

### Chapter 441: She's Not Going Back

"Stop acting like a spoiled child! I'm not Yi Ling, nor am I your husband, Lu Yi who will indulge you unconditionally. Do you have any idea how much trouble you've caused me?" Luo Lin glared at Yan Huan. What else could she do? She had canceled all the notices. Would Yan Huan leave her a mess again after she got all the notices back?

"Please, Sister Luo," Yan Huan tugged Luo Lin's sleeve again. She knew very well that Luo Lin would eventually approve it even though she was fuming right now. This was because she was just like Yi Ling; they would compromise with her unconditionally. She could stop filming as she wanted and change her schedule as she pleased. She knew that her one-month schedule had been fixed beforehand. Changing one part of the schedule would have an impact on others. As far as the manager was concerned, it would undoubtedly be a very tedious matter and most probably she would be utterly exhausted from overwork.

"Yi Ling really has spoiled you," Luo Lin pulled out her sleeves from Yan Huan's grip, she simply could not do anything with Yan Huan. "All right, go as you please, I'll arrange the rest. Remember, just this once."

She would have to make amendments later, it was a troublesome job. She had never seen an artist who caused less trouble than Yan Huan, yet she was the most troublesome one as well.

She shook her head. Nevertheless, she had no choice but to leave Yan Huan here and go first. After all, she surely would not lose Yan Huan. She would abandon Yan Huan here as her punishment. How could an artist be so audacious to change her schedule without consent? Besides, she did not even inform her manager and left the manager with a terrible headache instead.

Luo Lin took a total of three days to settle the follow-ups. At the moment she had not taken a bath and changed her clothes for three days. But strange to say, she could not smell her own sour body odor.

Her hair was all frizzy and she had dark circles under her eyes.

Luo Lin was enraged and stormed into Yi Ling's place to pour out her grievances. However, she was startled when she saw Yi Ling's current appearance.

"Oh my goodness, why have you become so fat?" She pinched Yi Ling's face. She used to be so skinny, how did she become like this all of a sudden? She could not even recognize her.

"If you have one in your tummy," Yi Ling pointed at her belly which had grown so much, "And..." She pointed at her surroundings, "A big family who feeds you like a piglet, would you be able to stay slim?"

"What do you think I can do? For the baby in my belly, I can only give up and stop bothering. I'll have to wait until I give birth to the baby and see what to do."

"It's so scary!" Luo Lin could not imagine how Yi Ling would look like if she kept getting fat. Though she initially wanted to complain to Yi Ling about Yan Huan, in the end she did not stay for long and left like fleeing from calamity. She had made up her mind that she would not drop by before Yi Ling went into labor. This is clearly an evolution from a tough girl to a piglet, oh dear, it's hurtful.

She better follow behind Yan Huan, at least Yan Huan was so good looking and delightful to look at.

“Why are you looking at me like this?” Yan Huan turned her face at Luo Lin and asked wonderingly. “You have been staring at me for about an hour. Am I so pretty that you can’t take your eyes off me?”

She took a sip of juice from the glass beside her, but Luo Lin was still staring at her when she turned around. Well if it’s a man who’s looking at her, it can’t be helped, but isn’t it pretty weird and awkward to be stared at by a woman?

She held out her hand and waved in front of Luo Lin.

“Hey, come back.”

Luo Lin had a sudden chill, “It’s too horrifying!”

“What’s wrong?” Yan Huan did not get what Luo Lin was thinking about. What’s with her expression and strange glance that was like a combination of empathy, fear, horror and all sorts of intolerance?

“Nothing,” Luo Lin let out a sigh, “I was just thinking about what to do if you got pregnant and become like Yi Ling in the future. How are you going to make a comeback?”

Yan Huan was holding a glass, her hand paused for a moment before she lifted the glass to her lips.

“Maybe I won’t get pregnant forever?”

She looked at the puffy white clouds outside the window, an unspeakable sigh escaped from the corner of her mouth.

Perhaps she could not have children forever. How could everything come off satisfactorily in life? She already had Lu Yi, and that was enough for her.

Though that was what she said, Luo Lin simply treated her words as a joke. After all, every woman would come to a stage where she would reproduce by giving birth to children. It was a natural instinct for living beings, it was the same for animals and human beings.

The airplane landed at Serene City after a few hours. Serene City was very far from Sea City. It would take seven hours of flight time. It might take a few days and nights if they were going by train. Of course, Serene City lagged far behind the Sea City in the economy. Serene City was in the inland areas. Despite the ‘Sea’ word in the name of Sea City, it was not really in close vicinity of the sea. However, there was a sea-river in Sea City and it was totally different from the inland area. Sea City served as an opened port for import and export trade. The city had a well-developed transportation system and it was leading the way in sea freight, land and air transport. Furthermore, the city attracted countless foreign investors and had an extremely crucial role in the world.

On the contrary, owing to the fact that Serene City was an inland city and had a lower sea level, there were plenty of living organisms in its ecosystem. The air in Serene City was a lot purer and fresher than Sea City. In spite of the fact that Sea City had been putting emphasis on ecological life, there were too many reinforced concrete buildings after all. There were lots of vehicles and people too, as a result, the environment was polluted by all sorts of industrial raw material waste gases. It was economically advanced and yet there was no longer clean air and unsophisticated hearts.

Sea City had its own good, while Serene City had its own serenity. After being accustomed to the urban lifestyle, it might be a good way to loosen herself by living in such an enchanting place for a period of time.

Yet, humans were odd and nostalgic. They would not leave if you were to ask them to leave the place where they had been living all their lives. They would not change even if they were asked to change.

Just like Yan Huan, she was born and bred in Sea City. She was from Sea City for both her lives. Perhaps Serene City was a better place to live, nonetheless, Sea City was the only place she would stay.

For the simple reason that she had her roots in Sea City.

The work at Serene City was actually very simple, she just had to shoot a commercial as a spokesperson and there was nothing much to do after that.

“You’re not going back?” Luo Lin was puzzled when she heard that Yan Huan wanted to stay here. “Why don’t you want to go back? Don’t you miss your husband? You’re always clingy with him and worried that he can’t eat, drink or sleep well, right?”

#### **Chapter 442: This City**

“You don’t understand,” said Yan Huan, swirling the milk in her glass. “Absence makes the heart grow fonder. A relationship grows stale if you are always with each other. I don’t get to go to Serene City every day, and I plan to take a few days off just to relax. It’s a nice place with splendid scenery.”

“I guess you have a point,” agreed Luo Lin. “I would love to stay there for a while if not for work.” After calculating, she realized she didn’t have enough time for a vacation. Yan Huan had left her many things to deal with, and she would have to rush back to Sea City as soon as possible.

“Are you fine being by yourself?” asked Luo Lin. She didn’t like the idea of Yan Huan staying there alone; she was a public figure, and things might happen to her.

“Don’t worry, I’m not a kid. I’ll be fine,” said Yan Huan, holding the glass to her lips. Beneath her long lashes hid things that were left unsaid, but Luo Lin failed to notice.

Fine then. Luo Lin gave up on trying to convince her. Not like she can in the first place. She was an adult, so getting lost was hardly a concern. And Luo Lin really didn’t have time to dally with her. She went back by flight at the earliest instance, leaving Yan Huan to her own shenanigans.

Colors of the night crept across the sky, in the middle of which rested a perfect crescent—it lacked the holy beauty of a full moon, but inarguably had its own charm. The arc, the curves, the indescribable hazy moonlight that sprinkled a layer of blue frost on the ground.

Looking further, she could see sparse stars below the twilight sky.

This wasn’t a good time to watch stars, nor was it a good night to count stars. She remembered the times when her mother would teach her how to read the stars as she rested on her lap. Until now, the only one she recognized was the Big Dapper.

She closed the curtains. A sleepless night awaited her. Every time she shut her eyes, nightmares startled her awake. And who would have known that a strong magnitude would hit Serene City a day later? The

exact location where she would be the epicenter of the earthquake, an earthquake that nearly destroyed the entire Serene City and decimated its population.

And one of the victims was Lu Jin—Lu Yi's father. On his way to a military exercise, he had been residing in a hotel in Serene City when the earthquake hit. He never escaped, his skull shattered by debris and leaving him an incomplete body.

Yan Huan switched on the light, sat up, and poured a glass of water for herself. She stood on the balcony looking at the stars afar. She knew what was coming. She knew many were about to die. Yet there was little she could do.

She couldn't say it, but she left a post using an anonymous ID, which was soon deleted. If fate permitted, some might see it and believe it and survive the disaster. But everyone had their own fates, perhaps you may call it destiny. There wasn't much she could do to change the future, but she did what she could. But there was a limit to what one person could do.

All she could do was wait right here, admiring the last of the serene and beautiful city that would turn into rubble a day later.

Who knows how many bodies would lie beneath the rubble?

Suddenly, she leaned against the balcony railings, her frail shoulders trembling nonstop. She was afraid. Afraid of what to do. Afraid of failing to save Lu Jin. Afraid of them both dying, and leaving the ones closest to them a pain that would never subside.

Suddenly, her phone in the hotel room rang. She walked over and picked it up.

It was from Lu Yi. She sniffed and wiped her tears dry, telling herself not to cry. Lu Yi was smart. He would realize.

She answered the call and held the phone to her ear, still leaning against the balcony as the Serene City wind fondled her face. There was a metallic smell in the air for some reason. The smell of death.

"What made you stay longer than planned?" asked Lu Yi. He sounded like he was in a good mood.

Must have just gotten home.

"The scenery, of course," said Yan Huan. "Serene City is wonderfully beautiful at night. It's a clean city too. There are many souvenirs to be bought too! I don't get to come here every day, so I'm going to stay awhile longer and buy more stuff for you."

"Which do you prefer? Serene City or Sea City?" asked Lu Yi as he placed the milk into the microwave.

"Each has its own merits," said Yan Huan, reaching out as though she wanted to grab the wind. In the end, she couldn't grasp a thing. "Everyone sees a different Sea City in their eyes, and the same applies to Serene City. Anyone who loves their hometown would find it the most beautiful."

"Wise words," said Lu Yi, opening the microwave and retrieving the bottles of milk, which he poured into a glass. The milk was still being delivered on a daily basis, and Yan Huan had ordered him to drink two cups every day. Breakfast and dinner were made by the nanny, and he ate lunch at the Procuratorate, so there weren't any chances for him to starve.

“Speaking of which,” remembered Lu Yi. “Dad’s going to Serene City tomorrow too. What a coincidence.”

“Really?” Yan Huan forced a bit of excitement into her voice, yet her eyes reddened. “I have to ask Dad to treat me to dinner then! The food here is great.”

“Sure,” chuckled Lu Yi. “Eat more. Don’t come back with an empty stomach.”

He raised the glass to his mouth and drank a mouthful of milk. The thick fragrance from the milk exploded in his mouth, melting his heart and tugging at his heartstrings.

His heart skipped a beat.

Yan Huan took a few deep breaths, breathing in the metallic-smelling air. The corner of her eyes hurt, as though something had sliced through them.

“Hubby...” she said with a smile, her tears falling where he couldn’t see.

“Is something the matter?” asked Lu Yi. He could tell something was wrong from her voice.

Yan Huan drooped her eyelashes, teardrops pooling on her fingers. Sorrow found its way up her rosy lips.

“I love you, hubby.”

#### **Chapter 443: Good Morning**

Lu Yi held on tightly to the cup in his hands.

“I love you too.”

He once again placed the cup between his lips, and a strong familiar aroma greeted him. He did not like expressing his love with his lips but today he wished to do so.

“I’m going to sleep soon,” Yan Huan made her voice sound tired. This was easy for her as she was an actress after all; she was very good at acting as she fully embodied the role of an actress.

“Goodnight.” Lu Yi wanted to kiss this little lady, however they were talking on the phone. He was 28 years old, which was an old age, so it did not seem suitable for this action. I hope that she would come back soon, very soon.

He hung up the phone and switched on the TV, changing the channels until he reached one of the TV series that starred his woman. He watched episode by episode, and at the same time to kill time. It was a long night and he had no desire to sleep.

The milk in his cup decreased bit by bit, and in the end he had drunk it entirely.

Yan Huan placed her own phone on the balcony as she gazed into the star-lit sky that stretched beyond the city. She continued to stare and remembered that she wanted to lock the memory of the landscape in Serene City in her heart, but then she thought that it was useless to do so because the old would always fade away and the new day would come again.

After such destruction, this city was reconstructed after a few years, and it would become a new Serene City, but it was no longer the previous Serene City, which was the Serene City in her eyes.

This night, she was unable to sleep well, before the day brightened she had already woken up, the sky was painted in a gloomy depressed color. The depression made her chest heavy, almost till she felt as if she could not breathe.

She put on her own optical glasses, then wore a cap and a mask and got ready to go shopping. Just as she was about to go out she suddenly remembered that it was still too early, the dark sky was still turning bright, and it turned out that most of the stalls were still closed.

But in the end she still chose to leave the house and sat on the side of the road, watching the cars pass one by one. She saw orange dressed cleaners sweeping away, the first bus of the morning arriving, elderly people practicing their Tai Chi, and several aunties occupied the entire square with their dancing. A cultural music played, bringing a touch of prosperity to the morning. It seemed that it was not much different from other mornings. Everyone went to work, went to school, some were still fast asleep, some were still drunk in bed. However, though it was morning here, others might have begun to say goodnight to the world somewhere else, but they did not know that perhaps they were saying farewell to the night forever.

Not far away a big supermarket had just opened its doors, and the first to go in were the staff. Some customers had already been queuing at their doors, they were getting ready to snatch up the cheapest products in the market.

Yan Huan followed the footsteps of the citizens into the supermarket. No one noticed her, because for them, she was just a stranger, a passer-by who was buying things.

Yan Huan picked a big backpack for herself, then put some chocolates in it, as well as two bottles of water, anymore she would not have been able to lift up the bag. She took some bread, assorted biscuits, and a few packs of ham as well.

Other than that, she did not purchase anything else...

She paid for the items, and carried these things on her shoulders. Although there were not many things, it loaded the backpack half full, and though the bag on her body was not very heavy, but she felt that it was crushing her until she wanted to cry.

She walked out with her bag and the morning light just fell on her body. The sun pierced the thick clouds with warm sunshine, coating a layer of gold on all things.

It was very beautiful and very warm, but at this time, she did not know why she felt that the light was excessively glaring, it was not giving the warmth that others was fond of as well.

She blocked the corner of her eyes, and she could hear the voice of the city in her ear. The people of the city used a special language to communicate. If they spoke too fast, she would not be able to understand it; but if they were to speak slowly, she could still catch onto their meaning,

“It is still so early in the morning and you came over?”

“Yeah, isn’t it cheap for eggs today? I wanted to buy more for my home. My son is coming back today. He hasn’t come home this year, today is his first time. It’s hard for him to be back so I bought more.”

“Then I will go buy some too, my grandson is coming today.”

“Hey old friend, why are you so early?”

“Yeah, my son is taking us, the old couple, to travel, it is a one way ticket, so we are buying something to prepare for the trip.”

“You’d still chose to go out of this city? Don’t you know that there are many people who purposely come to visit our city?”

She was not sure who had spoken these words; it was just like a movie, but the ending was like a kind of destruction.

It was unsure that those who came into the city at this time could escape this disaster, and those who leave could just so happen to avoid it.

They should just go, go, leave this place and never come back.

She started walking, her glasses seemed to be covered with a layer of white fog, she could not see anything so she took off the glasses to clean, but discovered that it was not the problem of glasses, but it was her eyes: she could not see anything clearly.

Forcefully, she got rid of the white fog covering her eyes and then put on her glasses, and walked step by step in the city. She took out her mobile phone, switched it on, found Lu Yi’s phone number and left him a message.

“Lu Yi, my dear husband, I love you.” Her finger gently touched the screen, and the message was sent over. Her trembling long eyelashes were faintly moistened.

At this time, Lu Yi, who had just started his shift at work, felt the vibration in his pocket. He took out his mobile phone and read the message.

“I love you too,” he replied with these four words and also pressed the send button. At this time, his cold face slowly became warmer, and the coldness seemed to be replaced by a tinge of warmth.

His whole person seemed to have melted altogether, his personality changed and became warmer.

When Yu Bo saw Lu Yi, he knew why their prosecutor was acting in such a way – Lu Yi was thinking about his wife. But could he not smile to the extent that he felt Lu Yi was making fun of a singleton like him? Was it so pleasurable to make fun of the single man?

Prosecutor, you are too much, how can you bully a single guy? It’s too hurtful.

Yan Huan took out her phone and saw Lu Yi’s message which contained that four words, she pressed her face to her phone, as if the phone was Lu Yi’s big hand, as though she could feel his clean, warm but dry palms and his long fingers.

He always held onto her hand, during winter he would place her hand on his heart, using his chest to warm up her cold fingers. When there were many people, he would never let go of her hand, even

though she knew the way as he was afraid she would lose her way. He treated her like a child he dearly loved, like a daughter whom he wished to spoil.

“Lu Yi, my hubby, do not worry, in this life I will not let Father come into trouble, believe me.”

#### **Chapter 444: Found Him**

In the distance, the sunlight piercing out of the clouds eventually faded away. It wasn't a sunny day people had expected, but that mattered little in a city where people headed to work regardless of the weather.

What can stop the routined lives of humanity? Nothing it seems.

Not disaster, nor accidents.

Carrying her backpack, she walked to the entrance of a hotel and found a place to sit. From her backpack she took out some meat buns which she just bought and were still warm. There was a famous meat bun store here, and Yan Huan had eaten there once when she visited Serene City. The taste left an impression on her, and she couldn't find the same taste at any other store, despite the similarities they offered.

She bought five meat buns, which she began to eat in large bites. She wasn't hungry, neither did she want to eat, but she knew she had to eat.

She checked the time. Almost noon. It's coming.

She took out her phone and called a number.

“Hello?” Lu Jin's voice came from the other end, unsurprisingly.

“It's me, Dad,” said Yan Huan, taking a bite out of the meat bun, her eyes fixed on the hotel entrance. Some people were entering, some leaving, some checking out and checking in with luggage in hand. A hotel was always a hotel, never a home.

“So it's Huanhuan,” said Lu Jin, delight filling his voice. “I heard from Lu Yi that you are in Serene City too.”

“Yes,” said Yan Huan with an air of affected breeziness. “I was hoping Dad would treat me to dinner!”

“Sure!” said Lu Jin. He checked the time. “How about tomorrow? Dad will take you to eat anything you want.”

“Thanks, Dad!” said Yan Huan, taking another bite out of her meat bun. “By the way, where are you staying right now?”

“I'm staying at...” Lu Yi pondered. “Hotel Magnifique, the one in the center of Serene City.” He had seen the name when he inspected the room card. “Room 603.”

Hotel Magnifique, room 603, the third room on the sixth floor. Yan Huan noted it down.

She stuffed down another meat bun. Her tummy was starting to hurt, even though she hadn't eaten much. Five meat buns, each smaller than the size of her palm, wasn't even enough for Lu Yi in one serving, but even one made her bloated.

She twisted open a bottle of water and took a gulp, trying to push down the meat bun remains in her throat. Then she realized it wasn't the meat bun that was stuck, but her worry and fear that had lumped up.

She shoved the bottle back into her bag. The originally half-filled bag felt much lighter now. There weren't many things in it in the first place—perhaps the meat buns had propped it up.

She hugged her bag tightly, pressing her face against it, waiting as time passed slowly and painfully. She wanted time to go faster, but at the same time, she prayed that the dreaded time never arrives.

She woke up when she felt a slight tremor in the ground. She quickly got up and checked the time. It was going to be four.

Serene City Large Earthquake had occurred at 4:10 pm.

How could she fall asleep? Damn it!

She quickly carried her backpack and raced forward, her heart racing as cold sweat beaded on her forehead.

Time passed, bringing them closer to the endpoint of their lives.

"Miss...Are you..." said the door boy when he saw Yan Huan. Before he could finish his question, Yan Huan had raced past him and pressed for the elevator. The elevator wasn't moving. Someone on some level must be holding it open. She checked her watch again. Less than 7 minutes remain.

She turned and ran for the staircase.

First floor, second, third...

By the time she reached the sixth floor, Yan Huan was completely out of breath, but she dared not dally. No extra breaths, no breaks, no stopping. Only 6 minutes left.

603?

603....

Where is it? Where the hell is it? Her flustered heart was on the verge of leaping out of her chest. What if he wasn't there? What if she searches the wrong place? What if he happened to be out?

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She's here.

Yan Huan rapped on the door.

Open it! Why wasn't it opening? Why? She was on the verge of tears. Five minutes left. There's no time left, for real. Why was she this useless? How could she have fallen asleep at a time like this? She felt like slapping herself.

Was the tragic history going to repeat itself? Now with the addition of her own life?

Not like this. She hadn't repaid Ye Shuyun and Lu Yi yet. She hadn't lived her second life to the fullest yet.

The door finally creaked open.

Lu Jin came out with a look of helplessness, a jacket loosely draped over him, his hair still wet, and a pair of trousers carelessly slipped on. He didn't even have time to put on shoes.

"Dad..." whimpered Yan Huan. There was no time to explain—4 minutes left.

"Follow me, Dad," said Yan Huan, dragging Lu Jin along before he could even put on her shoes.

"What's happening?" asked Lu Jin, letting her drag him along. There wasn't time to wait for the lift, so they took the stairs. "What's wrong, Huanhuan?"

Yan Huan never stopped even after they reached the first floor.

Her chest hurt, but she dared not stop. No time. There really wasn't any time left.

"I felt the ground shaking, Dad! Could be an earthquake!"

Suddenly, she shouted in the direction of the hotel. "Run! An earthquake's coming!"

As she shouted, she ran out of the hotel while dragging Lu Jin behind. As they dashed out, the people in the lobby were left dumbfounded as a mass of people flooded out of the hotel.

"Are you alright, Huanhuan?" asked Lu Jin worriedly. He thought she might be having a fever, one that gave her hallucinations. The clamor had attracted a crowd, and people from within the hotel were still running out.

Yan Huan's eyes were fixed on the hotel. At that time, no one saw the silence and despair within them.

#### **Chapter 445: Seriously An Earthquake**

"Huan..." As Lu Jin was about to shout Yan Huan's name again, the earth trembled and the crowd gave out a loud scream along with a crack. Within a matter of seconds, the sound of rumbling reverberated across the atmosphere.

The hotel before them collapsed in a few echoes of rumbling sound. Everything was swaying, and trembled until they were not able to stand upright. It was crowded with people crushing over people, and the sounds of shrieking, wailing and crying resounded in their ears.

It's earthquake, it really is an earthquake.

Not knowing how long it had passed, the quake of the whole earth had finally slowed down. In the meantime, Lu Jin held tight onto Yan Huan's arm, his hands pressed with full force, causing Yan Huan to feel the pain.

Yan Huan looked back with a straight face. Even though she knew there would be an earthquake in her previous life, she had only seen news about it on television and internet. However, she had never seen it

with her own eyes, not to mention experiencing such a terrifying incident herself. What was even scarier was that, when something toppled, everything would be gone just like this.

“It’s an earthquake, Dad.”

Yan Huan closed her eyes and her reddened eyes could not help but to let out a sobbing tone.

Lu Jin rubbed Yan Huan’s head like he was treating his daughter. At that moment, he did not even wear his shoes, but he was drenched with sweat from fright. A few minutes ago, he was still showering in the hotel and preparing to go to bed. If it was not for Yan Huan who pulled him out forcefully, then he could probably be crushed to death in the hotel when the entire hotel collapsed and fell apart.

He wiped his face. “Save others, save others first.”

He could not be bothered if he wore his shoes when he initiated to lead those who were still alive to rescue those who were buried. He could only rescue them by himself, the more he could save, the better it would be. Perhaps, he could really save many lives.

Yes, save people, save people. Yan Huan tagged along behind him. Those who were not here would never know how it felt to be shocked and helpless with one’s life. At this instant, they could not feel any pain or sufferings as the only thing they cared about was to rescue others, saved those who were buried, especially their good friends, relatives, siblings, husband or wife.

Yan Huan used both her hands to lift the floor slab on the ground.

“Help... help...” A soft and weak voice transmitted from a place nearby.

Yan Huan moved another piece, and at this juncture, her fingers were already worn out with blood dripping onto the cement and bricks, but she did not stop. She never thought of stopping because she wanted to save the person and others.

“Help, please help me...”

She could not remember how many concrete slabs and bricks she had moved to remove all the things that pressed on that person. Then, she dragged that person to the temporary emergency evacuation area.

At this moment, there were many people resting in it as if the whole world had already turned into grayish color. The air was filled with dust, even the atmosphere was seemingly occupied with grains of sand.

Many people were crying and shouting the names of their family members and even more people were relentlessly trying to save more people who were waiting to be rescued.

The night became darker and it became harder to view everything. Sometimes one could sense as though there were sounds of collapsing at some places. They were all sitting together, waiting for rescue, expecting dawn and anticipating safety.

Yan Huan walked to the front of a man, and stared at his legs, “Can you give me your shoes?”

The man nodded. A hoarse voice appeared from the crack corner of his mouth,

“Go ahead and take them. I know you all are saving people. My legs are broken so I could not be of much help.”

“Thank you.” Yan Huan slowly removed the shoes from the man’s feet as she was afraid to hurt him. She took down her backpack, and then fetched out a piece of chocolate and handed it to the man.

“Thank you...” The man said with a husky tone, taking the piece of chocolate with all his might as though his whole body was shivering; not sure if it was because of the loss of his family, or because of losing his legs.

“The rescue team will come for our rescue soon,” Yan Huan comforted him as she found solace in it. Yes, soon, but she also knew that it would not be so easy because the collapse had also destroyed the road. Now, they could only wait until tomorrow, not knowing if the helicopters would deliver food to them.

She then fished out several pieces of chocolate from her bag and put them in her pocket. She dare not hold them openly because there were too many people.

She only gave these chocolates surreptitiously to those who were injured as well as younger kids. She did not give out the two bottles of water in her bag.

She walked to the front of Lu Jin who was sitting down. His body was filled with sand, not knowing how many scratches he had on his body. He did not wipe off the dust on his face, and he was still barefooted. Even though his legs were not full of dirt, it was uncertain if he was severely injured.

“Dad, do you mind wearing someone else’s shoes?” Yan Huan put down the shoes. She was aware of Lu Jin’s personality. He was not a person who was particular about things, but there was one thing he was selective; he only wore his own pair of shoes and a pair of shoes he loved the most was the customized pair that Yan Huan bought for him. He purposely wore that out this time. To let him wear someone else’s shoes was similar to asking him to use someone else’s toothbrush to brush his teeth.

“It’s good enough to have a pair of shoes to wear.” Lu Jin forced a smile. As a grown man, a general, the scattered ruins before his eyes and the wailing and shouting sounds across the atmosphere that resounded in his ears caused him to choke with sobs. Natural disaster was inevitable, but it was even more heart-wrenching to experience it.

Yan Huan took out a bottle of water from her bag, opened the bottle cap and passed it to Lu Jin.

“Dad, drink a little bit of water.”

Lu Jin accepted it, and took a sip. But as he looked at several pairs of innocent, fearful, despair and greedy eyes staring at him, he heaved a sigh and passed the bottle of water to a child.

When the child received the bottle of water, he hurriedly drank a big mouthful and the parents’ of the child quickly snatched the water bottle from the child. It was not that the parents did not allow him to drink, but he was drinking it way too fast so they scared he would choke. However, the child was oblivious of that so he thought they were stealing the water bottle from him. Thus, he cried loudly, causing his parents to frown and began to shed tears.

Yan Huan tore out a piece of her clothes, and then took out another bottle of water from her bag. She poured some water on the torn piece of cloth on her hand. She raised her head and passed the water

bottle to the person sitting by the side. His head was filled with blood; he kept a straight face, not knowing what he was thinking about.

The man took over the water bottle and expressed his gratitude. He drank a sip and started to cough violently, then he held his head and started to wail in pain.

Yan Huan sat upright and placed Lu Jin's legs on her legs.

Lu Jin appeared to be a little embarrassed.

#### **Chapter 446: She's There Too**

"A father shouldn't back away at his daughter's touch," said Yan Huan, holding the sodden cloth. "You are my father. You may not have made me or raised me, but you made Lu Yi, raised him, and educated him. He's the only man in my life to cherish, love, and dote me. Therefore, you are my father as much as his."

Lu Jin sighed, desisting.

"I have some food in my bag, Dad. Here, have some," said Yan Huan, passing her bag to Lu Jin. She had given most of the chocolate and tidbits away to the casualties, and all that remained were two meat buns from that morning and a few snacks.

Lu Jin took the bag but left its contents untouched.

"Please eat something, Dad. You'll need energy. Food aid will come tomorrow," said Yan Huan, looking up. She knew what was on Lu Jin's mind—that was all the food they had, they couldn't possibly distribute or share them. It wouldn't be enough.

"Okay," said Lu Jin. He took out a meat bun and began eating. Yan Huan used the cloth to clean the wound at Lu Jin's feet. Part of the reason why she asked Lu Jin to eat was to distract him from the sight of his feet.

Carefully, she extracted the bits of stone and glass from Lu Jin's feet. She didn't know how Lu Jin endured the pain and covered that much distance with these embedded in his feet. There wasn't a single woundless spot.

"It's alright," said Lu Jin, stroking Yan Huan's hair. "Dad has gone through worse in the army. These wounds are nothing."

Yan Huan cleaned his feet with the cloth once more, but what she could do was limited—they had run out of water. They drank it all.

She took the shoes and wiped the inside of it. Thankfully, the shoe had a soft woolen base. Even if Lu Jin didn't have socks, she couldn't have asked for the man to remove his socks as well.

She fitted the shoe on Lu Jin's feet and tied the shoelaces. Fortunately, the shoe fitted well. Lu Jin's feet were large, and it had taken her quite some time to find a pair that fits him. It was still a little tight, but no doubt, better than nothing.

Lu Jin passed the last meat bun to her.

Yan Huan took it and gobbled it down.

Lu Jin took out the phone from Yan Huan's bag. He sighed. There was no signal.

Yan Huan knew that, which was why she didn't take out her phone earlier. It wouldn't be of any use. The signals in Serene City would be out for about 24 hours, and the rescue team will only be able to reach them through the debris a day later. That meant that the victims would need their help till then.

Lu Jin was a general, adept at commanding and maintaining order. Therefore, he had to preserve strength. No one was as important as Lu Jin in this situation. Many lives rode on his back.

Yan Huan hugged her bag tightly. It was pitch-black around her, almost as if the city had fallen into ruins. Everywhere smelled like dust, and she could hear the occasional caving in. At night, a few rounds of aftershocks kept everyone awake, weeping in fear and seeking warmth from each other.

"Don't be scared. We'll make it out," Lu Jin comforted Yan Huan. "Dad will bring you out of here."

"Mhm. I know," nodded Yan Huan, hugging her bag tighter. She reached inside and found a bar of chocolate, which she passed to Lu Yi.

Lu Yi understood. He took the chocolate and munched on it. He rarely ate sweet stuff, but things were different this time. He will bring Yan Huan out of this mess even if its the last thing he'll do. And he planned to make it out alive too.

He can't die. He can't leave Shuyun husbandless, or his son fatherless.

Right now, Ye Shuyun was hugging Lu Yi and bawling her eyes out. The Ye Family and Lei Family were both present.

"What do I do? What do I do?" asked Ye Shuyun. "Lu Jin's in Serene City when the earthquake hit, and the hotel he's staying at is right in the epicenter of the earthquake!"

Lu Yi wanted to console her, but he found himself mute. News about the earthquake was everywhere on TV; the destruction of roads had impeded rescue efforts, and the rescue team was doing what they could to fix the roads. But how could that be easy? Serene City was full of slopes and rocks. A person may be dying at every minute, and things were getting more dangerous as time elapsed.

Lu Jin was indeed at the epicenter of the earthquake. From the satellite pictures, the hotel had been reduced to rubble and debris. The fate of his father, Lu Jin, unknown.

On top of that...

Huanhuan. His Huanhuan was there too.

His hands tightened around the phone in his pocket. No incoming calls. Signal was out in Serene City. No news at all.

Suddenly, his phone rang. In the still atmosphere, they all turned their gazes at him. Lu Yi took out his phone. It was from Luo Lin.

"Hey, Lu Yi, it's me, Luo Lin! Did Yan Huan come home? Did she?" said Luo Lin anxiously. "Say something! Is she back? She was at the epicenter of the quake, you know?"

Lu Yi parted his cracked lips, but couldn't get his voice out of his throat.

"No, she hasn't come back."

Luo Lin hung up immediately. Lu Yi gripped his phone tightly without another word. Scary rumors about the disaster site from unknown sources kept emerging in the hours that followed.

According to reliable sources, the best actress of the year, Yan Huan, was also caught in the epicenter of the earthquake in Serene City.

"There is nothing we can do now but pray," said the news reporter.

Ye Shuyun's head buzzed. She trembled, trying to find something to say, but failed. As her lips parted, the world went black before her. She passed out.

She wasn't strong enough for this news, this blow, this ending.

Near them, Lu Qin and his mother enjoyed the show. As the others worried, they were filled with joy.

#### **Chapter 447: Saving People**

"It's good to be dead. It's unfair that we have no men at home but Ye Shuyun has a man. I can't wait to see how they will fare when Lu Jin is gone. It's a pity for Yan Huan anyway." Qin Xiaoyue looked at her fingers. "That lady is so good at making money and has great fame. If she was with you, then she can help you. It's such a waste."

"If it is not for my use, then it is better for her to be dead, isn't it?"

It seems like heaven is on their side.

Lu Qin lifted the tip of his mouth, revealing a cold smile.

In the distance, it seemed that the smell of dust had wafted through the air to the Sea City, leaving behind endless worries and torment.

People from afar, wondering if you all are still safe and sound.

People from afar, wondering if you all are still alive.

Lu Yi leaned against one side of the door, deadly staring at the television with a pair of eyes filled with blood veins. He did not sleep for a day, he could not sleep, and more like he dared not sleep.

He could not accept the fact of losing his father and his wife.

The last thing his Huan Huan told him was "I love you."

If they were all gone, tell him, what should he do? How was he going to live his life? No, he could not accept it. This was absolutely unacceptable to him.

Every second and minute ticked by, the torture was not only one's energy and spirit, but also the soul of a person. It was totally more unbearable and painful than being cut into pieces. There was not even a tiny bit of news about the earthquake at the Serene City. The only thing one could do was to wait till dawn when helicopters went over to find out if they were still there or they were still alive.

The sun finally rose from the east. It represents brightness and hope as the sun still rises, and the sun indeed rose. At one point in time, it was not known how many times the survivors had experienced the aftershocks. They would most likely think that the sun would never rise again, and the world would be in darkness forever. It could be the end of the world, and they could not survive any longer.

The moment the sun rose, those people who were in great despair, once again felt a tinge of hope in their heart as though this was the sun which could break through the fog and welcome the daylight.

Yan Huan fixed her gaze at the sunrise in the east. It was nice that it was not raining. If it was raining, it could definitely be a big trouble for the rescue team. She knew it would rain soon, but she hoped that it would rain later so that it enabled them to save more people.

Life cannot be determined through one's status. Everyone can only live once in this lifetime. If it is gone, then it's gone forever. There will never be a turning back.

Lu Jin raised to his feet, and at this moment, the sunlight landed on his face as though he was an ironman equipped with the iron-like courage of a soldier. It all emerged on his face, standing firm and never compromise.

"Everyone listens to me." He took a step backward; his voice was hoarse, but it was very shocking, having an inexplicable feeling of making people trust in him and an indescribable willingness to be his follower.

As now they did not have a backbone within them, they urgently required someone to tell them what to do, how to do, what they needed to do and what they could do.

"The males will tag along with me to save people while the females will stay here to take care of the casualties and children. Everyone please be patient. Now that it has not rained, we need to take this opportunity to save as many people as we can. Believe me, I am a soldier so I know that our country, our citizens and our army will never give up on us. They must be finding solutions to come for our rescue. Maybe there is a roadblock, road damage, or other related problems. But I always believe that they will find ways to bring us out of here, thus for now..." Lu Jin's throat was seriously dry; his voice was hoarse, but he did not surrender like how he was at this instant, a person who was still standing upright.

"Look, the ruins that he is pointing at around us have our family and our siblings buried inside. What we all can do now is not just waiting here, but to save others. We need to save them, and we must also believe that we are able to save them."

Everyone clenched their fist with their eyes welled up in tears. Yes, they needed to rescue others, and they must save them. They could not give up and never going to give up at all.

All the men stood up, even those who were injured also participated. Lu Jin had tears gathered in his eyes. Under such a situation, it was unbelievable that no one was touched. Before the sight of a catastrophe, everyone respected life.

Yan Huan tagged along as well.

"Huan Huan, you go over there." Lu Jin pointed to the place where the females were sitting down.

“Dad, I am also a soldier.” Yan Huan straightened her body. As a standard military asset, it was true that she was a soldier; she used to be a soldier. Even if she was a female, she was still a soldier. She wanted to become an army on the battlefield, on the front line, but not waiting here, doing nothing in particular.

Woman is not weak. Things that a man can accomplish, a woman can also do them well. One more person meant an extra help. Who knows maybe she could help to save more people, even if it was just one, but it was still a precious life after all.

She could not stop the catastrophe, but at least she could help to save more people. Some of the things she could not change them such as the people who died in the natural disaster. Although she was reborn herself, she could not be a savior.

Lu Jin patted her on the shoulder. “Don’t force it.”

“I know.” Yan Huan showed a smile; her face was covered in ashes and a little bit of scratches. She was an actress, a film celebrity. She should be looking gorgeous as usual, dressed in elegant outfit and wearing her high-end jewelry, and stepping on the red carpet like a noble vase, open for the public to appreciate and admire her, instead of her condition now. Her clothes were torn into pieces with her body covered with injuries. Her hair was messy and her face was dirty. But the person she was now could not be considered as unattractive for the beauty she revealed previously caught one’s attention while the one now caused others to be deeply moved by her actions.

Lu Jin led a group of men to look around for people who were still alive. They moved stones and carries those heavy floor slabs to pull out one after another person from the bottom.

When a person who was saved showed the sign of being alive and was still breathing, everyone felt like shedding their tears. However, they chose to keep their tears down their throats because they needed to rescue the next person, saving the life of another individual.

Yan Huan tagged along behind a group of men. When others lifted the stones, she did the same; when others carried the floor slabs, she followed, and when others dug the soil, she also used her hands to imitate their actions. At this juncture, she was not a film celebrity, and no one would actually realize she was Yan Huan. Everyone was racing against time to save more people because every second counted when it came to saving a life.

The preciousness of one’s life relied on a few seconds of time.

#### **Chapter 448: Search and Rescue**

Living meant hope; you can’t take away anything when you die. A broken house can be rebuilt, but a dead person is forever lost, along with what he owned.

Wearing the pair of shoes that didn’t fit too well, Lu Jin led a group of people on a search for survivors, saving the lives of many.

The dark sky foreshadowed rain—doubtlessly a hindrance to the rescue mission, yet the prospect of water gave the survivors hope.

They need water. And food.

Yan Huan's bag was empty by now, all the edibles in it long expended. They had been working on the rescue mission since the day before, a job that was extremely physically-demanding. They were all famished by now, and the lack of water wasn't helping.

Yan Huan licked her cracked lips. Her throat was parched. She needed a drink. Even river water would do. She had never been this thirsty throughout both of her lives.

She looked up, her eyes slightly dazed. Without water, she thought, we might not make it. The healthy ones might be fine in the absence of water, but what about the casualties? It hadn't been an easy effort to rescue them. Were they going to lose them to the water shortage?

Suddenly, she saw something falling from the sky. She looked up with difficulty—and realized she was right. Airdrops were falling from the sky.

The bags of items kept coming from the sky, dropping to vacant land so that no one would get injured. Yan Huan opened a bag and discovered food and water.

"We have food and water!" cheered the others in high spirits.

"Distribute the food and water, the wounded first. The ones who can still move, bear with it for now, you'll get your turn," commanded Lu Yi. He trusted that everyone knew the priorities at this dire moment.

Indeed, the healthy ones began to nurse the wounded after collecting food and water, feeding it to them in tiny sips while they themselves abstained.

Yan Huan took out a bottle of water from the bag and joined them, carefully feeding sprawling casualties. When she had hydrated all of them, she passed a bottle of water and a pack of cup noodles to Lu Jin.

They were beyond hungry and thirsty.

Throughout her two lives, Yan Huan had never found cup noodles this tasty. She hadn't had cup noodles in a long time, and it was so delicious right now that she was nearly brought to tears.

She gulped down a piece of dry cup noodles, but the hard bits scraped at her throat. She quickly drank a mouthful of water, but that didn't stop her from coughing violently.

Lu Jin held out his hand and patted her back gently.

"Slowly. It's all yours."

"I'm hungry," said Yan Huan, taking another bite out of the cup noodles. "This tastes so good, Dad. I'm going to host a cup noodles party when we get back! I'll stir-fry it, boil it, roast it, steam it, braise it...Nah, actually I think it'll taste best with hot water."

The thought of cup-noodles with hot water made her drool. At a moment like this, she wasn't thinking of feasts and delicacies, but a bowl of cup-noodles cooked with hot water.

"Alright. Mom will cook the noodles when we get back," said Lu Jin, taking a bite out of the cup noodles himself. Sure enough, it tasted amazing. He hasn't tasted such tasty cup noodles in years too.

He was well aware that the wonderful taste came from the hope of survival and the much-anticipated food, not the cup noodles itself.

Not a single person slacked off when they were done eating. Everyone got up and continued searching for survivors; the people buried down there could be their kins, their parents, their children, or their cousins and siblings.

Soon, another round of airdrops came. Bottom line, they had food and water now. However, rain fell at around noon, followed by a minor aftershock.

Yan Huan began propping up the tents she found in the airdrops for the young, old, and wounded.

They had saved even more people than what they expected, and the tents filled up fast, leaving more to combat the elements.

Yan Huan was thoroughly drenched in the cold rain of the season. She was placing her hand on her forehead when she saw Lu Jin approaching with an apologetic look.

Yan Huan gave him a big grin to show that she's fine. She was young, and she could endure more than this.

Suddenly, something caught her eye. She ran into the rain, pulling out a waterproof cloth from the ground. If they hung this up, it could shelter more people from the rain. The others soon caught on and aided her in dragging out the enormous piece of waterproof cloth.

A few people hung the cloth up and secured it in place. The large and thick cloth sheltered the people below it from the heavy rain, but the drenched ones could do nothing but endure in their sodden clothes.

And the rain kept falling.

"Let's continue searching. We can't just stay here forever," said Lu Jin. Many casualties were waiting for their aid—they couldn't just stay here and hope for something to happen.

Lu Jin led another group off to search for more survivors. Yan Huan joined them. She couldn't sit around either.

The incessant rain made everyone's heart leaden, each drop hitting like an icicle.

"Survivor here!" shouted a person frantically.

Lu Jin went to him and saw a man with his leg pinned down by a stone slab.

A few men extricated him with sticks and similar objects, but the man's leg... Yan Huan turned away. She couldn't look. The man's leg was a bloody mess. Even if he lived, an amputation awaited him. His leg was broken, and the ground was bestrewn with pieces of his flesh. Even his bones were visible.

It was a terrible sight.

Yan Huan looked up, allowing the rain to brush across her face. This was the first time she realized how helpless she was before the wrath of nature. She cried, her tears mingling with the rain as they rolled off her cheeks.

## Chapter 449: Digging Out A Familiar Person

“Help me, help me...”

At this time, a faint cry echoed in her ears. This voice seemed to be transmitted from the bottom of a pile of ruins not so far away.

Yan Huan ran over following the origin of the sound. “Hey, are you there?”

Yan Huan knocked on the rocks.

“Help me, help, help me...” It was the same voice again, for sure it was the right direction.

Here was another victim.

“Come, come, help” Yan Huan shouted for help while her hand carefully moved the bricks and debris at the top.

“Help...” This person screamed again, obviously revealing a sobbing tone.

“Don’t hurry, don’t move. We will save you right away.” Yan Huan listened to the voice, not knowing why but she felt like crying, worrying about the condition of that person. She recalled the bloody and vague scene of the man who broke his legs and the image of the two white leg bones.

“What happened?” Lu Jin brought a group of people over. It was raining cats and dogs at the moment as though it dropped straight from the head, so when he opened his mouth, the rain droplets would fall into his mouth.

“Someone is at the bottom, Dad.”

Yan Huan pointed downward; her hands did not stop moving the rocks to the side.

Lu Jin walked over, knocking on the rocks. “The person inside, are you still alive?” He questioned loudly.

“Alive, alive, I am still alive. Quick—save me. I don’t want to die...” The whining sound caused Lu Jin to feel a surge of irritation.

“Save some energy, don’t cry. Are you hurt anywhere? How’s your condition now?”

“Yes, I have some injuries. My leg bones seem to be fractured. I am stuck in a floor slab.” The person inside was still crying. It was obviously a grown man, but still acted like a woman from the way he cried. For Lu Jin, he felt annoyed having to deal with guys like him, especially a brat like Ye Xinyu who loved to cry since young and was born with a facial features similar to that of a female. Each time when he saw him, he had to prevent himself from punching Ye Xinyu on his face.

When others heard of this, perhaps they would say it was fortunate of them to find a person buried inside and was still alive, as it was not known how many people would be discovered alive after all.

Those people who were dug out by them from the ruins were mostly hurt with either severe or minor injuries. Human’s body is fragile. Most casualties here had either fractured bones or missing limbs.

Lu Jin checked around to confirm the location.

Then, they started to move the rocks above. The physical strength of a few men was indeed favorable as they could move things swiftly. Yan Huan who was standing by the side continuously looking inside, and it seemed like she saw a person.

Finally, once the debris on top were cleared off and left behind a hole, the person inside stretched out one of his hands, "Pull me out, quickly pull me out, Waah, dad, grandpa, I am sorry for everything..."

"Shut up!"

The corner of Lu Jin's eyes lifted. He had a strong urge to knock this person out with a rock as now did not seem like the right time for someone to utter dreadful cries and screams. They still had to spare some time to save others.

Lu Jin and the others dragged that person out. This person's hair was long and drenched; his face was covered with a layer of soil, and due to the rain, it turned into a pile of mud. His clothes were in tatters, and some parts were ripped or torn apart. One leg was pulled up; and it must be broken. However, he was lucky enough for not ending up like the other person, whose flesh on the leg had almost dropped off completely.

The face of the man lying on the ground could not be seen clearly. He was still hugging his legs, but he had stopped crying. If he dared to cry anymore, Yan Huan had a feeling that Lu Jin would throw a brick at him right away.

"Here is another one." Someone was shouting at a short distance. Lu Jin rushed over with a bunch of people for a rescue.

Yan Huan walked over and squatted down before the man. "Can you walk? I can help you to the other side to take shelter from the rain."

"I can walk by myself. Thank you." The man said as he wiped off the mud on his face. The rain was heavy enough to clean the mud stain on his face, revealing his actual skin tone.

Yan Huan jumped forward all of a sudden, causing the man to be taken aback.

"What are you doing?" He hugged his chest as though Yan Huan was a perverted woman approaching him from somewhere. Yan Huan extended her hand to wipe off the mud on the man's face directly.

"Why are you here, Ye Xinyu?"

As Lu Jin who was not far away heard this name, he immediately turned around and walked back toward them. Looking at the person he rescued like pulling out a carrot just now, he gave him a real slap in the face accompanied with a snapping sound.

"Why are you here, Ye Xinyu? Aren't you studying overseas?"

Ye Xinyu was indeed crying this time, "Big Uncle..."

He nearly could not return anymore, so how could he not slap him? He did not want to be here, but he was now here. He was back for a trip with his friends, but who knew that it would be an earthquake? Then, they all ran outside, however, they were not sure who made it out safely. He only knew that he was stuck here with a broken leg and everything was perfect, not missing or broken.

However, who could tell him why his Big Uncle was here? He would be dead this time, completely doomed.

“You little brat, I will deal with you later.”

Lu Jin raised to his feet, and moved forward with big steps. He needed to rescue others.

“Cousin-in-law.”

Ye Xinyu obviously could recognize Yan Huan by now. When he saw Yan Huan, he felt scarier than meeting Lu Jin. Yan Huan was not frightening but Lu Yi was terrifying. Now his Big Uncle and cousin-in-law were here, his cousin brother must not be far away.

“Rest assured, he’s not here.”

Yan Huan walked toward Ye Xinyu to help him up, “I will carry you to take shelter from the rain, and then provide treatment for your leg.”

Ye Xinyu used all his might to stand up, but found it hard to move forward step by step. He was obviously in a lot of pain, but he clenched his teeth and forcefully dragged his broken leg. This made him look like a family member from the Ye family, appearing like a man, a grown-up.

Yan Huan carried him to the bottom of a big tarp. Although the rooftop was covered, the ground was wet and their clothes were also drenched, so even if they sat on the ground, it would not be very comfortable.

Ye Xinyu was painful until his face was twisted with pain. His forehead was dripping with cold sweat. He could release cold sweat in such a cold weather proved that he must be in real pain which was intensely painful.

Yan Huan was the youngest in the family, and Yi Ling had always tolerated her. Now that she was married to the Lu Family, the entire family treated her well, and even Lu Yi pampered her like a child.

#### **Chapter 450: Help Is Here**

To her, Ye Xinyu who was four years younger was like a brother. If she had a brother, she thought, he would be exactly like Ye Xinyu—mischievous, and often beaten by the family that doted him. They beat him for they loved him so much, and could not bear the thought of him going on the wrong path. Still, he was pretty thick-skinned and the beatings and counseling hardly got through him.

She took out a pack of cup noodles and water from a bag beside her, walked over to Ye Xinyu, and squat down.

“Eat this.”

“Thank you, cousin-in-law,” said Ye Xinyu, taking the cup noodles from her hand. With every bite, he drank a mouthful of water, and soon he was about to finish both.

He had really been starving. Looking back, it has almost been a day and a night since the earthquake.

“Thanks so much, sister,” said Ye Xinyu ingratiatingly. He was calling sister instead of cousin-in-law, and it seemed almost as if he had forgotten about his cousin.

He was a sorry sight, covered in mud, as he gulped down the cup noodles, and when he was done he stared at Yan Huan with puppy eyes, just like Little Bean when it makes a mistake.

It was hard not to pity him.

“Don’t worry, I’ll stop your brother if he tries to rough you up,” said Yan Huan, patting him on the shoulders.

“Thank you, sister,” said Ye Xinyu, munching on the cup noodles again. Yet tears rolled down his cheeks beneath the waterproof cloth—not out of pain, but out of sorrow. Sorrow for the missing, sorrow for his classmates whose fates remained unknown. A living person could become a body at the tick of a clock.

Yan Huan patted his shoulders again as a voiceless comfort.

She stood up, turned around, and walked into the rain again. Rain blustered against her, but the cold made her more alert than ever. Coming to Serene City, saving Lu Jin, saving the intrepid Ye Xinyu. It was the best thing she had done during this life. Ye Xinyu was the only child and heir of the Ye Family, and if he was dead, nothing would have been different, would it? It would still be over for the Ye Family.

She joined the rescue party and aided their efforts. The rain was getting smaller, and they managed to save ten more, but they were seeing more bodies as they went on. Yan Huan knew many of the bodies they were seeing now belonged to people that would be dearly missed by others for the rest of their lives.

A low rumbling came from the sky, not from a clap of thunder, but from a helicopter. She looked up to see a descending helicopter, from which came many professional soldiers and doctors. Yan Huan heaved a sigh of relief. Thank god there were doctors now. The casualties were in dire need of medical attention.

The last thing she wanted was for the casualties they painstakingly saved to lose their life to untended wounds.

When the people came out of the helicopter and saw the tents and makeshift shelters and those beneath it and the dozen covered in mud and blood while digging for survivors, they all shed tears.

They were saving each other, yes, they were. Without their first-aid, many of the casualties now would have been dead.

When they opened the tent, children and elderly crawled out by dozens. The only men in there were casualties, and the healthy men were all out there pushing their limits to save another life.

A camera was recording this scene, not for sensation, but to relay live-information of the disaster zone to the people of the nation who might have their kins or friends in this hellhole.

The men covered in mud turned around once again. They were silent as they searched for more survivors. The soldiers joined them in their efforts. At this moment, the entire nation’s heart was as one.

That was when a frail woman emerged with a person on her back. The person was clearly injured, blood trickling down his legs into the rain puddles before getting washed away. They were both covered in mud and dust, so it was hard to see their faces clearly. However, the person who had offered her back was definitely a woman.

The camera recorded the entire scene.

Once Yan Huan put the man down, the medical staff took him into their hands. She had just saved him, dug him up with her own hands, a man whose back had been crushed into a bloody mess. Thankfully, it seemed like he was going to pull through. She wiped her face with her sleeves.

However, the more she wiped, the dirtier her face became. She stood up, ready to head out again. She never kept count of how many she saved—the only thing on her mind was that she had to keep at it. If she stopped, someone might die.

“Hello, Miss,” said a man as he walked towards her. “Can I interview you? It won’t take long. I’m very sorry to interrupt your efforts, but the nation needs to know of the situation here.” His voice was often blocked off by the lump in his throat as he spoke.

Yan Huan stopped and turned. The camera captured her dirty face, but in that face, people saw the cleanest form of beauty.

The interviewing reporter paused.

“Are you...Yan Huan?” he stammered.

“Yes, I am,” said Yan Huan, pushing her hair behind her ears. She took a glance at her clothes that were soaked in mud. “Sorry to let everyone see me like this.”

“No, you are the most beautiful actress I have ever seen,” said the reporter, breaking into a smile and fighting back tears.

“Can you tell us more about...here...” his voice broke off as emotions overwhelmed him.

Yan Huan looked up at the hoary sky, felt the rush of air and the imminent heavy rain.

“The earthquake happened yesterday at 4 pm. When the survivors had banded together, my grandfather General Lu, Lu Jin, organized us and issued orders. When he ran out, he wasn’t even wearing shoes. On bare feet, he saved one person after another.”

“After that, we ran out of food and water, but the aftershocks kept coming. The first night was rough. When morning came, we went out to search for more survivors. Every single one of us capable of moving went. Then came the airdrops, which saved us from the fate of starvation and freezing. Those people we saved,” she pointed to the casualties being rescued by doctors. “They will live on. And that brings us the greatest joy imaginable.”

The reporter’s lips parted to ask more, but nothing came out.