was three, mostly because of safety concerns. She had been more or less traumatized by the gun attack in the square previously.

The point was that Yueyao was too young. At that time, she had just learned how to toddle along. Yun Shishi was worried that things might go wrong if she brought the girl too far away. Most importantly, Mu Yazhe did not have much time to accompany her on trips. Recently, he had taken his annual leave and suggested that since Yueyao had grown up a little, he should take her to explore the huge world out there.

Hearing this, Yun Shishi readily agreed. Her anticipated family trip had finally arrived! They had been looking forward to it for the longest time, to finally be able to travel together as a family. It was even Mu Yazhe who had suggested Saipan as the holiday destination. Yun Shishi and he had been there previously and could not stop thinking about its magnificent coastal views. So, naturally, Saipan became the destination of this trip.

Hua Jin’s main concern was the paparazzi, but that was not even a difficult problem for Mu Yazhe to deal with.

The day before they set off, Mu Yazhe sent people to clear the entrance of the villa. It was not surprising that they caught many paparazzi who had been laying in wait for a long time. After a serious warning, no one dared to continue their stay.

The man did not make things difficult for these media reporters. Mu Yazhe was no longer as stern as he had been in his youth. He had mellowed in his ways and did not make things too difficult for them.

The paparazzi who had been caught thought that they were going to lose their jobs this time. To their surprise, the man’s light handed management of the situation made them want to publish an article extolling him instead.

This trip seemed likely to go smoothly, making the actor look forward to it even more.

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Early in the morning on the day of their departure, Hua Jin got up and began to pack, getting ready for the trip.

He had bought quite a few dresses for Natalia to wear for the beach vacation. Some had tiny floral prints, some were Lolita style. He really liked them and imagined Natalia would look lovely in them. He looked forward to seeing her in these dresses. Once he was packed, he went to wake Natalia.

Ever since he became Natalia's guardian, Hua Jin had been very diligent in his role as a newbie dad. After announcing his withdrawal from the entertainment industry, he did not have many opportunities to go out, so he focused on learning hair braiding techniques.

The Internet was very developed now. Even though he knew nothing about this topic, he learned very quickly through online instructions. In a short period of time, he had learned several methods of braiding. And so, triumphantly, the actor went to Natalia armed with his new skill of hair braiding. It did look as though he was looking for some recognition! However, it seemed to have turned out to be a good idea.

Every girl loves to look pretty.

Natalia had her own little desire to look pretty. After the actor braided her hair for the first time, she realized how beautifully it could be done. Back when she'd been at Michel Hospital, no one had taken such meticulous care of her. But now Hua Jin was seeing to every little detail concerning her, even her hair.

Therefore, her hair was always let out. Fortunately, her hair was in good condition. Otherwise, it was hard to imagine what she would have looked like, running around with her hair let out all the time.

That morning, after Natalia woke up, Hua Jin volunteered to braid her beautiful hair before they left for the trip. Natalia changed into the floral dress the actor had picked out for her and sat obediently in front of the vanity mirror. She gazed at herself in the mirror with pursed lips, her eyes beautiful as crescent moons.

The actor began to weave her hair according to the technique he had learned. Natalia studied his serious expression through the mirror. She opened her mouth but said nothing.

He caught a glimpse of her subtle expression and asked gently, "What is it? You look as if you have something to say."

"Do you know magic, Uncle?"

"Why do you ask?" the actor asked, torn between amusement and surprise.

Natalia cocked her head as she swung her legs gently. "Because, I think the braiding looks so good it's as if you've cast a spell on me."

"Haha." Hua Jin answered solemnly. "That's because you're pretty as a doll."

"Really?" Natalia turned back to her reflection and smiled sweetly.

Admittedly, the actor had managed to close the distance between them a little more, through his new found skill in hair braiding. If his ex-colleagues were to witness this scene, their eyes would probably pop out.

The actor had always been a Demon King on the set. He was arrogant. He was rebellious. He seemed rather stand-offish.

But unexpectedly, in the presence of Natalia, this gentle side of his emerged as he weaved her hair with great care. Her silky locks followed the movement of his jade-like fingertips, there was an indescribable beauty in the entire dance.

They were almost done when Natalia looked surprised, as if she found it novel.

“Is this new?”

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“Is this new?”

“Yes. Why? Don’t you like it?”

She pressed her lips together gently and shook her head. “No ... I love it ...”

“Really? Do you think it’s pretty?”

“Uh huh, it looks good.” Natalia nodded gently, looking a little shy.

!!

The actor suddenly felt immensely pleased with himself. Naturally, he felt a sense of accomplishment that Natalia would approve of his skill.

This style of braiding suited Natalia as well. The girl had a classic oval face, high-bridged nose, and deep-set eyes. Only, characteristically, they were not too pronounced, so her profile was not as deep set as those of a girl of European descent. However, they were already exquisitely delicate.

“Our Natalia is the most beautiful little princess in the world.” Hua Jin knelt beside her and took her gently by the shoulders. He looked at the porcelain doll in the mirror, finding her pleasing to the eye, and at the same time, he felt a strange sense of achievement!

Instantly, a thought came to him.

How wonderful it would have been, if Natalia were really his daughter. This way, he wouldn’t have to be jealous that Mu Yazhe had such a cute daughter! Then again, so what if she wasn’t his own flesh and blood? Is blood relation really that important?’

He wasn’t old-fashioned or feudalistic, believing that there had to be someone to carry on the lineage. He simply had never thought about having a child. He felt that raising a child was better than giving birth to a child. So why not treat Natalia like his own flesh and blood?

The actor stroked her cheek gently, his eyes filled with tenderness. The girl raised her eyes to meet his, then she quickly turned away shyly. She seemed to have reverted to her timid self, like when they had first met.

Hua Jin was stunned for a moment. He frowned slightly. He was taken aback because, in a moment of absentmindedness, he realized that something in Natalia seemed to have changed.

He remembered the time he was on the terrace and had turned around to see her standing there. The same face, but for some reason, she had struck him then as a devilish little witch.

But now, Natalia had reverted to being the shy doll she had been when they first met.

Unless...

These were two different personalities and he hadn't realized it. The actor was skeptical, but he did not make his suspicion too obvious.

In the past few days, he seemed to have forgotten the task that Alice had given him. Alice was hoping that he would be able to help sketch out Natalia's personality. Or rather, she was hoping he could make a record of Natalia's daily personality and behavior. However, he had been so busy with managing his retirement from the entertainment industry that he had forgotten about this.

"What's the matter?" When Natalia caught him staring off into space, she was puzzled and asked him.

"Oh, oh... it's nothing!" The actor reached for the knitted hat and pulled it gently over her head.

A handmade lily adorned the knitted hat, and it made Natalia look pure and adorable.

"What a pretty hat!" Natalia loved the hat.

The actor grinned. "Wear it to the beach too, okay?"

The wind was strong on the beach and so was the sun. To protect her from the sun, Hua Jin had prepared a considerable amount of sunscreen so that she wouldn't get burned during this vacation at the beach.

Especially with skin as tender and fair as Natalia's, the sea breeze and sun combined would easily cause her skin to burn and peel. Sun protection had to be in place.