

### Chapter 271: Saved

Several of the older married women helped take care of the baby. They stayed inside the car, while the men moved to squeeze into the tent with the other children. Those who could not fit in the tent had to sleep outside.

This was their second day trapped by the mudslide.

Yan Huan knew they would have to wait for another three days to be rescued. It was just three days; the time would pass quickly enough.

Yan Huan looked at the stars above her, but could only make out a few of them as the moon was very bright. The weather was good, but it was still very cold.

“Will we get back in time for Chinese New Year?”

Yi Ling’s fingers tightened on the blanket around her. It was so cold now she felt like crying.

Thankfully, the massive bear of a man sitting next to her shielded her from most of the biting wind. Yi Ling’s impression of him had improved considerably during their ordeal; he had previously mistaken her for a man and inadvertently implied that she was flat-chested, true, but he was also the first man to have regained her respect after such a horrendous first impression.

“Yes.” Yan Huan turned to look at Yi Ling with an encouraging smile. “We’ll get back to the city, safe and sound. Let’s go eat hot pot once we’re back.”

Yi Ling pouted. “I want to eat ice cream.”

“Ice cream? It’s still winter!” Lei Qingyi said incredulously.

He did not understand the strange, whimsical desires of women. He practiced the ancient martial arts, which taught him to follow the changes of the season and to live according to the demands of his natural surroundings.

Lei Qingyi followed the teachings faithfully. He was most definitely not the type to eat hot pot during the summer, or order cold drinks during the winter.

“I want to eat ice cream, and it’s none of your business,” snapped Yi Ling. She turned her back on him and got ready to go to sleep. She pulled the blanket over herself, leaving only a tiny corner for Lei Qingyi. But Lei Qingyi did not engage in a tug-of-war over the blanket; if Yi Ling wanted the blanket to herself, so be it. He was happy enough with the tiny piece of fabric left for him.

Yan Huan closed her eyes as she mentally reviewed how long they had been trapped. It was only three more days; they would be rescued soon enough.

She leaned back against the car and waited calmly for sleep to take her. A moment later, she drifted off to sleep, her head nodding until finally, it came to rest upon Lu Yi’s shoulder. Lu Yi carefully tucked the blanket around her, and then remained seated in the exact same position for the rest of the night. He did not move a muscle, for fear of waking Yan Huan.

The third day came and went. Everyone—even the tiny baby—got by relatively comfortably. The gas in the car was running low now, however; soon they would not be able to use the heater.

But the loss of the car heater did not affect them too much. It was easy enough to keep warm, as long as they huddled together at night.

On the fifth day, Yan Huan kept her eyes glued to the sky. She knew a helicopter would be rescuing them that day, but she did not know the exact time it would be flying by. She did not want to miss it.

“What are you looking for?” Lu Yi asked as he handed her a pack of biscuits. “Here, you should eat.”

Yan Huan opened the packet and shoved a biscuit into her mouth before answering his question.

“I’m looking for a helicopter. I hope one will spot us and come to our rescue.”

“Don’t worry. They’ll come for us,” Lu Yi said comfortingly. But he was not as confident as he sounded; there was still a lot of food left, but they were a large group. The food would not last long. He hoped someone would find them soon, before they succumbed to despair.

Suddenly, a loud rumbling filled the air...

Something was heading towards them.

What was that sound?

Yi Ling shoved one of the biscuits in her hands into her mouth. She lifted her head to look at the sky as she tried to locate the source of the unfamiliar sound.

What was that sound coming from the sky? Was she hearing things?

The sound became increasingly loud as it approached them. Suddenly, Yi Ling tossed the remaining biscuits in her hands at Lei Qingyi, who deftly caught them, despite having been caught off-guard by her strange behavior.

“Hey, don’t throw your food!” Lei Qingyi was now extremely sensitive when it came to food. He knew their supply of food could not last forever; at the rate they were going, they would have to start eating roots and tree bark soon.

Yi Ling placed a hand over her eyes, shielding it from the glare of the sun as she stared at the sky. She spotted a helicopter, and almost burst into tears.

She waved at the helicopter like a maniac.

“Hey! We’re down here! Over here! Look, we’re here...”

The other survivors heard her shouts, and hurried over to join in on the waving and shouting. “We’re here! We’re down here!”

Yan Huan was not as ecstatic or moved by the sight of the helicopter. She already knew that they would only be trapped for a few days, and that nobody from this small group of survivors would die.

The helicopter circled overhead, indicating that the pilot had spotted them. A moment later, it had found a place to land.

Lu Yi walked over to the helicopter and spoke with the pilot, who nodded every now and then. After that, he used the helicopter's walkie-talkie to contact someone. Once he was finished, he divided the survivors into two groups as the helicopter would only be able to carry six passengers at any one time. Fortunately, there were only about a dozen of them, which meant that the helicopter would only have to make two trips.

"Don't worry." Lu Yi helped Yan Huan rearrange her messy hair. "I've already instructed them to send another helicopter to take you and Yi Ling back to your apartment. He Yibin will visit you to give you a check-up later."

"Thanks." Yan Huan knew what Lu Yi was worried about: she was a celebrity, a public figure, which meant that it would be best for her to lie low and stay under the radar as the press jostled to cover the aftermath of the mudslide.

At that moment, Yi Ling was plastered over the Hummer's hood, weeping noisily. It was a pitiful sight.

"What about the car?" Yan Huan asked Lu Yi. "Do we leave it here?"

"Unless they repair the roads, I don't see how we can take it with us. It'll have to stay here."

Lu Yi looked at his car. It was his favorite, but now it looked like it would have to spend the rest of its days here. It would take a long time to repair the roads leading to this specific spot; perhaps the roads would never be fully restored. Lu Yi's car would be exposed to the elements for as long as the area remained inaccessible. He felt a twinge of regret at the thought; he fully understood why Yi Ling was crying as though someone had died. It was not her car, but she had doomed it by driving it here.

Yi Ling had been smitten with Lu Yi's car. Driving it had seemed like second nature to her. And now, the beautiful car would have to rust in this desolate place. Her heart ached terribly. How could she not cry over its tragic fate?

"Don't cry!"

Lei Qingyi scratched his head. "If you really like this car, I'll fix one up for you when we get back."

"How much will it cost?" Yi Ling wiped the tears from her eyes. She had a lot of money in the bank now, thanks to her generous, multimillionaire Huanhuan, but she was not going to spend the money recklessly. She had to hang on to it.

Lei Qingyi put up his hands. "You don't have to pay me. I'll give it to you, free of charge. How could I possibly ask you to pay me for it?"

Yi Ling's eyes narrowed with undisguised skepticism. She stared at Lei Qingyi as though he were an alien with three heads. Why would anyone give a car away for free, for no reason? There had to be a catch somewhere.

## **Chapter 272: Going Home**

"How can I ask you for money?" Lei Qingyi said again, genuinely taken aback. He thumped his chest.

"You saved my life. My life is worth a lot, you know. If you want Lu Yi's car, no problem! I'll model a car for you when we get back. I mean what I say."

Yi Ling chewed on her thumb. "You really mean it?"

She had forgotten that she had saved his life. It was the Chinese way to return favors tenfold; surely it was perfectly reasonable for her to ask for a car in return?

"Yes, I mean it." Lei Qingyi thumped his chest again for emphasis. "I was the one who modified Lu Yi's car for him. I'll put together a better, flashier car for you."

"Okay, it's a promise." Yi Ling reached out, intending to pat Lei Qingyi on the shoulder, but she was much too short and Lei Qingyi was much too tall. She tried standing on tiptoe, but even then all she could do was feebly flap her fingers near his shoulder.

"You're a real bro."

The smile on Lei Qingyi's face froze in place.

Were they bros? Really?

The other survivors boarded the helicopter and left, leaving Lu Yi, Lei Qingyi, Yan Huan and Yi Ling behind to wait for another helicopter to come for them. The other survivors would be taken to the local police station, where the government would assist them with their current, more pressing needs, and also with their plans for the future.

A second helicopter arrived; it flew Yan Huan's group directly to Sea City, landing on top of Yan Huan's apartment building. Yan Huan had never been to the top of her apartment building before; she was surprised to see that it was large, spacious, and free of obstructions. Her imagination raced ahead, and she began to wonder if it had been built specifically as a landing pad for military helicopters.

Lu Yi escorted Yan Huan to the 15th floor. When they arrived before her apartment, Yan Huan turned and stared pointedly at his hand. She was sure his injury needed to be cleaned and treated properly.

"I'll be back in a moment." Lu Yi opened the door to her apartment for her.

Yan Huan opened her mouth, but could not think of anything to say.

She gave up and entered her apartment. When she turned around to look, Lu Yi had already left.

Yi Ling hugged her sofa as soon as she entered her apartment.

"My sofa, my dearest sofa, I've missed you."

She kissed her sofa. They had been away for almost ten days, and it felt like an eternity. But she did not regret the trip; it had been scary, yes, but they had made it out alive. The vacation had not gone according to plan, but it had been a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It had been worth it.

Her only regret was the car. She wished she had at least brought the steering wheel back with her, to keep as a souvenir.

Yan Huan pulled a fresh set of clothes from her wardrobe before entering the bathroom to take a shower. She stank horribly. She turned on the shower, and her knees almost turned to jelly at the sensation of the warm water raining upon her.

She opened her hand and inspected the cuts on her palm.

She had been a little too reckless. She had not been afraid then, but thinking on her actions now, she felt a belated twinge of fear.

She placed her forehead against the wall, closed her eyes, and slowly let out a long breath. She could still see, in her mind's eye, a vivid image of the swollen river—the turbid water, the branches and logs that bobbed furiously along, and the frothing bubbles.

She remembered asking her mother where she had come from.

Her mother had said that she had fished her out of a swollen river, that there was a tiny child inside every bubble on the frothing river surface. After hearing that, Yan Huan had hoped for the river to swell again, so that her mother would be able to fish out another child like herself.

It was much later—when she was all grown up—that she finally realized that it had been a metaphor. Rivers had nothing to do with children.

But it turned out that her mother had not lied to her.

It was actually possible to find a baby amidst the frothing current of a river.

“Huanhuan, are you done?” Yi Ling knocked tentatively on the bathroom door, wondering if Yan Huan had passed out inside; she had been there for more than an hour now.

“Yeah, I’m almost done.” Yan Huan turned off the shower, wrapped herself in a bathrobe, and finally emerged from the bathroom.

Yi Ling let out a sigh of relief. She had been worried about Yan Huan, afraid that she had fallen sick after their ordeal. She entered the bathroom and took her time showering, making sure to clean herself thoroughly.

Once she was clean, she dressed herself and went to the pet shop to pick up Little Bean. The pet shop attendant had told her that Little Bean had not been eating much, and it showed; she was obviously a lot lighter now than before.

Yi Ling’s heart ached for her poor baby.

Yi Ling was sitting on the sofa with Little Bean on her lap when the doorbell rang. She patted Little Bean on her tiny head and moved the cat onto the sofa before walking over to the door. She opened the door and saw that it was Lu Yi; standing next to him was an unfamiliar man.

“Hi, nice to meet you.” The man smiled cheerfully at Yi Ling. “My name is He Yibin. I’m a doctor.”

“Hello.” Yi Ling quickly stepped aside to let him through.

Yi Ling was happy to have a doctor in the house. He would be able to give them a check-up; she would be able to sleep easier at night if she knew for certain that there was nothing wrong with Yan Huan.

He Yibin checked Yi Ling first. She was in perfect health.

Yan Huan, on the other hand, was running a slight fever. She was feeling a little groggy and sluggish.

The wound on her hand had become infected.

“How is she?” Lu Yi frowned. He knew from He Yibin’s expression that something was wrong.

“Don’t worry. It isn’t serious. I’ll give her an injection; she’ll be fine as soon as her fever breaks tonight,” He Yibin replied as he pulled out an IV bag from his medicine kit and hooked Yan Huan up to it.

Lu Yi tossed his house key to him. “You can stay in my apartment. I’ll call you if we need you.”

“Okay.” He Yibin slid the key ring around his index finger. He did not bother taking his medicine kit with him, since he would be sleeping at Lu Yi’s place that night. It was only a few floors below Yan Huan’s apartment.

That night, Yan Huan drifted in and out of consciousness. Yi Ling was relieved to have Lu Yi in the apartment with them; in fact, she was so relieved she fell asleep as soon as she seated herself on the sofa in the living room.

After the ordeal, Yi Ling was now much more comfortable with Lu Yi and Lei Qingyi.

They had survived a harrowing life-or-death situation together, which made them comrades-in-arms now. She would gladly give the shirt off her back for her fellow comrades if necessary—although she was pretty sure no one did that any more.

The point was, they now trusted one another.

Yi Ling knew that she could trust both Lei Qingyi and Lu Yi with anything, no questions asked.

When Yan Huan opened her eyes again, the sky outside had brightened. She lifted a hand to rub her eyes, only to discover that it had been wrapped in a thick layer of bandages.

“What...?”

She stared uncomprehendingly at her hand, turning it around to inspect it. She felt a slight throbbing pain from her palm.

It was her wound. It hurt.

### **Chapter 273: Not So Bad**

The sunlight shining through a gap in the curtains was a little too bright for her. She instinctively raised a hand to block the light; a second later, a masculine hand shot out and drew the curtains firmly together. The room seemed a lot more soothing and cosy without the harsh sunlight.

“How are you feeling?” A warm, comforting hand had rested upon Yan Huan’s forehead before she could process what was going on.

“Your fever’s gone down.” Lu Yi withdrew his hand. Yan Huan saw that his eyes were bloodshot from lack of sleep; nevertheless, he seemed to be in good spirits.

“What happened...” She had barely begun to speak when she realized that her throat was uncomfortably dry. She sounded as though she had swallowed a mouthful of sand—where had her clear, lovely voice gone?

“Here, drink this.” Lu Yi poured a glass of water and handed it to Yan Huan.

Yan Huan accepted the glass and drank the water in steady, measured gulps. The water helped moisten her parched throat, but she could not for the life of her recall what had happened to her.

“You fell sick,” Lu Yi explained calmly when he saw the confusion in her eyes. “Your wound became infected,” he continued, “but your fever’s gone now, so you should be fine.”

Yan Huan opened her mouth to say something, but her throat was still sore. She was sure her raspy voice would be unpleasant to listen to, so she decided to keep quiet.

Her gaze drifted towards Lu Yi’s left hand.

“Don’t worry, my wound’s been taken care of.” Lu Yi knew what she was thinking. He showed Yan Huan his palm.

Yan Huan saw at once that he was telling the truth: his wound had been treated and dressed. She could tell that it had been done by a professional; it had been expertly bandaged, unlike her amateurish attempt.

The door opened, and He Yibin walked in. “How is she? Is she better now?” He saw the alert expression on Yan Huan’s face, and breathed a sigh of relief.

“Looks like our hero is all right,” he said with a chuckle.

“I’m not a hero,” Yan Huan said hoarsely. She did not think she deserved that title. She had known about the mudslide only because this was her second run through life, but even then she had not been able to stop it. She had not been able to save all the other people who had perished.

“Well, you’re a hero in our book.” He Yibin gave her a thumbs-up. “Maybe you were there because of a coincidence, maybe Lu Yi and the others survived because they were lucky—it doesn’t change the fact that the food you brought with you saved a lot of people. And don’t forget the baby you rescued! We found the parents. Can you believe it? Things could have been a lot worse, but as it turns out, every cloud has a silver lining.”

“The parents have been found?” The news was music to Yan Huan’s ears.

The parents had been found. The poor baby would not end up an orphan like Yan Huan.

Oh, thank god, she thought. Thank god.

She could not have hoped for anything more.

“Yes, the parents have been found.” He Yibin extracted a thermometer from his pocket and shook it before handing it to Yan Huan. “I need to take your temperature. If it’s normal, that means you’re all right. Rest for the next few days, and you should be able to go back to work.”

He pulled out a small notebook he had been hiding behind his back. “By the way, I’d like a few autographs from you, if you don’t mind. My family adores you.”

Yan Huan accepted the autograph book and signed her name on its pages. When she was done, He Yibin happily slipped the book into his pocket. He said, smiling, "Okay, I'll leave you alone for now. If your temperature turns out to be normal, I won't have to give you another injection today."

Yan Huan stuck the temperature under her tongue and sat quietly for a moment. She turned to look at Lu Yi.

"You stayed the whole night?"

"Yes." Lu Yi tucked the blanket around her. "I couldn't leave you while you were sick."

Yan Huan was struck with a strange feeling. She felt both numb and bitter; she was seized with the urge to ask him to leave, but she knew she did not mean it. She did not want to see him go.

She wondered how it had turned out this way. The more time she spent with Lu Yi, the more she realized that she had been wrong about him in her previous life. She had been a horrible judge of character—her marriage to Lu Qin was proof enough of that.

But she kept her feelings to herself. There were some things she could not bring herself to say, just yet; things that Lu Yi would not say, either, so long as Yan Huan did not broach the subject first. In a way, they were watching each other, keeping each other at a polite distance as they tried to figure out their relationship.

Yan Huan felt that this was for the best. She no longer knew how to behave around the man before her.

She was afraid to get too close to him.

But the thought of him leaving her behind scared her, too.

Lu Yi held his hand out to her. "Give me the thermometer." As usual, the lack of expression on his calm, stoic face made it difficult to guess what he was thinking. That had been his character in Yan Huan's previous life, and it had remained unchanged in this life. He lived up to his reputation as the hardest member of the Lu family to get close to and understand.

Yan Huan took the thermometer out of her mouth.

Lu Yi looked at it. 36.2 degrees. That was normal.

He exited the room with the thermometer in his hand. In the living room, Yi Ling and He Yibin were engaged in an animated discussion as they watched a movie on the living room TV.

"She's not as pretty as my Huanhuan."

"Yes." He Yibin nodded in agreement. "True."

"Her acting isn't as good as my Huanhuan's." Yi Ling turned her nose up snootily for emphasis.

"Exactly," He Yibin agreed.

"The movie would be so much better if my Huanhuan played the female lead," Yi Ling said with complete confidence. She was not afraid of being labeled "thick-skinned"—her skin was plenty thick, after all.

"I couldn't agree more." He Yibin and Yi Ling were singing in the same key now. They bonded over their shared tastes.

He Yibin was a doctor, but that did not mean he took a clinical, no-nonsense approach to life. In fact, weepy, tearjerker melodramas were his biggest weakness. He wept like a baby whenever he watched a particularly moving melodrama.

That was why he was getting along so swimmingly with Yi Ling—he had been profoundly moved by *Divorced*, and now considered Yan Huan's performance to be the golden standard for melodramas.

Lu Yi showed He Yibin the thermometer.

He Yibin took it. "Okay, good, her temperature's back to normal. She should be all right now."

Yi Ling was relieved to hear that, but her relief gave way to embarrassment when she remembered how quickly she had fallen asleep last night. She shuddered to think what might have happened had Lu Yi not been there for them; her Huanhuan could have died from her fever in the night, while Yi Ling snored on the sofa, blissfully unaware.

Lu Yi prepared to leave—he had no reason to stay now that Yan Huan had recovered, and he had a lot of work to deal with. He had to check in with the Peace City survivors, and also file a report to his higher-ups detailing his experience with the mudslide.

Yan Huan was lying on her bed when Lu Yi left. She was awake; she knew he had left, but she made no attempt to get up.

Yi Ling opened the door to Yan Huan's bedroom and walked in. She carefully tucked the blanket around Yan Huan as she mumbled, half to herself, "I guess they're not so bad. I wish they'd stop taking my share of the food, though."

"Yes, they're okay." Yan Huan added silently: But I already know that. The one I hate is Lu Qin, not Lu Yi.

As in Yan Huan's previous life, the mudslide in Peace City received a lot of public attention. The natural disaster was covered by the TV stations, the internet, and all the major newspapers. And just like in Yan Huan's previous life, Lu Yi and Lei Qingyi were thrust into the spotlight because they had experienced the mudslide first-hand.

## **Chapter 274: Ang Pow**

"I know I've said this before, but I'll say it again—the man's ridiculously photogenic," Yi Ling commented as she bit into an apple. "He should have gone into showbiz, what a waste of that figure and face."

"Oh, by the way, do you want me to post these photos to your Weibo, Huanhuan? I think they'd make great PR." Yi Ling got out her phone and showed Yan Huan the photos she had taken of her during the mudslide.

"No." Yan Huan did not want to publicize the fact that she had been in Peace City. She could care less about "marketing" herself, either through wholesome news or scandalous gossip—she would earn her fame and reputation on her own merits, one step at a time. And besides, the mudslide had caused a lot of pain and suffering to its victims; it would be extremely insensitive and callous of her to use it as a PR boost to her image.

The aerial photos taken by the helicopters showed a desolate landscape, devoid of all signs of life. The survivors had lost their homes and family; it would be cruel to rub salt into their wounds by releasing intimate photos of the tragedy to the public. They were victims—not a circus show or entertainment for the masses.

Yi Ling was disappointed. She was sure the wholesome photos of Yan Huan helping the survivors would help Yan Huan increase her number of fans and followers.

On the other hand, the netizens might accuse Yan Huan of staging the photos.

Yan Huan reached out and poked Yi Ling's cheek.

"We should try to stay humble and grounded. Not everything has to be about fame and fortune."

"Okay," Yi Ling said with a slight pout. "I won't upload them." She did not post the photos, but she did not delete them, either. They were too precious to delete.

It took a while for news coverage of the Peace City mudslide to finally die down. In Yan Huan's previous life, the survivors had been skin and bones when they were finally rescued; thanks to her intervention this time around, they had gotten by in relative comfort. As for their future, well, Yan Huan could not do anything about it. It would be up to the government to help them now.

A few days later, it was finally Chinese New Year's Eve.

Yan Huan made dumplings for Yi Ling.

"Aren't you going to invite Lu Yi and Lei Qingyi over?" Yi Ling asked as she ate a dumpling. She knew that both men enjoyed eating Yan Huan's dumplings as much as she did.

"It's the New Year," Yan Huan replied simply as she ate the dumplings in her bowl. As per Chinese tradition, Lu Yi and Lei Qingyi would have to return to their family homes to celebrate. This was especially true for the Lu family; no matter how busy they were, they always gathered in the main family house for the reunion dinner on the eve of Chinese New Year.

It was the Lu family tradition, and as far as she knew, it had never been broken—at least not after she had married Lu Qin in her previous life. In any case, there was no way Lu Yi would be coming over to her place to eat her dumplings.

"I see..." Yi Ling was not particularly upset to hear that. In fact, part of her was relieved that she would be able to eat as much as she wanted, without having to save some for potential guests.

Yan Huan placed half a dumpling in Little Bean's food bowl.

"Little Bean, let's celebrate Chinese New Year together."

"Meow..."

The cat eagerly ran over to the food bowl and began eating the dumpling. It was not the first time Little Bean had eaten Yan Huan's dumplings; Yi Ling always gave Little Bean half a dumpling from her own bowl whenever they had dumplings for dinner. In fact, Little Bean liked it so much she could eat a whole dumpling, if given the chance.

Outside, fireworks flared as they snaked towards the heavens.

Yan Huan looked out the window in time to catch the fireworks burst in the sky with a loud boom. They were beautiful, but they lasted only a few seconds.

The fleeting nature of fireworks made them all the more beautiful.

The things that remained outside your reach always seem better than the ones within reach.

The things you lose always seem better than the things you have.

Those were the thoughts that flitted across Yan Huan's mind as she lowered her head and bit into another dumpling. She tried not to show it, but the fleeting nature of the fireworks had left her feeling a little melancholic inside. It was supposed to be the day for family reunions, but she and Yi Ling were both orphans now. She could not even recall the taste of her mother's dumplings.

Her dumplings were not her mother's. No matter how delicious they turned out, they would never compare to her mother's dumplings.

The last time she had seen her mother was a long time ago—during her previous life. She had not seen her mother for more than a decade now. She had not been able to save her mother in her previous life, and she had failed to do so this time around, too.

Perhaps this was her fate.

Perhaps this was her mother's fate.

Whatever it was, Yan Huan no longer had her mother's dumplings to look forward to during Chinese New Year. She missed the ang pow her mother used to give Yi Ling and her, too.

As the night deepened, Yan Huan could hear the faint sounds of firecrackers from somewhere outside. It used to be tradition for the people in Sea City to stay up the whole night during the eve of Chinese New Year to usher in good fortune for the following year, but the tradition had begun to die out in recent years.

Only those from the older generation still insisted on it.

Yan Huan placed a book on her lap and began reading it to help pass the time. She was not feeling sleepy just yet.

She was in the middle of her book when her phone began to beep and vibrate. She reached for her phone, and saw that she had received several text messages from her friends and acquaintances. There was one from Liang Chen, one from Yan Boxuan, one from Huang Ming, and one from Director Jin—directors and actors she had worked with previously. They did not see each other much because of their busy schedules, but they were her good friends, all the same.

When she saw the last message to come in, her fingers trembled.

It was from Lu Yi.

She remained motionless for a long moment. Her mind had gone blank: she seemed to have forgotten how to open text messages.

Should she open his message?

Or should she ignore it?

She struggled with herself, but before she knew what she was doing, she had already opened the message.

“I left something on your doorstep.”

That was it. The message was short and succinct—entirely characteristic of how Lu Yi usually spoke and behaved. He did everything quickly and efficiently, without beating around the bush. There was never an irrelevant sentence from him, or an unnecessary word.

Yan Huan quickly put on her slippers. She ran out of her bedroom, giving Yi Ling—who was in the living room watching the annual Spring Festival TV Gala—a huge fright.

“Huanhuan, where are you going?”

Yi Ling yawned. She was sleepy, but she had to watch the Spring Festival TV Gala. The quality of the show had gone downhill in recent years, but that did not stop her from watching it. It was tradition—it did not feel like Chinese New Year, not unless she was sitting in front of the TV, watching the Spring Festival TV Gala.

“I’m just stepping out for a moment.”

Yan Huan opened the door. As soon as she stepped outside, she spotted a small cardboard box on the floor. She picked it up and shook it; there was barely any weight to it.

When she returned to the living room, Yi Ling immediately snatched the small cardboard box from Yan Huan.

“What did you buy? I didn’t know they deliver so late in the night, and on the eve of Chinese New Year, too.”

Yan Huan plucked the small cardboard box from Yi Ling’s hands.

She smiled enigmatically. “It’s a secret.”

She went into her room with the box, and then shut the door behind her. Her heart was beating rapidly, and she could not explain why.

Ba-dump, ba-dump...

Her heart pounded in her ears.

She inspected the box; there was no name or signature on it, but she knew it was from Lu Yi. She wondered when he had left it at her doorstep. Had he left it at her doorstep hours ago, before leaving for the Lu family residence? Or had he asked someone else to deliver it for him?

Or had he been standing at her doorstep just minutes ago?

She walked over to her bed, sat on it, and opened the small box.

There was a red envelope—an ang pow— inside the box.

She took out the ang pow and opened it. There were only about 500 yuan in it, but she did not mind in the least. This was the first ang pow she had received in a long while.

She gleefully flapped the ang pow in her hand, laughing merrily. She had finally gotten an ang pow! These days, most people sent digital ang pows to e-wallets and online bank accounts, but Yan Huan still preferred physical ang pows. She enjoyed opening them with her own hands.

She loved ang pows; the red envelopes could contain only one or two yuan and she would still be happy to receive them. To her, ang pows were rare and precious.

She carefully put the ang pow into her drawer. She was in an excellent mood.

She would be able to sleep well that night.

This was the last day of her break from acting; she would have to begin shooting *Please Close Your Eyes* after the Chinese New Year. She had delayed the shoot for several days because of her trip to Peace City, and she knew she had to make up for it as soon as possible. She was famous now, yes, but not so famous as to be able to hold up production indefinitely. She did not want to come across as an unreasonable diva.

### **Chapter 275: Red Carpet**

The next day, Yi Ling helped Yan Huan pack. Luo Lin had already helped arrange their lodgings; they would not be staying at a hotel this time, but in a private guest house. It was located in a quiet neighborhood, and they would have the whole place to themselves. Yan Huan had readily agreed to the arrangement; she was not particularly choosy about her lodgings.

Once Yan Huan had gotten into the car, she got out her phone and contemplated it as she chewed on her lip. She was so lost in thought it took a sharp, biting pain from her lip and the taste of blood to wake her from her reverie.

She unlocked her phone and wrote a message to Lu Yi.

“I’m off to shoot a TV show. See you in a few months.”

It would take several months to finish shooting *Please Close Your Eyes*. After that, her schedule would continue to be packed: her career was really taking off now, and her agency would have her next project lined up for her by the time she was back to take full advantage of the momentum.

Ding! That was the sound of Lu Yi’s reply reaching her phone.

“Noted. I’ll take care of Little Bean for you.”

Yan Huan pressed her phone to her chest as she thought of how she had left Little Bean at Lu Yi’s doorstep earlier that morning. She could not help wondering what Lu Yi’s face looked like when he opened the door and saw Little Bean; she guessed that he had probably let out a long sigh of resignation.

Just then, the car came to a complete stop.

“We’re here.”

Yan Huan stepped out of the car with her bag, and followed Yi Ling to their lodgings.

Luo Lin was waiting outside. She helped Yan Huan with her bag and told the actress as they walked, “I’ve cleaned the place, you can move in immediately. It’s not as luxurious as a hotel, but you’ll get a lot more peace and quiet here. It’s a lot more private, too.”

“Thanks.” Yan Huan entered the guest house, and found the place to her liking. It was, as Luo Lin had said, a nice place to live in.

Yan Huan did not mind where she stayed in, as long as it was peaceful and quiet.

Yan Huan was very impressed with Luo Lin. The assistant had proven herself to be a true professional: she thought of everything, and had prepared even the things that most people would not realize was lacking until they needed them.

Yan Huan got out her script for *Please Close Your Eyes* and began to leaf through it. She had read the script countless times, but she wanted to know it like the back of her hand.

The main character of the story was an outstanding policewoman with top-notch martial arts skills. The story was divided into six arcs, spanning a total of 36 episodes. It was a relatively short series, but every episode was full of action and suspense.

Most of the episodes revolve around the main character solving crimes. The mysteries were written in such a way that most of the audience would come up with a variety of wildly differing theories on who had committed the crime and why. The truth, when it was finally revealed, would always turn out to be something else entirely, catching the audience by surprise.

The unpredictable, out-of-left-field twists were what Yan Huan liked best about the show. She did not remember how the show had fared in her previous life, and could only hope that the audience would enjoy the show as much as she did this time around.

But it was not her place to worry about the ratings or audience reception. As an actress, it was her job to bring her character, Yu Jie, to life in *Please Close Your Eyes*.

She was a decent martial artist now. The agency had arranged for a martial arts teacher to coach her, and then Lu Yi, an expert in the ancient martial arts, had personally trained her for about two weeks. She had benefited a lot from Lu Yi’s lessons; the ancient martial arts were not only lethal, but also beautiful and elegant to watch.

Even the martial arts choreographer was full of praise for Yan Huan; her beautiful yet lethal moves were a welcome addition to her character, Yu Jie.

Her training had left her arms and legs sore for several days. She had thought of throwing in the towel, but she gritted her teeth and persevered. Now, she was pleasantly surprised to see that her sweat and tears had paid off.

*Please Close Your Eyes* was set in modern times, but there was so much fighting in the show it could have been a Wuxia epic. Yan Huan spent most of the day on her feet, moving around and performing stunts. By the end of the day, she was so tired she did not feel like talking.

“They have stunt doubles, you know. Why must you insist on doing your own stunts?” Yi Ling asked as she massaged Yan Huan’s shoulders. It was a rhetorical question; she knew Yan Huan was as stubborn as a mule.

“I started out as a stunt double, you know,” said Yan Huan. She lay sprawled on her bed, too tired to move. She felt as though her body would fall apart if she got up.

She did not see the point in using a stunt double. It seemed like a lot of extra hassle to get someone else to do her stunts, when she could pull them off herself. It would be less taxing for her to use a stunt double, sure, but she would miss out on the opportunity to hone her acting skills. She was a good actress, but she was still a little rusty after having retired from acting for several years in her past life. She needed all the practice she could get to reclaim her former glory; even more so because she intended to surpass her past self and climb to even greater heights.

She needed time. She needed work. She needed to hone her skills.

A few days later, she accidentally cut her leg during a stunt and had to get it bandaged. Luckily, she was able to hide it because her character wore trousers.

Several days later, she bruised her face badly in a fall. Luckily, her character was supposed to look all beat-up in the story as well. She did not have to fake her bruises with makeup now.

The director’s eyelids began to jump and twitch.

He had never seen an actress as fearless and as committed to the project as Yan Huan—she was literally putting her life on the line. He was glad for it, in a way; a half-hearted performance would always be second best to a performance that was truly sincere and authentic.

The director broke out in a cold sweat every now and then as he watched Yan Huan perform her dangerous stunts. It was thrilling watching her perform live, and he knew he could make her stunts even more exciting and mind-blowing with proper editing.

The shoot for *Please Close Your Eyes* went smoothly. Yan Huan’s zealous commitment to her role was so infectious the other actors caught her enthusiasm and tried their best to match her efforts. The mood on the set was one of eager optimism: everyone was motivated to improve on their best performances. As soon as a take was approved, the actors took the initiative to share their thoughts on the next scene and discuss the best approach to filming it. By the time the cameras rolled again, everyone already knew what to do.

Yan Huan had expected the shoot to take four to five months, but they finished it in a little over three months. It was at least two weeks ahead of schedule.

After the wrap party, all there was left to do was to wait for the higher-ups to secure a slot for the show on the TV stations.

Yan Huan returned to her apartment in Sea City. She had only gotten a few days’ rest when her agency called to inform her that three of her roles had been nominated for this year’s Golden Phoenix Award. The award ceremony for achievements in the domestic film and TV industry.

Best Supporting Actress, *Journey to Fairyland*, *Love and Tribulations*.

Best Actress, Best Newcomer, Divorced.

Journey to Fairyland and Love and Tribulations had dominated the TV ratings last year, while Divorced had grossed over 600 million yuan at the box office since debuting on New Year's Day. It was a spectacular box office record that was unlikely to be matched by any other movie for the rest of the year. Yan Huan's mature, realistic performance in the movie and the way the story had resonated with audiences of every age and background set it above the pack. There was a good chance that the movie would sweep the awards.

Yan Huan did not know how many awards she would be able to win.

She did not spend a lot of time thinking about the Best Actress award. She remembered that Liang Chen had won the award this year, in her previous life, and she had won it fair and square. Yan Huan knew better than to expect her tiny butterfly wings to turn the entire world upside down; Liang Chen was still going to get the Best Actress award this time around.

But Yan Huan did not mind. There was no denying that Liang Chen was a better actress than she was. Yan Huan mentally vowed to surpass Liang Chen in the future. She would continue climbing to ever greater heights; she wanted fame and wealth, but more than anything else she wanted to surpass Liang Chen on her own merits.

#### **Chapter 276: She Won**

The opening of the Golden Phoenix Award didn't give her much time to rest. It took place on the third day that she was back.

This was the first time Yan Huan walked the red carpet. Of course, in this life at least.

She wore a white dress that reached her knees and she paired it with a silver high heel., making her seem taller than usual. She had a skinny frame and dressing like this made her seem skinnier, yet more photogenic.

Her hair was casually swept back and the stylist didn't do too much to her or give her something outrageous. All of it came naturally; the make-up wasn't too thick and was pretty refreshing.

On the red carpet, she casually nodded with her back incredibly straight. Her high heels stepped on the red carpet lightly and it almost seemed as if she had returned to her past life when she was at her peak.

She closed her eyes and quietly let out a sigh.

She then let out a smile and the worry in her eyes disappeared.

She, Yan Huan, was back.

The light landed on her body. She stopped, turned and smiled.

It almost seemed as if she had undergone proper training, it was almost perfect.

Sitting afar, Yi Ling was incredibly nervous as she broke out into a cold sweat.

“She is doing very well, it doesn’t seem like it’s her first time walking the red carpet,” Luo Lin rested her back against the chair as she observed Yan Huan walking carefully. Only someone who was familiar with the red carpet would be able to do this.

Because from certain angles, no matter how the pictures are taken, they wouldn’t be too bad.

“Are you sure Yan Huan has never walked any red carpet?”

Luo Lin wanted to confirm once more from Yi Ling.

“Yes yes,” Yi Ling nodded harder. “She used to be a stuntwoman and has never walked any red carpet before.” She didn’t dare say the rest but when it comes to whether Yan Huan has walked a red carpet before, she was very sure that she hadn’t.

She carried herself well and Luo Lin had no idea what to say about Yan Huan. She was worried at first that she wouldn’t be comfortable with many things, considering it would be her first time walking the red carpet. However, she was surprised that Yan Huan didn’t need them worrying at all. She was putting on a good show and had already surpassed many other actresses.

After the red carpet, they were announcing various awards.

The first was the best director award. Of course the winner of the best director award was Director Jin Hailiang. After all, Director Jin’s Love and Tribulations as well as Journey To Fairyland were the best shows of the year. Of course there was the director of Divorced, Director Huang Ming. After all, he managed to set a \$600 million box office record with a phone. This wasn’t something many people could do.

As of this year, no one is able to break the \$600 million record. All the films that were released during the new year period had performed mediocly and Huang Ming deserved the title of best director.

Song Qi was a new director and had become the black horse of this year’s Golden Phoenix Awards. He would win the glory that he deserves and it is sufficient to say that his achievements will not be limited to this in the future.

The best scriptwriter and story award went to different winners. Yan Huan didn’t pay attention to who the best supporting actor award went to and she didn’t care also. In actual fact, none of these awards mattered to her.

“The winner for the best female actress award is...” The host paused for effect. All the lights were moving around and everyone’s hearts were in their throat. There were screams and fear and nervousness.

The light stopped on Yan Huan. She lifted her head and gave a casual smile. She wasn’t incredibly nervous or excited as she knew it wouldn’t be her.

As expected, it didn’t take long for the light to move away from her as it landed on Liang Chen.

Yi Ling had gripped the shirt she was wearing tightly at the front; she had almost screamed earlier.

Almost, just almost. She wanted to scream and go crazy and Yan Huan was about to win the best actress award. What was this? This was the movie queen. It was a pity that her Huanhuan didn't win that in the end.

Liang Chen went up onstage to receive her award. This wasn't her first time winning this award but she was still incredibly excited.

Her gaze shifted down a little and landed on to Yan Huan.

Yan Huan gave her a thumbs up before she squinted a little. She wasn't the least upset or jealous. She knew that this prize didn't belong to her; it belonged to Liang Chen at the end of the day. She was meant to win it.

Hence, she wasn't upset or jealous at all. Of course there was a little admiration and she couldn't deny that. After all, she didn't know how much longer she needed to be able to stand up there.

"Let us present our best newcomer award now." The host shouted on stage. "It is quite a coincidence this time since the best newcomer and best supporting actress is the same person."

"Everybody make a guess who will it be. Who will be our lucky winner here?"

Everyone below looked at each other. Naturally, they had no idea who it will be.

Some of them straightened their bodies; they were obviously very confident of themselves and of their acting.

The lights started moving around crazily again.

Almost like a knight attaining sainthood, when the light landed on that person, she would become a fairy. The newcomer award was a huge stepping stone in one's acting career. It was incredibly precious. As for the best supporting actress, this goes without saying. With this award, she wouldn't need of fearing getting the best actress award and becoming the movie queen.

The light stopped on many people as it moved around. When it stopped, many actresses got flustered and what followed immense gratitude and excitement.

However, they didn't have much time to be excited as the light seemed to be teasing them, disappearing after a while and returning. One needed to have a strong heart to attend such an awards ceremony. If not one's skin might fall off from all this stress.

The light finally landed on Yan Huan as the host spoke again.

"Congratulations Yan Huan for winning both the best newcomer award and best supporting actress award." The screen showed stills from Divorced as well as Hong Yao from Love and Tribulations.

Yan Huan knew that her best supporting actress award was referring to Hong Yao.

She wouldn't mind it if she won it from Journey to Fairyland. She felt that she could win two best supporting actresses awards. However, she had acted in both and there was only one prize.

**Chapter 277: Beauty**

She walked up the stage with her white dress lightly brushing against her knees. Her perfect legs were glowing like pearls under the light. She walked straight up with her dark hair resting against her shoulders. She extended her hands and received the two trophies.

When the host allowed her to give her the winner's speech, she didn't talk much but she wasn't afraid at all. She did everything perfectly and the people below all gave her a thunderous applause. Director Jin Hailiang managed to win most of the prizes and he had regained his glory once again.

Lu Yi opened her laptop and crossed his legs on the chair. When he saw Yan Huan going up to receive her awards, a rare smile appeared on his lips.

"Congrats."

He said towards the computer. He then closed his laptop and continued on his work.

At the end of the awards ceremony, Yan Huan rejected a meal from some directors. She'd rather go home since if she promised one of them, what about the other two people? Hence, she decided not to go with anyone.

Yi Ling held one trophy in each hand; she was incredibly happy.

Two. Who would have the chance to win two awards? Even though she missed out on the best actress award, it didn't matter. Huanhuan was still young and she still had a chance. These two awards carried a lot of weight and if she were to win another best actress award, the rest wouldn't stand a chance any more.

Hence two was very good. Yan Huan wasn't greedy and of course she wouldn't be.

Yan Huan walked towards the door under the escort of the staff. Just as she was about to walk out, someone stopped her.

"Mrs. Yan, wait."

Yan Huan's body stiffened. The discomfort in her body seemed to weigh against her heart and almost broke out of her skin.

This discomfort brought with it a sense of disgust.

A man walked towards her quickly from behind. He was dressed in a black suit and he looked incredibly sharp. There was a slight smile on his face and it was a clean smile. However, he had a different look in his eyes.

Just as the man approached closer, he was stopped by the staff members.

"Mrs. Yan I mean no ill intentions," the man quickly explained. "I just want to know you. I will be frank; I am a fan. Can I get your autograph?"

Yan Huan didn't turn around. Her fingers that were against the side of her body tightened. Her fingernails had dug deeply into her palm and every inch of it was in pain.

Her legs were planted firmly on the ground. They felt incredibly heavy.

The man was shocked. Women usually couldn't help but throw themselves at him but he didn't expect a day to come where someone wouldn't want to even take a glance at him.

"Mrs. Yan, I am Lu Qin. Please remember, I am Lu Qin." He exclaimed his name loudly to the woman in front of him. He then broke out into a confident laugh.

"Yan Huan, we will meet again."

Yan Huan returned to her car under the escort of the staff. Yi Long was driving and this car was the one that Lei Qingyi had given to Yi Ling. Compared to the sports car, Yi Ling still liked this car the most. This was mainly due to its superb safety features that can fight against a military car. Lei Qingyi had personally modified it and it was relatively sturdy. It was good at providing privacy too.

Yan Huan sat in the car and closed her eyes. Her brows were tensely locked.

In her previous life, this was almost how she had met Lu Qin. Of course, she didn't win any awards back then and Lu Qin wasn't as enthusiastic back then.

Only when her career was stable and her fame got bigger did Lu Qin try to get closer to her intentionally.

She didn't think about something as obvious as this back then. She had assumed that Lu Qin liked her. That was right, Lu Qin definitely liked her. He liked her fame and her money.

When he was looking at her, was he looking at Yan Huan, her fame or everything that she brought with her?

Thinking back to his face now, his voice, his actions, it was enough to make her utterly disgusted.

That was right, he was very right. They will meet again.

So long as Lu Qin doesn't regret it.

She wanted to see how he can go without her.

She closed her eyes and fell into a light sleep. Even Yi Ling couldn't tell that she was mentally exhausted. But she had a clearer mind now than ever. She understood things better now than ever and she knew what she wanted to do.

She wasn't the same Yan Huan from her past life.

She was no longer as stupid as in her past life.

When she returned home, Luo Lin took out a pile of scripts and placed them in front of her.

"The company wants you to strike while the iron is hot. You have no time to rest. These are the scripts I have helped you choose recently, you can take a look."

"So anxious?" Yi Ling pouted.

They had barely finished filming Please Close Your Eyes.

"How can she be famous if we aren't anxious?" Luo Lin said seriously. "A good script will not wait for you. So is a good role. If you want to rest, you won't be able to win anything at the Golden Phoenix

Awards next year. It is already April and you have eight more months left. How many shows do you think you can film?”

Yi Ling gave Luo Lin’s words a serious thought, it was indeed quite a problem.

She looked at Yan Huan. This decision wasn’t up to her and she wanted to see what was Yan Huan’s arrangement.

“What are you leaning towards?”

Yan Huan asked Luo Lin. She wanted to know which one Luo Lin chose. Luo Lin had been in this industry for a long time and she had an incredibly acute sense. The script that she chose would very likely blow up. Even if it didn’t, it wouldn’t be a show with poor ratings.

Basically, she wouldn’t let her artist choose a show that viewers would scold.

“This one.” Luo Lin picked one out from the stack and placed it in front of Yan Huan.

“Director Jin’s new show. He’s a director that you have worked with before. His films have always enjoyed decent reviews and this is a huge period show. There are many investors and the clothing and props used are very exquisite. Your appearance fits this.”

“Moreover, Director Jin wants you to act as the female lead for this show. The pay is good too and this show will broadcast as it is filmed. It has the same broadcasting period as Please Close Your Eyes. You will be everywhere with two shows broadcasting together. Plus, you’ve just won the best newcomer and best supporting actress award, people will definitely notice you.”

Yan Huan took the script as she exclaimed in her heart.

It was this one.

Beauty.

### **Chapter 278: She Has Been Replaced**

The show’s name was nice. Director Jin’s shows have always enjoyed good rating but she didn’t act in this show in her previous life. This show was indeed more famous back then and just like what Luo Lin said, the clothes and style of the show was a classic for this year. No other show could surpass it after that.

This one will do.

She trusted Luo Lin’s words and of course, she believed in her memory from her past life. This was the biggest show of the year regardless of the script.

“Yi Ling, do you have any opinions?”

Luo Lin asked Yi Ling. She was still carrying and cleaning Yan Huan’s trophy.

She lifted her face before shaking her head, “No, you all have decided, I will follow you all.” Evidently, nothing excited her more than the two trophies.

The pain in Yan Huan slowly started lifting as she saw Yi Ling smiling happily.

Yi Ling was no longer the same person as who she was in the past. She had committed suicide because of that man.

In this life, she was still living well. As for that man, she will find someone to take care of him.

The three of them had the same opinion and all of them chose Director Jin's Beauty in the end.

The next day, Yan Huan went to the office first to find Li Changqing.

"You want me to find a new manager for Ding Ming?"

Li Changqing sat upright; he didn't know why she didn't want Ding Ming all of a sudden. That guy was her junior, which was why he arranged him with Yan Huan. Yan Huan had rose very quickly and he hoped that Ding Ming could capitalise on her fame to quickly become famous too. However, Yan Huan had rejected him.

"Yes, I do not like him," Yan Huan didn't look for any excuses.

Dislike is dislike.

She wouldn't say in the past as she wasn't qualified enough. But she already had enough rights to negotiate with Li Changqing now.

"This..." Li Changqing was a little troubled.

"Can I know why?"

"I just don't like him."

Yan Huan had the same words.

Li Changqing was planning to plead for Ding Ming but she was incredibly adamant. She wanted Ding Ming to leave and there was no other options.

Li Changqing could only agree in the end. Whether it was her fame or her reputation as a box office treasure, he didn't dare offend her just by who she had as a backing.

He didn't have the reputation that Zuo Fanrui enjoyed nor the powerful and patient Tigress that backed him.

But at the end of the day, he was thrown into jail by Lu Yi.

"Thank you, Manager Li." Yan Huan extended her hand. "Do not worry, Yi Ling still wishes to bring up newcomers. However, just not the ones who have ambitions but are incompetent.

"Yes, I know." Li Changqing could only force out these words as he shook Yan Huan's hand embarrassingly.

Ding Ming came to find him not long after Yan Huan left. He took a seat opposite Li Changqing once he entered.

"Uncle Li, you are looking for me?"

“Yes, Li Changqing was a little disgusted upon seeing Ding Ming like this. He had no rules at all. He was still a newcomer; how could he assume he had fame and money? Was he the company’s money machine already?”

“I will arrange another manager for you.” Li Changqing furrowed his brows. He regretted not finding out more about his character before promising his good friend. He was basically hopeless.

“Is it Luo Lin? I am fine with it.” Ding Ming waved his hand again. He didn’t care about that bitch anyway; he didn’t like her. Luo Lin was good. She had experience and the brains. Of course, so long it was someone beside Yan Huan, it was fine.

“You will know soon, go down.”

Li Changqing couldn’t be bothered to reveal more to Ding Ming. It was a waste of his time and breath. In any case, no matter who it was, Ding Ming could only accept it. As for staying beside Yan Huan...

He could forget about it.

He had already tried to arrange him beside Yan Huan and had given him a chance. In the end, others had already promised to give him the second male lead. Yet, he wasn’t willing to accept. He complained about their low production cost and small opportunity to show his face. He wanted to act as the eunuch in a big show instead.

Now that Yan Huan didn’t want him, he deserved it.

Li Changqing always assumed that he had angered Yan Huan because of this. He didn’t ask and Yan Huan didn’t explain anything either.

So long as Ding Ming left their side.

As for Ding Ming, he didn’t want to sit there in a daze looking at a guy’s face. What was there to see? He wanted to see a woman’s face, a beauty, someone pretty.

However, when he found out that his new manager had nothing to do with Yan Huan at all, he almost blew his lungs in anger. He wanted to reason with Li Changqing but he kept saying he was busy and refused to meet him.

Only then did he knew that he was nothing without Li Changqing.

Even though Li Changqing was very disappointed with his good friend’s son, he still let him walk the back door at the end of the day. He had asked for a decent role from Director Jin and he only hoped that he will be more ambitious and practise his acting skills a little. It couldn’t be that he doesn’t watch any TV or comments. He didn’t have any expression in his acting at all, yet wants to be the first male lead.

In any case, he had already arranged the role. If Ding Ming wants it, he can. If he doesn’t want to go, that was on him too. He had already done his best by helping him get the role.

Yan Huan had already kicked Ding Ming out and without him, she was leading a decent life. Of course, Yi Ling would never like that jerk again. If she still liked a jerk like him, she could only say that Yi Ling was blind. If she dared to have even a thread of feeling for that jerk, she would beat him up to death before giving Yi Ling a piece of her mind.

However, Yi Ling seemed to be getting closer to Lei Qingyi recently.

Was anything going on between them?

She held her head up with her hands as she started imagining things. If there really was, it seemed good too. Lei Qingyi was much better than that jerk. His character could easily crush Ding Ming's.

However was it even possible, was she overthinking?

Yi Ling and Lei Qingyi, it didn't feel very right.

Lei Qingyi and Yi Ling, this image seemed so uncoordinated.

"Yan Huan!" Suddenly a voice shouted that brought her out of her fantasy.

It was Luo Lin.

She didn't look too good, almost pale.

"Yan Huan, something happened."

Something happened?

Yan Huan suddenly had a bad feeling. "Something happened, what happened?"

Luo Lin sat down. She didn't expect something like this to happen too. She only received the news today. Wasn't this being a bully?

"Your female lead role in Beauty has been replaced."

### **Chapter 279: First to Second Female Lead**

Yan Huan refused to listen any more once she heard what Luo Lin had to say

Being replaced was something very common in the entertainment industry. However, she had never been replaced before in both her lifetimes. She earned a living from acting and any director who knew what was good wouldn't replace an actress like her for someone else.

"What did Director Jin say?" Yan Huan asked Luo Lin. Director Jin had personally promised to give her the first female lead. If it wasn't for this promise, she wouldn't have made changes to her schedule to act in his show.

Now she was told that she was being replaced. Even if that was so, shouldn't she have an explanation?

"Director Jin didn't say much, he only asked me to apologise on his behalf." Luo Lin sighed before extending her hand and patted her on the shoulder. "Actually even if he doesn't say, I already know why. It must have been from the top and someone must have a very strong backing to replace you as the first female lead."

"Then what am I acting as?"

"The second female lead." Luo Lin said helplessly. "Yan Huan, you make the decision. If you do not want to act in this, I will help you turn it down. We can find some other shows to act in. I have a few more at hand but they are all released a little later."

Yan Huan didn't have much love for the role of the second female lead right now, but she could consider the second female lead role for Beauty. It wasn't out of the question.

It was a pity to lose a show where she could be the first female lead. She was definitely a little uncomfortable.

"Can I know who is replacing me?"

Yan Huan asked Luo Lin. She really wanted to know who had such a strong backing to be able to replace her. She had just won the best newcomer award and was basking in glory. Even a normal sponsor couldn't replace her this easily as she can earn money for the entire show.

"I think she is called..."

Luo Lin frowned. "It is a very unfamiliar name, I heard she had just returned from studies overseas.

However what was it? She couldn't remember.

That is right. She suddenly remembered.

"She is called Su Muran."

"Su Muran!"

Yan Huan stood up abruptly. The colour drained from her face and Luo Lin was incredibly weirded out by how agitated she was. "Why Yan Huan, do you know her?"

I guess so. Yan Huan sat back down and returned to her usual calmness. But only she knew then that there was much turbulence in her heart.

Su Muran.

Heh, it's her. It really is her. That isn't surprising. With her backing, it wasn't difficult to bring Su Muran up. However, she didn't understand why Su Muran appeared early in this lifetime.

Could it be that her life track has changed and hence, others had also changed? But whatever the case was, Su Muran had appeared before her now.

It was earlier than expected but it was the same. She had chosen to walk this path but she had no idea whether in this lifetime, would she crush Yan Huan or would Yan Huan beat her down?

"Su Muran, what is her background?" Luo Lin asked Yan Huan. She could tell that Yan Huan recognised her but she had no idea who she was despite being in this industry for such a long time. How could Yan Huan know who she was?

"Her background?" Yan Huan smiled. Her gaze was incredibly cold.

"She is the daughter of the affluent Su family in Sea City. She studied in a prestigious arts school in the UK and had received an elite education since she was young. What kind of background do you think she has? She only wants a first female lead role now, not just any first female lead role. So long as she takes a liking for, the Su family will help her get her hands on it.

They had to fight with their face, their acting skills and their opportunities.

But Su Muran just needed to fight using her dad.

In her past life, Yan Huan had lost against her. She stole all of Yan Huan's glory and her diva position. She almost bled Yan Huan dry and had exchanged her life for Yan Huan's six months old baby.

In this life, she had no idea if she would be able to escape that and whether Yan Huan would still be as foolish.

"Su family?" Luo Lin thought of all the established family in Sea City. All of them controlled a huge portion of the wealth in Sea City.

There was the Lu family. They had immense control over the media.

Another was the Ye family. Their family was related to the Lu family but they were incredibly secretive. They wouldn't appear in the public eye usually but their influence was no less important than the Lu family. Another was the Lei family. They were a traditional family that always had their influence.

The last one was the Su family. They were incredibly rich with their company business all over the country and globally. They were in all the money-making industries and their influence were comparable to the other families. The Su family didn't have many male offspring and there was only a daughter in this generation. Could that person be Su Muran?

If it was really that Su family, it was easily explained why Director Jin would back down.

Commoners stayed away from conflicts with officials. Even though the Su family isn't the officials, the ins and out of the family was well-known. No commoner would dare to offend them. Yan Huan didn't need to fight for the first female lead role any more, she wouldn't be able to win the Su family.

"Sis Luo, could you pass me the script?"

Yan Huan extended her hand to Luo Lin, she wanted to see the rest of the script.

Luo Lin quickly took the script and placed it in front of Yan Huan. Yan Huan took off her shoes and snuggled her white legs on the sofa. She placed the script on her legs and started flipping through them page by page.

The first page was the cast list.

First female lead: Su Muran as Mei Rushi.

First male lead: Bai Qiu as Qin Jun.

Second female lead: Yan Huan as Shen Jing.

The "second female lead" words were indeed glaring to Yan Huan. No one would be willing to take this lying after being demoted from the first female lead to the second female lead this brazenly.

Beauty talked about a lady from a common family and how she used her wits to become a queen. The first female lead was known as Mei Rushi. The first male lead, Qin Jun, was the owner of the Qin family manor. The second female lead was Qin Jun's wife, Shen Jing. Shen Jing was the epitome of an evil woman.

Now she knew what felt wrong when she first agreed to star in this show. The first impression that the script gave her was a battle between two commoners.

Now that she thought about it, wasn't this a commoner vs. mistress story?

That's right Su Muran, you want to act as Mei Rushi, I will let you act as her. I want to see how a homewrecker like you become the owner of the house.

"Luo Lin, I will take this show."

### **Chapter 280: She Has Backing Too**

She placed the script on the table before picking Little Bean up. Then, she carefully caressed his soft fur. Little Bean yawned and lied lazily on its owner's legs, allowing her to caress its fur.

"You are taking this up?" Luo Lin was a little surprised. She had a feeling that Yan Huan was in fact a prideful woman and had just won the best newcomer award. She was supposed to be the best female lead but had been stopped by others and was now the second female lead. She was the evil supporting actress.

This wasn't something any actress who was getting famous would be able to take the lying. Yan Huan's idea now was to continue acting in this show as the second female lead, as the evil supporting actress?

"Yes, why not?" Yan Huan pinched Little Bean's ears. Who do you think will win? The wife or the mistress?

Luo Lin eyes lit up, she understood. Yan Huan's acting was indeed incredible and not many people in this industry could compete against her. Su Muran had just returned from overseas and wants to make Yan Huan her supporting actress. Then, she would need to figure out if she was able to suppress Yan Huan's acting. Not many people are able to do so.

"But have you thought about it, if you offend the Su family, what will they do to you? Will they get someone to kill you off?"

She didn't believe that if Yan Huan really suppressed Su Muran, the Su family wouldn't do anything.

"Don't worry about this, I will think of a way," Yan Huan carried Little Bean and stood up. She had never had any interaction with anyone from the Su family before but she knew every family were very protective of their own. Su Muran managed to get anything she wanted but at the end of the day she still fell ill with Thalassaemia.

Su Muran good days will come to an end soon, as for how she would fend herself off the troubles that the Su family will give her.

As for this...

She still wasn't very sure about this.

She took out her phone and decided to give that person a call.

"Lu Yi, it's me."

“What’s wrong?” Lu Yi put down the pen in his hand, he wasn’t able to multitask.

“You said you will protect me, is it true?” Yan Huan carried Little Bean in one hand and walked to the balcony. Everything seemed small as she looked down from here. If she wasn’t careful, she would smash into smithereens, there would be no chance of survival.

“For the rest of my life,” Lu Yi leaned back, “this promise will be in effect.”

“Who have you offended?” He was starting to understand Yan Huan. She wouldn’t look for him usually and when she does, she was about to cause trouble.

Yan Huan pouted, “Not yet, but soon enough.”

“Okay,” Lu Yi waited for her answer.

“I have been replaced as the first female lead; I am the second female lead now. I want to suppress her.” Yan Huan squatted and placed Little Bean on the floor. Little Bean quickly ran away, ignoring its owner.

“Their family background isn’t simple.”

Lu Yi replied, “Who is it?”

“Su Muran from the Su family,” Yan Huan was honest. She couldn’t hide anything from him; she needed him from now on.

“Su Muran?” Lu Yi was surprised. Ah, it is the Su family.

“Go suppress her,” Lu Yi said calmly, there was no tone in his voice. “With me around, even those from the Su family need skills to enter the entertainment industry. If they don’t and only gain success through opportunities granted to them, they must be able to take it lying down too.”

“You don’t like her?”

Yan Huan understood Lu Yi. The Lu and Su family had some tensions and weren’t as good as she imagined. However, the Su family were wealthy and Lu Qin had something with their family back then because he was attracted to their wealth. Did Lu Yi not eye that before?

“Why must I like them?” Lu Yi didn’t have a very good impression of Su family and Su Muran.

He still remembered at a gathering when he was young, Su Muran tried to blame Lei Qingyi even though she had fell down herself. Lei Qingyi was punished severely by his father. He knew then that he would never like this girl in his life. She had many scheming ideas from a young age; she couldn’t be any better when she grew up.

The Su family weren’t saint; they all had rather mediocre characters.

“That’s right,” Lu Yi leaned forward again and tapped on his phone, “I want to eat dumplings tonight.”

“Okay, I will make for you.” Yan Huan smiled happily. She felt the sun especially warm today. She would go buy the groceries in a while, some fresh prawns to make prawn dumplings.

Lu Yi loved them the most.

She hung up and went out to get the groceries. She wanted to buy them herself and she needed to choose the prawns too.

Who said she couldn't get her own groceries after becoming famous?

She wore her cap and a mask with a pair of shades. No one would recognize her like this. Now that she was fully disguised, she could set off.

She went to buy prawns at the market and she chose the big prawns one by one on her own. She had no idea that even though she was fully disguised, people had recognized her and had taken many photos of her secretly.

Only when those photos were uploaded online did she know that she had been filmed. However, those photo angles were decent and she looked pretty good in them. The news was positive too.

Famous actress Yan Huan looking pretty and good at cooking. It was a pity they couldn't eat them. The photos of her were good.

Yan Huan finished buying the groceries and went home to make the dumplings.

Back home, she cleaned the prawns and removed their heads before taking out their intestines. She then chopped them out and added mushrooms and eggs to them. She was busy the whole time and made the dumplings alone without asking for help. No one in this house could make them as good as her. She could forget about Yi Ling. She only knew how to eat and if she let her make the dumplings, they wouldn't be dumplings. They would be buns.

She did a head count. Her, Yi Ling, Luo Lin, Lu Yi and of course, Lei Qingyi. Lei Qingyi had a huge appetite and he was taller and stronger than everyone else. Of course, he needed twice the amount of what the rest ate.

Yan Huan looked at the plate of dumplings that she had made and couldn't help but sigh from tiredness. Her entire face had flour.

She really felt that all these dumplings alone weren't even enough for Lei Qingyi.

Alright, she would make more. Luckily she had bought enough prawns or else she wouldn't have anything to make the dumplings with.

She almost made a whole freezer of dumplings. She was pretty sure they would be enough. She would cook these dumplings when they arrived later.