

## Chapter 1011: Evil Vs. Evil

Xunxun—being the first girl to descend upon the Lu Family in decades, and having inherited the beautiful looks of her mother—was prized and cherished by everyone. She grew up sickly, and Lu Yi often had to drive her to the hospital in the dead of the night. Everyone was relieved to see her health improving with time, and everything had been going so well...until now. If something happened to her, Ye Shuyun would be the first to break.

That being said, it was highly unlikely that someone would hide Xunxun just to get a laugh out of it.

And if she wasn't here—where could she have gone? Was it kidnap? The more the nanny thought about it, the more scared she became. Cold sweat beaded and rolled off her forehead, and her clothes were nearly drenched in the cool weather.

Unknown to her, a suspicious man with a large bulge in his coat was tossing furtive glances around. From a look, one could tell that he wasn't up to any good.

The man hastened up, trying but failing to hide the odd smile on his face.

What a great catch! She would have gotten away had he not been so quick. This was the prettiest child he had abducted in years, and he was certain she would fetch a good price.

He gripped the child in his chest and walked faster in his unalloyed excitement. He wasn't going to count his chickens before they hatch, though; he had to find a buyer first, and fast.

He slowed down when a woman wearing a face-mask emerged from the corner of a wall. She was a scrawny thing, like some sort of living skeleton, and her sudden appearance gave him a shock.

"Put the child down," said the woman in a tone as flat as still water. Her eyes were so cold it seemed as though there was a film of frost covering them.

"Put the child down," she repeated softly, with a fresh tinge of impatience.

"What's your deal?" sneered the man, his ratty features twisted hideously. "You trying to snatch my goods? Rob me in daylight?" He gave the skinny woman an once-over.

"A skinny thing like you trying to rob me? Get out of my face, or you are gonna be in a world of hurt."

"Put the child down," repeated the woman, her voice as cold as her eyes. Her face was calm—no one knew how tense she actually was, or how tight she was clenching her fingers.

"You'll be wasting your own efforts if you damage the good," she said, raising her chin, her eyes narrow with danger and murderous intent.

The man contemplated her words. She had a point—a bruised child would certainly lower its value. He figured he should make quick work of his skinny competitor before dealing with the good.

And so he took off his coat and placed the swathed child on the floor. The child scanned her surroundings with wide eyes, in curiosity and fear. Even so, she didn't make so much as a sound.

The man had initially been worried that the child would kick up a ruckus, but now he realized his worries were unneeded. The child was quiet and well-behaved. That saved him the trouble of putting the child to sleep.

He turned around, ready to finish off the woman with a swift kick, but he lurched back with a pain in his face before he knew what happened.

Bam! A sharp pain greeted his head next, followed by a red stream that trickled down his head. The red mist obstructed his vision. He touched his face and contemplated the red wetness in his hand.

"Blood..."

He was bleeding...

His eyes rolled back, and he went out like a light.

The woman put down the rod in her hand and dashed to the child.

"Xunxun," called the woman as she touched the child's tender face with tremulous hands.

The little girl blinked and broke into a smile, her dimples sinking into her cheeks. She looked adorable.

"You are all grown up," said the woman hoarsely. "You look so much like me."

The little girl cupped the woman's face with her hands and tilted her head. She didn't understand why the aunty was covering her face.

The woman untied her mask, revealing a thin face that was still recognizable. There was a hideous scar on the right side of her face, which made her look a little scary, but she was extremely beautiful when she smiled. It was a pity that such a pretty face was ruined by a scar.

How good would it be if the scar wasn't there? How beautiful would she be then? No one knows.

The little girl stroked the woman's face and pondered.

She beamed.

"Mama..." she said. Her voice was silvery with the softness of a toddler, but a little stiff from disuse.

Xunxun knows how to speak! The woman cupped the child's face with her hands. Such a small face, such a small child... And to think she would have been abducted if she was a step too late!

What would have happened to her? It's all my fault, thought Yan Huan. I wasn't even aware of her existence when she was born, when she had not even been 2 pounds, when she needed her Mommy the most.

She forgot how to talk after she left, and that was her fault too.

"It's alright, baby, it's alright. Mommy will bring you home," she lifted Xunxun up and wrapped her in her own coat. All she wore was a thin sweater, and that made her look even skinnier. She made a pitiable sight with her skin and bones.

Soon, they arrived at an old house. The paint on the walls was peeling off. It must have been built at least 20 years old.

This was the place she lived in.

Her house and shelter and safe space.

She unlocked the door. The weather was warmer these days, so it wasn't very cold inside the house. The furniture was old, but immaculate from repeated dusting.

### **Chapter 1012: Her Daughter Is Not a Mute**

The bed sheets and the blanket were not a complete set but they smelled like sunshine. This was an old house, but it was also evidently lived in by a woman who was obsessed with cleanliness.

"Xunxun, we are here. Look, this is mummy's house."

The woman took off her mask and revealed her face. If one looked closely, one could really see traces of Best Actress Yan from the past.

However, there were now scars on her face and her body's shape had changed due to her weight loss.

When she was living in the village, she never had three full meals a day. Even after she started living with Changsheng, her health never seemed to recover. This was mainly because she had been floating in the Sea River for too long and it had weakened her.

Thus, she was so skinny that she looked like a ghost.

Fortunately, her daughter was not afraid of her and could recognize her.

Yes, she was not just anyone, she was Yan Huan. She was still living in the same small house she used to share with Yi Ling. She was like a turtle now, hiding in her shell here. She did not dare to do anything nor see anyone.

She knew that in the hearts of the Lu family members, she was already dead. As for her current appearance, not to mention other people, even she herself could not tolerate it. She was afraid.

She was afraid of being discriminated against and abandoned. Therefore even though it had been a few months since she returned from that small village; spring had gone and fall had arrived, yet she was still hiding the fact that she was alive.

She could only hide in the shadows every day and look at Lu Yi and her children from afar.

Lu Qi and Lu Guang had the typical Lu family's features. They looked sturdy like Little Lei. They were taller than kids of their age and they looked healthy, but Xunxun was the one she was worried about as

she was smaller than her brothers. She also heard from the women at the door that her little Xunxun could not speak and that she was mute.

But that was impossible, that was definitely impossible. Before she went missing, little Xunxun had called her mama then.

Looking at her now, Yan Huan was certain that her little Xunxun could still call out to her.

“Xunxun, are you hungry?”

Yan Huan placed her daughter on her own tiny bed and covered her daughter’s tiny body with a blanket.

Little Xunxun nodded her small head firmly, then she reached out her tiny hands and held on to Yan Huan’s shirt.

“Mama...”

She rubbed her little head on her mother’s neck with an expression full of longing.

“Xunxun, yes, I’m mama, it’s mama.” Yan Huan sobbed a little, then she let her daughter sit down before placing a blanket over her small legs.

“Be good, sit here and wait for mama. Mama will steam an egg for you, alright?”

Xunxun nodded her little head again and sat still obediently.

Yan Huan stood up and caressed her daughter’s little head once again before entering the kitchen.

She opened the refrigerator and took out an egg. She had found a job as a milkwoman and had been delivering milk for months. This was not an intensive job. Besides waking up early in the morning, it was an easy job. Once the delivery was done, she had the rest of the day to herself. She earned one to two thousand yuan a month and that was enough for her current lifestyle.

She was used to the difficult life in the small village now. She had lived through the days of being penniless, so no matter how bitter, how poor or how difficult life was now, it was nothing compared to life in the village. She had suffered in the past and after. Even though she used to earn millions or billions per night, she could still get used to the poor life now.

In fact she never denied herself the luxury of life. Every day she still fed herself well and slept well. Since she lived alone, she could not let herself live inhumanely no matter what. Fortunately she had bought some eggs so there was still food in the house.

When she came out of the kitchen, Xunxun was already fast asleep.

Yan Huan went directly to the side of the bed, then she caressed her daughter’s forehead carefully. She was very lucky to have bumped into them on her way back so she waited by the door to see her three children a little longer. If not for her, little Xunxun would have gotten lost.

“Mama...” Xunxun rubbed her eyes as she sat up and crawled toward Yan Huan’s arms. She did not know how she recognized Yan Huan, she just knew in her heart that Yan Huan was her mother.

Although mummy's appearance had changed and she was not as pretty as before, she was still her mother. This would never change.

Yan Huan sat her daughter up properly before bringing out the steamed egg from the kitchen and fed her daughter.

Xunxun must have been starving as she finished the bowl of egg in just a few mouthfuls.

For a child as big as her, she still needed milk.

She played with Xunxun for a while. Xunxun was very happy so she kept smiling, and this should have made Yan Huan happy. However, while her child was well-behaved, she rarely spoke.

After a while, Xunxun rubbed her eyes as she felt sleepy. She lied on her mother's lap and fell asleep quickly. Yan Huan did not know her daughter's daily routine nor did she know how long her nap time would be.

The sky outside had darkened and night had fallen.

She obtained her large mask to cover her face before going out. She then came back quickly, though she was now full of sweat. She kept coming back in between as she was worried that Xunxun would wake up all of a sudden.

But fortunately, when she was back for good, Xunxun was still sound asleep. Her tiny child's little face was flushed. She was a very pretty child with delicate features and she looked just like Yan Huan.

Yan Huan sat down and took out the things that she had bought. She had gotten some milk powder, a milk bottle and some clothes for her daughter. Xunxun's clothes were already dirty, if she washed it, Xunxun would not have an outfit to change into.

As she folded the clothes one by one, little did she know that chaos had descended upon the Lu family.

Lu Qi and Lu Guang had started crying on the way home once they could not see their sister anywhere. They had cried until their voices were lost and after much effort, they managed to fall asleep. Lu Jin and Master Lei were carrying one of them each.

The two children had cried so pitifully their eyes had turned puffy. Even now they did not sleep peacefully, they had to be held by someone. Once they were put down, they would start crying again. No matter how sensible they were, they were merely kids who had yet to turn two.

Ye Shuyun was still crying hysterically.

Madam Lei was trying to comfort her, but the more she did, the more she herself cried.

What should they do now? How could they have lost Xunxun? They all knew how much the Lu family doted on Xunxun. Their families were full of boys so they yearned for girls. Especially the Lu family, more than a hundred years had passed before they had finally gotten a baby girl. Everyone in the family loved her so much. Losing her was heartbreaking for the Lu family.

### **Chapter 1013: They Found The Kidnapper**

Little Xunxun was Yan Huan's look-alike, and Lu Yi's greatest solace for the rest of his days. The family would crumble if she was gone.

How could such a well-behaved and pretty child go missing?

Ye Shuyun covered her face and wailed whenever Xunxun crossed her mind; how could she have been so foolish to leave Xunxun while looking for a bag? What could have been more important than Xunxun?

How could she face her son, or Yan Huan in the afterlife, if something happened to Xunxun?

Yan Huan was missing and presumed dead, and now it was Xunxun's turn. Xunxun was only a small girl who didn't know how to speak. Who took her, and what do they plan to do with her?

No one had the answers to her questions.

Lei Qingyi was in his office reviewing security footage.

"Right there," Lei Qingyi pointed to the screen. "That's our guy."

Lu Yi was beside him, concealed in the darkness. He was like a dynamite encased in ice, and it looked like he might explode at any moment. When he explodes, it would be scarier and magnificent than any dynamite.

The paused footage on the screen showed Xunxun sitting in her stroller, before a man appeared out of nowhere, covered her mouth and took her into his arms.

Lu Yi clenched his fist tightly, his knuckles cracking.

His Little Xunxun, his daughter with Yan Huan... The docile child who loved and trusted him and thought of him as her greatest protector... The timid child that would open her arms and smile at him, waiting for him to lift her into the air...

Yet the father she trusted so much couldn't find and rescue her.

How is she? Is she thirsty or hungry? Is she being scolded, or abused? Would she be alright in this freezing weather? The thoughts melted away the calm façade he had displayed for thirty years.

"Don't worry. It'll be fine," consoled Lei Qingyi. "We'll find her. I have locked down every street and alley that leads out of the Sea City and ordered thorough checks on every child around Xunxun's age. We haven't gotten anything so far, which means that Xunxun is still within the city. And if they are in the city, we'll be able to find them in no time."

Lu Yi pursed his lips tightly, his piercing eyes fixed on the screen, as if he wanted to mince Xunxun's kidnapper into a thousand pieces.

Five hours had elapsed since Xunxun's disappearance.

Yan Huan shook the baby bottle and offered it to Xunxun.

Xunxun grabbed the bottle, laid down on her mother's legs, and began drinking. She never had any problems drinking milk. Yan Huan heaved a sigh of relief.

She had picked it in a hurry, since she couldn't find the brand which Xunxun drank when she was little, and wanted to make it back before Xunxun wakes up. If Xunxun rejected it, then she could only try to feed her porridge.

Luckily, she wasn't picky when it comes to milk.

Xunxun was spirited after finishing the milk, tugging at her mother's sleeves tightly as though she was afraid of being abandoned.

Yan Huan lifted her to the bed. The little girl had meaty limbs despite not being fat. Her pudgy little feet were especially dainty and adorable.

"Say Mama," said Yan Huan with a smile. Her pellucid eyes made it easy to overlook the hideous scar on her face.

"Mama," said Xunxun. She bounced up and down the bed in wild delight, her soft feet stomping on the soft bed cover. Xunxun only had such a sense of security before her mother.

"Now say Papa," prompted Yan Huan.

Xunxun tilted her head and pursed her lips.

"Say Papa," repeated Yan Huan, mouthing the words slowly for her daughter to read her lips. "Pa-pa."

Xunxun nibbled on her fingers and broke into a smile.

"Gua...gua..."

"Not Guagua. Papa," said Yan Huan.

Xunxun's large eyes swam around intelligently as she pondered on that.

"Ba...ba..." said Xunxun. She knew how to speak, but she was reluctant to do so after Mama left. Now that Mama was back, she was keen to listen and learn.

"Papa," repeated Yan Huan, stroking her head gently.

"Papa!" said Xunxun with improved pronunciation, still hopping on the bed.

She could hear and speak. She wasn't a mute.

"Good girl," praised Yan Huan. Little Xunxun beamed and wrapped her arms around Yan Huan's neck tightly.

Yan Huan fondled her soft hair.

Tomorrow. Yes, tomorrow. Tomorrow will be the day she sends Xunxun home.

It was late now, but she would send her back on the morrow, surely. Xunxun soon grew sleepy, and so did she.

Sleepy as she was, she did her best to coax her daughter into sleeping.

Xunxun rubbed her eyes and cuddled up against Yan Huan. The bed wasn't as big or comfy as the one back home, but that was alright, because Mama was there.

Outside, the chilly autumn wind kept blowing, flapping the curtains up and down whenever it touched a corner of the window.

"Lu Yi! We found him," announced Lei Qingyi as he hurried into the room. "We found the guy."

"Where is he?" asked Lu Yi, springing to his feet and preparing to leave.

"In the hospital," said Lei Qingyi. "Someone had smashed his head and broke one of his legs with a blunt object."

"What about Xunxun?" asked Lu Yi coldly.

He didn't give a damn about what happened to the guy. All he cared about was how his daughter was doing.

#### **Chapter 1014: The Woman With a Face Mask**

"Well..." Lei Qingyi opened his mouth, then shook his head.

"I couldn't get that part out of him, but he said someone snatched Xunxun."

"Snatched?" Lu Yi narrowed his sharp eyes dangerously. How could she have been snatched? He had heard of cases where wallets, gold and silver jewelry and phones got snatched. It was the first time he heard of snatching children, instead of kidnapping them.

"I'm not sure either. In any case, the guy over there had put it like this."

Lei Qingyi confirmed that he had not misheard. It was "snatched" alright; the person used this particular word. He was certain.

In the hospital was a special ward where several police officers in their uniforms were standing outside. A man was lying in the room, his head completely wrapped in bandages and his face scrunched up in pain.

However, he certainly was not someone important, nor was he rich or powerful. He was merely an ordinary person. He could even be said to be someone from the lowest class of society. From swindling, stealing to having illicit affairs, he did anything he could; furthermore, he was a human trafficker.

He had conveniently abducted a child of good worth this time. However, before he had the chance to sell the "goods" off, a hole was smashed in his head and the bones in his thigh had also been fractured. How did that skeleton thin woman launch such a fierce attack? Pounding his head furiously was not all she had done; she stabbed his thigh with a dagger and even stepped on his face.

He had only kidnapped a kid.

That was it. He had only kidnapped a kid and done nothing else.

He spoke as though it was nothing worth paying attention to. Of course, it was not his child but someone else's. He had never given birth to a baby, never raised a kid nor had he ever loved a child dearly. He could not have known that it would be a terrible shattering of the heart had one lost his or her children. It was a fate worse than death.

He kidnapped and sold children who grew up cherished as the apple of their parents' eyes, some still being breastfed. He had never once thought of the child's family or the child's parents. He had never contemplated on whether they could live on after this incident. He did not care if the family was separated and entirely gone because of the child.

He was now still rejoicing over the fact that he was not beaten to death. Even though there was a large cavity on his head and his thigh was fractured, at the very least, he was still alive. Very soon, however, when the doors flung open and a man emanating a murderous aura walked in, he who was good-for-nothing almost knelt down.

"Where is the child?" Lu Yi asked the man blandly.

"Haven't I told you already? How many times do you want me to repeat in a day?" The man's entire body was aching, but the people would not leave him in peace. Did they not know that he was a patient? He was in pain right now and he needed rest.

Lu Yi walked over, towering over the child trafficker who had a leg elevated.

"Tell me, where is the child?"

"How would I know?" The child trafficker became annoyed again, "You've asked many times. What a bother you are! I've already said that the child was snatched by a skeleton thin woman. She even beat me to this state. That f\*cking son of a b\*tch! Where did that b\*tch come from?"

Right as he was about to continue cursing, a large hand reached out and seized his chin. The clench caused his head to ache violently.

"I'll ask you one more time." The voice simply came from hell as each word was enunciated with an icy tone.

"Tell me, where have you brought my daughter?"

The child trafficker wanted to curse again, but his eyes widened abruptly as his head was forcefully thrown onto the pillow. Whimpering sounds came out from his mouth.

"Tell me!" It was these two words again, as light as a feather, yet heavily pounding on the child trafficker's heart.

The child trafficker was truly frozen in fear. For a long time, his mouth was gaping as his eyes went wide, his teeth chattering to make clicking noises.

"I advise that you'd better speak the truth." Lei Qingyi did not care anymore. He sneered, "Did you really think that you're a patient, eating and sh\*tting here for free?"

"If the child isn't found, I'll immediately have you eating sh\*t."

The child trafficker was frightened to the point that cold sweat perspired on his forehead unceasingly. Each drop seeped into the pillow, and his clothes were almost soaked through.

For the first time, he became aware that he might have provoked and snatched a child from someone whom he should not have done these things to.

However, he was telling the truth; he had always been telling the truth. The child was snatched away by the skeleton thin woman. Otherwise, he would not have been caught. Moreover, he had a cavity on his head and a broken leg. How could he send the child to somewhere else?

His wounds had hurt to the point that he was wailing for his parents, but no one sympathized with him. He still did not know whose child it was he had taken, or who he had offended.

It would be difficult for him to be released in the future. Perhaps he really had to stay in prison throughout his lifetime, until he was old and dead.

Lei Qingyi walked over and pressed on Lu Yi's shoulder, "Calm down. Even if you beat him to death now, you still won't be able to get information about Xunxun. I've already had someone draw a portrait of the woman he's talking about, and now the whole city is searching for this person. If she's still in Sea City, she'll definitely be found."

However, he still could not understand this. Dog-eat-dog affairs were common for the business circle. Was it possible that the same thing would happen among human traffickers?

Not long after, Lu Yi had a portrait in his hands. "Is this all?"

Lei Qingyi rubbed his face.

"Yes, that's all. What else do you want?"

"Do you think she can be found with this?"

Obviously, Lei Qingyi was not dumb, and he was definitely not foolish either. He turned his head and asked the artist, "Do you think she can be found with this?"

The artist was evidently embarrassed as well.

"I had no choice, Director. It's as how that human trafficker had described her. He didn't see the woman's facial features clearly, so this is what the result is like."

There was a portrait of an indeterminable gender on the large white paper, with only a black frame drawn to represent the eyes, and that person was even wearing a face mask. The human trafficker absolutely could not remember what that woman looked like. He could only recall that she was wearing a face mask. Many people were wearing them, however. Face masks used to be worn only during winter, but now people wore them all year round. If they really searched the city using this portrait, anyone could become a suspect.

Lu Yi threw the portrait on the table, turned and left.

Lei Qingyi lowered his head, picking up the portrait to crumple it into a ball, and threw it into the trash.

It seemed that this lead turned out to be a dead end. They needed to think of another way.

## Chapter 1015: Mama Will Bring You Home

All they knew about the woman who snatched Xunxun was that she was thin and wore a face mask. Uncovering her identity was akin to finding a needle in the haystack. Even if she had not left Sea City, how would they find her? There were millions of people in the Sea City, and the pathetic clues they held weren't much of a help in thinning down the list of suspects.

They didn't get any useful information out of the human trafficker; not that he was non compliant, but because he didn't know what was going on either. According to him, the woman had appeared out of nowhere and snatched his prize away. He didn't even know what the woman looked like, except that she was thin and wore a face mask!

The day was breaking. Lei Qingyi, Lu Yi, and every member of the Lu Family had not slept a wink, worried sick about how poor Little Xunxun was faring.

She was a sensitive child that couldn't sleep without her security blanket. Was she thirsty or starving? Was she mistreated? Ye Shuyun's heart wrenched whenever such thoughts surfaced. Little Xunxun had been cherished all her life, and if she were to suffer... The sorrow from that alone would be enough to knock the soul out of Ye Shuyun.

Sunlight spilled onto the bed from the windows. It was a small bed that could only fit one, covered by blankets that were soft and warm. Something stirred under the blanket. A tiny hand, tender and plump, reached out from under it, groping at this and that playfully. Then a tiny head emerged.

"Good morning." A warm hand fondled her cheeks.

"Mama." The childish voice—with its bone-penetrating softness and heart-infiltrating sweetness—had to be the sweetest thing in the world.

Yan Huan sat down and placed the baby bottle before her.

"Milk time."

She had not forgotten about Xunxun's habits; she would wake up at 7 in the morning to demand her first bottle of milk. It seemed like she hadn't changed, even after all this time.

Xunxun took the bottle, sat down on her mother's lap, and began gulping down the milk greedily. As she did so, her tiny feet tapped against the blankets briskly. She had really grown up; she didn't used to be this heavy.

Yan Huan helped her change into a new set of clothes and planted a little cap on her head. This was the first set of clothes she bought her. In her one year of absence, Xunxun had grown bigger and stronger.

She felt a sudden tingle in her nose as she studied her daughter, and had to blink back tears.

She lifted her up again with a smile, despite how much she wanted to cry on the inside.

"Don't be afraid," she stroked Xunxun's face gently. "Mama will protect you."

“Mhm,” nodded Little Xunxun eagerly. She didn’t understand her mother’s words, but she was anxious to put the one word she learnt from Mama to good use.

Yan Huan pressed down the brim of her cap.

“Do you want to play a game, baby?”

“Mhm.” Delighted at the proposal, Xunxun’s eyes turned into smiling crescents. She looked naively adorable.

“It’s a deal, then. No moving or speaking, alright?”

“Mhm,” Xunxun nodded vehemently. She may not like to speak, and others might think of her as stupid, but in truth she was very clever and could roughly make out what adults were conveying.

Yan Huan slipped into a loose set of clothes and hid Xunxun inside. There was a lot of room, since she was thin and the clothes were huge. The bulge made it look like she was thick of waist, but no one was likely to tell that there was a child hidden within.

When the sun was a little higher, she spotted the familiar garbage truck she was waiting for. She tailed it with her head dipped low. The head of the cleaners—a kindly middle-aged woman—had taken pity on her when she saw how skinny she was, and allowed her to follow her into the condominium to pick up some sellable trash and help with the cleaning. Otherwise, she wouldn’t have been able to enter the place so freely and peek at her children regularly.

As expected, the security guards let them through when they recognized the cleaner. None of them paid Yan Huan any attention since she always tagged along.

Plus, she was a bony creature that didn’t pose a threat to anyone.

She parted with the cleaner once they got in, and found a desolate place to hide. Then, she carefully unzipped her coat. Little Xunxun was asleep with her thumb in her mouth. She really was a good girl; she hadn’t uttered a word or budged an inch after Mama told her not to. And she DID know how to speak. She even learnt to say ‘Mama’ and ‘mhm’.

Yan Huan bit her pale lips. From the distance, the Lu Estates—a spacious independent three-story building—looked the same as ever.

Lu Qin and his mother used to live here too, but now there was only Ye Shuyun and Lu Jin. The house only became lively with the arrival of the three children.

There were reasons behind why Qin Xiaoyue didn’t want to move houses; the estate was greened spectacularly, and it was located in Sea City’s silk-stockings district. Most importantly, the security there was top-notch. An independent house with no fences was no doubt a luxury in a city where every inch of ground was worth its weight in gold.

Presently, the door was locked tight, but earlier she had seen the nanny going inside with her hands full. She figured that there should be many people at home.

Xunxun was missing, after all.

“Mama has brought you home.”

She pressed her face against her daughter’s.

“I’m sorry, Xunxun, but I can’t bring you with me. Mama lives in an uncomfortable place, where it’s cold during winter and hot during summer. Mama doesn’t have enough time to accompany you all day either. Besides, Papa and Grandma are worried about you. Be a good girl, alright?”

She suppressed the tingle in her nose and gently dropped Xunxun off at the Lu Estate’s doorsteps.

Separated from her mother’s embrace and familiar warmth, Xunxun frowned in discomfort, but didn’t wake. Instead, she curled up into a ball.

### **Chapter 1016: Xunxun Has Been Found**

Yan Huan took off her outerwear and covered Xunxun with it. She was wearing a thin sweater underneath. However, Xunxun was not feeling chilly anymore, her creased brows soothed and she continued her slumber whilst grasping onto her mother’s shirt.

Yan Huan rang the doorbell and quickly hid in a corner.

Not long after, the door creaked open and the housekeeper walked out.

Who rang the doorbell? When the housekeeper opened the door, she had a strange feeling in her heart. There was no one out here, so who rang it? Was it a prank?

Just as she was about to shut the door, she noticed the thing that was placed on the floor.

No, it was not a ‘thing’.

It was a child, a little kid wrapped up in a coat.

Quickly, she squatted down and picked up the child together with the clothes she was wrapped in. She was utterly shocked when she took a glimpse of the child’s face and rapidly bolted in, closing the door behind her.

Only then did Yan Huan come out from the bushes. At that moment, she was covered in grass. She bit on her lip once more, then turned around and walked away without looking back.

Meanwhile, within the house, the housekeeper exclaimed, “Master! Madam! Xunxun has been found! Xunxun has been found!”

“What?” Ye Shuyun jolted up, her fingers clenched onto Lu Jin’s arm. He winced but he did not push her hand away.

At that very instant, his reaction was comparable to Ye Shuyun’s, feeling both thrilled yet terrified.

“Master, madam, Xunxun is back.”

The housekeeper rushed toward their direction and showed them the child in her arms.

"It is Xunxun, it is Xunxun!" Ye Shuyun could not help but cry out. Tears rolled down her cheeks as her heart throbbed with pain.

She carefully took her granddaughter from the housekeeper's arms. It really was her Little Xunxun. She would never be mistaken by that delicate little face of hers. Not to mention the fact that she would hold onto her day and night, so how could she forget her own granddaughter?

Lu Jin gently caressed Xunxun's little face. She was fine and had no injuries. The little one slept soundly up until now.

"Let me call Yibin over."

Lu Jin asked Ye Shuyun to put Xunxun down first. He needed to call He Yibin and also to notify Lu Yi as well, letting him know that he could stop his search for Xunxun as she was back safe and sound.

"Okay, I know what to do. I will return this instant."

Lu Yi stood up, his repressed emotions and desolation slowly fading away.

"What is it?" Lei Qingyi sensed it too.

"Xunxun has been found." Lu Yi put down his phone and got ready to head back.

"She has been found?" Lei Qingyi looked at him wide-eyed. She has been found? How and where?

"Someone left her at my doorstep." Lu Yi had already waltzed out the door, leaving Lei Qingyi stunned behind him.

Left at the doorstep?

Did she just return to the owner what she had picked up?

Correction. Did she just return to the owner the child she had picked up?

"Wait for me!" Lei Qingyi finally came to his senses and hurriedly followed behind him.

By the time Lu Yi arrived home, He Yibin had also reached.

Xunxun was sleeping peacefully in between her brothers inside the nursery room, her face puffy and rosy. Nothing had happened to her. There were no signs of injuries anywhere, not even a single discomfort. If there was anywhere she felt uncomfortable, surely she would wail and cry for papa and would not be sleeping so soundly.

He Yibin placed his hand on Xunxun's little belly, watching it growl under his palm.

"Don't worry, everything is fine," he said as he stood up. Even he himself let out a sigh of relief, not to mention the Lu family. Out of all the people that Lu Yi had brought Xunxun to see, he was the one who had spent the most time with her. He had been watching her grow ever since she was little and he treated her as if she was his own daughter.

"She is unharmed, and she has already eaten too." He Yibin turned back to Xunxun again and reached out to caress her tiny forehead. Everything would be fine now that she was back. He was almost scared

to death, let alone if it was his loved ones. If anything were to happen to her, there was no guarantee that Old Master Lu could make the cut.

They had not told Old Master Lu about Xunxun being missing when she was gone for the past 12 hours. They were afraid that he could not take the news at such an old age. If they were to break the news, they might lose both of them at the same time.

Lu Yi sat down and held his daughter's little hands. Her face was still puffy and her lips pouty. As though having a sweet dream, a smile was plastered on her tiny face.

Watching her smile, he too, had a grin on his face. The chilly aura he emitted which was about to turn colder became warm instantaneously.

"Qingyi, go check on the surveillance."

Lu Yi said to Lei Qingyi. Xunxun was lost and was brought back again as though it was a play gone wrong. If it was really so, the lady who brought Xunxun back must have known who Xunxun was and had most probably followed her for a long period of time. Even though she brought Xunxun back safely, there was no guarantee that these incidents would not happen again. In order to put an end to any danger that might occur, they must find out the identity of the lady.

"Okay, I got it."

Lei Qingyi had this thought in his mind as well. Though he wanted to hug Xunxun dearly, he was currently among the Lu family. Right now, he was the extra amongst them so he might as well investigate the lady with a mask.

It was not surprising that Lu Yi would have such a thought. Something was fishy. There must be a reason behind all this. None of them would be at ease, not until the danger was rooted out.

All this while, Xunxun was still in her deep slumber. She did not wake up even for a single bit. Just as what He Yibin had said, Xunxun was totally fine and stuffed. If it were not so, she would be crying for food now and not sleep so sweetly.

Ye Shuyun, Lu Jin and two of their housekeepers were watching over her. Since he did not have much to work on, he stood up and headed to where Lei Qingyi was to check on his investigation progress.

"Take a look at this."

Lei Qingyi pointed at the screen. It was the high definition surveillance he had personally installed not long ago. If it was not for it, it would have been impossible for them to have such a high definition footage.

"This was the woman."

Every single image was displayed clearly through the monitor. The lady was dressed in loose clothes and held Xunxun in her arms. She took off her coat and covered Xunxun up then left her at the doorstep, while she herself was left with a thin sweater. Seeing a sweater that thin, honestly, even Lei Qingyi could feel the cold that she was feeling.

The lady left after dropping off the child. All the time they had been watching her frightfully lean figure, coupled with a huge mask covering up half of her face, just like what that trafficker had mentioned earlier.

### **Chapter 1017: She Could Now Speak**

The camera had not captured any close-ups of the woman's features, since she had her head dipped low the whole time. No matter how much they zoomed in, they couldn't find a frontal view of her face.

The only characteristics they knew were:

1. She was skinny.
2. She wore a mask.
3. She hits hard, and presumably knows a little kungfu.

And that was all.

"Switch to the entrance camera," commanded Lu Yi, sitting with one leg crossed over the other. His dark eyes were fixed on the screen. For some reason, he felt a vague pain in his heart. Something...inexplicable was eating at him and gnawing at his nerves.

"I'm on it," said Lei Qingyi as he immediately got to work. Gaining access to those footages was a piece of cake for him, since his status allowed him to bypass any time-consuming procedures.

Without a word, Lu Yi sat before the computer, contemplating the skinny and pathetic woman.

That was when his phone at the side of the table rang. He picked it up and glanced at it; it was from Ye Shuyun.

He answered the call and brought the phone to his ears.

"Is there something wrong, Mom?"

"Come back right now, Lu Yi!" There was a chaotic ensemble in the background, compounded by Ye Shuyun's anxious voice, Xunxun's heart-rending wails, along with Lu Qi and Lu Guang's howling.

Lu Qi and Lu Guang were normally well-behaved, but the sight of their sister crying had inspired them. They didn't know why she was crying, but that didn't stop them from joining in.

"I'll be right there," said Lu Yi. He hung up with a contemplative look in his eye, before tossing one last glance at the blurry figure on the screen.

As he approached his house, he could hear Xunxun's wails from afar. He hastened up. When he got closer, he saw Ye Shuyun coaxing Xunxun to stop crying, while Lu Jin and nannies dealt with Lu Qi and Lu Guang.

Lu Yi received his daughter from Ye Shuyun. Xunxun looked pitiful with her eyes and nose red from crying. Her dainty face was full of tears, and even her long lashes were wet.

She kept sniffing, and the tears kept falling.

“Is she hungry?” Lu Yi stroked her tummy. It felt flat; she must be hungry.

“She’s not drinking her milk,” said Ye Shuyun as she picked up the baby bottle. Most of the time, Xunxun cried because she was hungry, and would quieten as soon as she was given her milk.

This time, however, she refused to eat or drink anything and just kept crying. Under her lead, Lu Qi and Lu Guang bawled their eyes out as well.

“Let me do it,” said Lu Yi as he took the baby bottle from Ye Shuyun. He dropped a few drops onto his arm; it was still warm.

With his daughter in one hand and the baby bottle in the other, he walked to the French window and drew the curtains.

In her great sorrow, Xunxun had sniveled and whimpered until her voice turned hoarse. She settled a little in her father’s arms, her face still red from crying. The redness, exaggerated by her milky-complexion, made her look extremely pitiful.

“Here. Drink up,” cooed Lu Yi as he offered her the bottle.

Little Xunxun received it with both hands. She was obedient toward her father, and she wasn’t alone in that regard. The difference was, Xunxun’s obedience stemmed from her unconditional trust and love, while Lu Qi and Lu Guang’s acquiescence was driven by their groundless fear towards Lu Yi. They loved their father, but their love was outweighed by fear.

Xunxun drank her milk obediently enough, but her tears kept falling. A girl at her age should not even know what sadness is, and it was rare to see her cry with such vigor.

Since Yan Huan went missing, Xunxun often cried when she couldn’t find her mother, but never to this extent.

Even after finishing a bottle of milk, Xunxun wasn’t looking very spirited. Perhaps the crying tired her. She leaned her head against Lu Yi’s shoulders and continued sniffing.

Lu Yi rubbed her head.

“Don’t be afraid, baby. No matter what happens, Papa will always be here.”

Xunxun looked up and tugged at Lu Yi’s sleeves with her tiny finger.

“What’s wrong?” asked Lu Yi, touching her face gently.

Xunxun moved her lips, but no sound came out.

Lu Yi stood before the window with Xunxun in his arms. Xunxun liked to look at the scenery from there, and wouldn’t throw a tantrum as long as she was there.

“Papa...” The mellow voice came with another tug of his sleeves.

Lu Yi couldn’t believe his ears.

Did Xunxun just talk? Did Xunxun just call him Papa?

“Papa...” repeated Xunxun clearly, her eyes meeting his eyes.

Lu Yi touched her face with tremulous hands. He felt a warm sensation in his eyes, and had to blink back tears. To think a man like him nearly broke down at the two syllables uttered by her daughter.

His daughter, his Little Xunxun, had finally spoken.

Xunxun huddled up close to him and pouted indignantly.

“Papa...”

“Mhm,” answered Lu Yi.

“Want Mama.”

Lu Yi covered her head with a large palm.

“Papa will definitely find Mama for Xunxun. Okay?”

“Mhm,” agreed Little Xunxun. That gave Lu Yi another shock. He then reached for his phone.

“Hello, Yibin? Lu Yi here. Come to my house. Xunxun has learned how to speak.”

Soon, He Yibin arrived, puffing wildly as though he had ran there on foot. He was drenched in sweat, and the back of his shirt stuck to his back uncomfortably.

But there was no time to care about that. When Lu Yi first told him the news, he was beyond belief. How did it happen? He knew Xunxun wasn't a mute, and was only reluctant to talk, but how did the change happen so quickly?

It usually takes a lot longer to overcome such hurdles.

### **Chapter 1018: She Saw Her Mother**

“Xunxun, say ‘uncle’.” He Yibin let Xunxun sit on the sofa and crouched down in front of her, lowering his eyes to the same level as hers.

Xunxun's wide and beautiful eyes stared into his, but she just would not speak.

He Yibin waited for a while and still could not hear what he was hoping for, so he held his finger up and pointed to Lu Yi who was standing by one side.

“Who is he?”

“Daddy.”

Xunxun opened her tiny mouth. She spoke with clear words and there was not even a hint of babbling heard. Again, He Yibin confirmed that Xunxun definitely knew how to speak. After all, she was almost two years old now, she could hear and think, so having her call out daddy was not a big deal. It was just that her mother went missing so she could not bear it at the moment. Therefore, she refused to speak.

“How about him?” He Yibin pointed at Lu Jin. It was fine for her to not call him ‘uncle’, but she should know the word ‘grandpa’.

However, Xunxun still had her gorgeous eyes wide open; it was just that she was unwilling to utter a single word.

“And her?” He Yibin did not give up. He then pointed at Ye Shuyun, “She is grandma.”

Ye Shuyun was also waiting anxiously. She was over the moon when she heard that her granddaughter knew how to speak. Especially the moment when the word ‘daddy’ came out from her tiny mouth, she could not ask for anything more than that.

Xunxun was the one she was worried about the most. She refused to speak and was treated as a mute by others. However, it was her granddaughter they were talking about, and obviously her Xunxun was nowhere near mute.

Though Xunxun had only called her father, she did not call her grandfather. She hoped that Xunxun would call grandma, but Xunxun was still the same old her – she kept her mouth shut. Opened was her pair of large, sparkly eyes. As though they were two black, ravishing gems, glittering yet as clear as pure crystal. Reflected was your face, your soul mirrored, your whole self exposed to them.

They were the world’s most dazzling diamond, the purest gem of all.

“This has already exceeded my expectations though.” He Yibin patted the little girl’s head. The little girl cocked her head and held her arms out to her father, signaling for him to carry her.

Lu Yi lifted his daughter up in one swift move of his long slender arms.

“She knows how to say ‘daddy’, how to call out to daddy and she also knows how to say ‘yes’.” Lu Yi looked down into his daughter’s eyes, “Darling, say ‘mommy’.”

“Mommy.”

This time around Xunxun called out straight away. She did not doubt even for a single moment.

“Say ‘daddy’ again.”

“Daddy.” The little girl finally halted her crying and smiled whole-heartedly, it was just that she still seemed to be lethargic.

“Let daddy carry you to the window okay?” Lu Yi pointed at the french window near him.

“Okay.” Xunxun nodded. She finally knew how to make use of those little lips of hers, unlike back then, when she only knew how to shake and nod.

He Yibin thought for a while, “This is a good start, you guys should talk to her more often, then she would be able to speak fluently in no time.” Just as what he said before, the ability to speak was one’s natural instinct, it was just like eating, sleeping and going to the toilet. Since she was not born a mute, she must know how to speak eventually then.

Furthermore, Xunxun was still young, she would recover slowly soon enough.

Lu Yi was still standing near the window, carrying his daughter in his arms. Just like that, Xunxun and her father watched the outside world through the window. Her father was quiet, and she was also as silent.

“Darling, who did you see last night?”

Lu Yi asked Xunxun.

In Xunxun’s arms was a fluffy stuffed rabbit which was her favourite toy.

Xunxun rested her stuffed rabbit against her face and rubbed her tiny face against it. She then blinked and remembered what her father had asked her.

“Mommy.”

She saw her mother.

Lu Yi left Xunxun to play on her own. He then stood up, took out his phone and called Lei Qingyi, “Have you found the surveillance?”

“Yes, found it,” Lei Qingyi was still looking through the surveillance. Not only did he have to find the surveillance at the door, but other places as well. Of course he also did a background check on the woman, though not much information was available.

“That woman was with some of the janitors. According to them, they thought she was starving because she looked skinny and pitiful. So, out of empathy, they took her in and let her collect the cardboard boxes and bottles to sell them for money. That should get her some food and plump her up a bit more.”

“But...” Lei Qingyi examined the woman in the surveillance camera footage closely, “She really is skinny. No wonder those janitors pitied her, I would feel sorry for her too. Just look at her, she looks like a walking ghost! God knows how long it had been since she had her last meal. If it was not for her bringing Xunxun back, I would think that she might just gobble Xunxun up! Just thinking about it sends chills down my spine!”

“Is that it?” Lu Yi waited for a long time but Lei Qingyi was still silent.

“Yeah.” Lei Qing Yi put both his legs on the table, “There is nothing more we can do, this was all I got. Other than these, no one seemed to know much. She was just like a roaming spirit, no matter how hard I tried, I could not seem to grasp more in-depth information about her. It was as though there was no such person in this world. Don’t you think it is weird too? Lu Yi, Lu...”

“Hello...” Lei Qingyi called out to his phone for a long time. He then shook his phone and realised it was not disconnected, but it was just that Lu Yi had hung up on him.

“He hung up on me?”

Lei Qingyi threw his phone to one side, absolutely displeased.

He had poured his whole heart into this and that guy did not even treat him to a meal! His stomach was still grumbling up till now! Oh right, since Little Xunxun was back now, he should pay her a visit. It has been too long since he had seen that little girl.

There were too many men in the house, but there was nothing unusual there. Little Xunxun was the only apple of their eyes. She was gone for only a day and yet everyone was frantically looking for her, not to mention not seeing her for a long time.

He drove to the Lu family home after packing up his stuff.

“Is there any food, aunt? I am hungry.”

Lei Qingyi howled right away when he went in. He had been running around the whole day and had not eaten anything, so of course he was famished. He was so famished to the extent where his stomach was thinning to his back, making him feel like crying.

“Let me have the housekeeper make you a bowl of noodles.” Ye Shuyun called out to their housekeeper and ordered her to prepare some noodles for him, “We just had our meal and there were no leftovers. So, she will make something new for you. Noodles are the fastest to prepare, you can eat them right away after being cooked.”

“Sure, noodles it is.” Lei Qingyi was not picky, he was okay with whatever food that was served.

“Oh yeah,” Just as he was about to take a few steps forward, he turned back to her again, “Is there anything that is ready-made, aunt? Anything is fine, I am extremely famished.”

### **Chapter 1019: What It Means To Be a Brother**

“In that case...” Ye Shuyun hesitated. “Do you mind children snacks?”

“Of course not,” said Lei Qingyi, waving his hand. He was so hungry he wouldn’t mind eating leftovers from the night before, not to mention children snacks.

“Okay then,” said Ye Shuyun, turning to the kitchen. Soon, she came back with a baby bottle in hand.

She set it down before Lei Qingyi.

“Here. Xunxun fell asleep before drinking her milk, so you can have it.”

The veins on Lei Qingyi’s forehead twitched.

He couldn’t picture himself drinking milk from a baby bottle.

How could you do this to me, Aunt?

In truth, Ye Shuyun had good intentions and simply didn’t think too much into it. The milk will go bad by the time Xunxun wakes up, and it would be a waste to throw it away, so why not give not it to Lei Qingyi? Milk was a snack too, no?

In the end, Lei Qingyi didn’t drink the milk. Disdainfully, he returned the bottle to the kitchen and endured his hunger while waiting for the next meal.

Xunxun was sound asleep, clutching a corner of the blanket with a small hand. Her soft hair had grown to a length where it could be braided.

For the first time, Lei Qingyi understood why his mother was so disdainful towards him.

It was because he had a son! And the naughty boy who was so often spanked would eventually grow up to become an oaf. How could that compare to a pretty, adorable, and thoughtful girl? Little Xunxun was capable of melting the heart of anyone who carried her.

And imagine how things would be when she gets a little older! A pretty little girl in a skirt and a dainty pair of leather boots, clutching tightly onto her father's hand. How cute would that be!

No wonder everyone in the Lu Family doted on Little Xunxun despite having two boys.

And who could blame them for loving such a pretty child?

"Thank goodness that you are alright," he placed his large hand on Xunxun's head. His hand was almost twice the size of her head. "If you weren't, your Dad might really lose his mind."

He sighed and stood up. The noodles should be ready soon, if his estimations were correct.

The door shut gently. Xunxun rubbed the soft blanket with her small face.

"Mama..." she muttered softly before dozing off again.

On the other bed, Lu Qi rubbed his eyes and sat up. Then, he climbed off his crib and stumbled towards Xunxun. When he reached his destination, he began patting her shoulders gently.

Lu Yi chanced upon the scene as he stepped into the room. He was surprised to see Lu Qi lulling his little sister to sleep.

Lu Yi stooped down and rubbed Lu Qi's head. He was a small child, only a few minutes older than Lu Qi and Xunxun, yet he had already learned to take care of his siblings.

"Good. That's how a brother should be."

"Papa," said Lu Qi, reaching for Lu Yi's hand. His hand was so small he could only grab one of his father's fingers.

"Mhm? What is it?" asked Lu Yi, bringing Lu Qi to his lap.

All of the Lu kids didn't like talking, especially Lu Qi. Xunxun was another matter, since she didn't know how to talk, but Lu Qi knew how to speak basic words. According to Ye Shuyun, Lu Qi resembled Lu Yi the most in terms of personality.

In comparison, Lu Guang was less reticent, and also the most active out of the three.

"Papa, Mama..."

Lu Qi squeezed his hand. "Mama, come back."

"Papa knows," said Lu Yi, carrying Lu Qi into his arms and caressing his shoulders. "Trust Papa. Mama will surely come back, because she's the one that loves and misses you the most. You have my word on that. You are the oldest one here, so you have to take care of your younger brother and sister before Mama comes back, alright?"

“Mhm,” Lu Qi nodded eagerly. His working memory wasn’t very developed at the moment, but he knew he was the eldest and had to take care of his younger siblings. This belief of his would accompany him in his early years, and turn into a conviction later on, so much so that Lu Guang and Xunxun would be more afraid of him as compared to their father or grandfather.

He was very protective, and more high-handed and merciless than his father. Any enemies that fell into his hands would be a shadow of their former self by the time he was done with them.

Of course, Lu Qi only turned out to be like this under the painstaking education of Lu Yi. Like a staked tree, Lu Qi wasn’t even given the chance to veer into the wrong path.

As the eldest son of the Lu Family, he was given the burden of responsibility at birth. At his age, he could not have comprehended the enormity of that burden, and how it would affect his entire life—be it childhood, adolescence, or adulthood.

“But you wouldn’t have to worry about that now,” Lu Yi rubbed his head. “What I need you to do now is sleep properly and grow bigger. Understood?”

“Understood,” nodded Lu Qi enthusiastically. He stood up, crawled back into his crib, and covered himself with the blanket with independence beyond his age. Lu Yi sat down beside his daughter and examined her pretty visage. She was looking more and more like her mother. Luo Lin had suggested Lu Yi to groom her into a child star and start taking on commercials, but Lu Yi thought otherwise. He wanted Xunxun to decide her own childhood.

She could play if she wanted to, or study if it pleases her. In short, she could do anything she wants.

It was too early to determine whether Xunxun would walk down the same path as his mother. It was all up to her.

Ever since Xunxun almost got abducted, Ye Shuyun dared not bring them out again. Even when she did, she made sure they never left her sight.

All three of them were precious to her, and she couldn’t live with one less.

She would keep all three of them at home, and away from danger, if she could. That being said, the children eventually had to go out, where they can bask in the sun and relax in the wind and improve their immunity.

Even though the children were well-behaved and wouldn’t raise a ruckus when locked up, they weren’t as lively as before. Recently, Lu Qi and Lu Guang had picked up Xunxun’s habit of standing beside the window.

## **Chapter 1020: That Is Granny**

As though afraid of losing anyone again, Lu Qi held his sister’s tiny hand with his left hand and his little brother with his right.

“What are you guys looking at?” Ye Shuyun walked toward them and squatted down. She thought to herself, when did both of them start picking up Xunxun’s fancy of watching the scenery?

“Grandma, I want to bathe in the sun sun.” Lu Qi pointed his little finger outside.

“Grandma, I want to pick up the leaf leaf.” Lu Guang mimicked his older brother’s action as well.

As for Xunxun, she was still unwilling to utter a single word. She would just look at you with her big watery eyes. The one thing that Ye Shuyun was afraid of the most, was those pair of eyes. It was as though she would start wailing anytime soon. She could not bear to reject her in any way.

“Fine.” Ye Shuyun raised the white flag.

“Let grandma bring you guys out to bathe in the sun sun and pick up the leaf leaf, okay?”

“Okay,” all three of them answered and nodded in unison.

All three of them were definitely adorable. The brothers were like two peas in a pod, other than their own family, outsiders could never easily tell them apart. As for Xunxun, she did not act as though she was part of the triplets. Xunxun was a head shorter and skinnier than her brothers.

However, they still do look like the spitting image of each other.

Although Xunxun’s looks resembled her mother’s, she still had the stubborn little lips like her brothers. They were the splitting image of their father when they were not smiling.

Others might not be able to tell but Ye Shuyun sure could. She even had a photo album as proof. When their father was the same age as them, they looked exactly like him with his poker face in the photo.

Ye Shuyun called out to two of their housekeepers and prepared them for a short outing. These kids should not be kept in the room all the time, it was no good to raise them in the way that the slightest bit of dirt could not be found on them. If they were to be indoors the whole time, they would definitely turn to waste.

Ye Shuyun together with the two housekeepers held onto one child each and headed outside. They even brought their toys along and let the three have fun together.

The Lu family’s siblings did not mingle with the other kids. They only played among themselves. Both the brothers made allowances for their little sister. All those that were fun to play with were given to their sister.

In the meantime, a lady was picking up plastic bottles not far away from them. Her face was covered with a huge mask and she kept on catching a glimpse at the three kids over and over again.

No one knew that at this moment, the face that was hidden underneath the huge mask was plastered with a light grin.

In the meantime, a bottle flew toward her and hit her head with a bang. When she looked over her shoulder, she saw a youngster holding his chin up, and with a benevolent tone, he said, “Here you go, poor ghost.”

Yan Huan picked up the bottle and put it into the bag on her back. Truthfully, she was not there to pick bottles. The reason was that, only with an identity as such, would she be able to take a glimpse of her

own kids from afar. No matter how insulting it was, she was willing to take it, even if it was just for a peek.

Xunxun picked up a leaf from the ground and blew on it with her little mouth. The leaf wiggled and entertained her easily. Just when she was putting down the leaf, suddenly, as though she had discovered something interesting, with her tiny legs, she ran toward it. When Lu Qi and Lu Guang saw their little sister running away, they too followed her from behind.

Not far away were Ye Shuyun and the two housekeepers. They did not take it to heart as long as the kids did not go too far and remained in the lawn.

Xunxun ran over and squatted down. She then picked up a plastic bottle from the ground and ran toward Yan Huan. As though handing her a beloved treasure, she held it in front of Yan Huan and faced her with a sweet smile.

“Mommy,” She took the bottle to Yan Huan.

Yan Huan took the bottle from her tiny hands. She wanted to touch her daughter’s tiny face, but when she saw Ye Shuyun and the other three looking over at them from afar, she stopped in her tracks. She then hung her head down and staggered away with a hunched back like an ordinary old lady who picked recycles for a living.

“Mommy.” Xunxun held out her tiny hands and pulled at Yan Huan’s sleeves.

Meanwhile, Lu Qi and Lu Guang spurted over and stood beside Xunxun, one on each side of her, and held onto Xunxun’s hands.

Yan Huan turned back, her heart aching. Standing in front of her were her children. Yet, she had forgotten how long she had not looked at them and hugged them nicely.

Shivering, she held out her fingers. Just when she was about to reach them, Ye Shuyun and the two housekeepers had come over and quickly carried the children in their arms, creating quite a distance between Yan Huan and the kids.

As though terrified of them recognising her, Yan Huan lowered her head, but at that moment, she thought that she was overthinking it. With her current look, there was no way anyone could recognise her.

“Mommy...” Xunxun held her tiny hands out, wanting to go over to Yan Huan’s side.

She recognised her mother. Not because of her apparel, not because of her looks. Only because she was her biological mother. The one who gave birth to her. The one who breathed life to her.

“Good child, that is not mommy,” Ye Shuyun coaxed her granddaughter, “Look, she is old. She’s a granny.”

The word ‘granny’ heavily stabbed Yan Huan’s heart, who was facing away from them.

Yes, I am not a mother. I’m a granny. I’m a granny. So it was, she had reached the age of a granny’s. She had become so old.

“Mommy, mommy...” Xunxun was still struggling to hold her hand out. She wanted her mother. As though contagious, both Lu Qi and Lu Guang started tearing up as well, crying for mommy.

No one knew how heartbroken and upset Yan Huan was right now.

They were her children. They were the children she had given birth to, and yet, she could never acknowledge them.

She clenched tightly onto the bag in her hand, almost to the extent of breaking off her fingers. She then turned around, step by step as she faltered away with a hunched back like an old granny.

Xunxun could not find her mother anymore. She cried for quite a while, rendering her tired and exhausted in the end, only then did Ye Shuyun carry her back home. Though on the next day, all three children made a stance that they wanted to go out once more, as if they were rejected, they would be very upset. Their lips were pursed so pitifully as well.

Ye Shuyun thought that it was not a bad idea for them to be active outdoors. Besides, it was right in front of their house, nothing could happen anyway. Moreover, together with her housekeepers, there were a total of three pairs of eyes; there was no way they would not be able to look after these three kids.

Xunxun held onto a small bucket, letting both her brothers keep the leaves collected in it.