Read Novel My Wife Is A Superstar Chapter 641

Chapter 641 Enemy Of My Enemy

It was already ten in the morning when Nan Chen woke up. It had been a while since he had slept so deeply to rise at that hour.

He was an early riser even if he stayed up late to work overtime as he usually did, and rarely did he have the opportunity to sleep in.

There had been too much to do of late, and he was physically and mentally exhausted. It was blissful to have a good night's sleep once he could relax.

After all, Nan Chen was only mortal who required sleep. Upon waking up, he felt refreshed. Then, after washing up, he hobbled over to the courtyard with his cane and saw his grandfather practicing Tai Chi.

Nan Chen no longer lived in the villa in Red Maple City since it had been given to Bai Hua and the others. Instead, he took up temporary residence at Commoner Residence.

When Ning Ran and the children returned, they would move to a more luxurious and spacious villa.

Nan Chen felt the blow of impermanence more strongly after the catastrophe and decided to spend more time with his grandfather.

Because of the condition of his legs, Nan Chen could not do strenuous exercises.

He could only manage basic stretches to relax his body while holding on to the tree in the yard for support.

With a final flourish, Nan Zhengde brought his fists down and took the towel handed by Chai Hua. "Let's have breakfast."

As Nan Chen had been asleep, breakfast time had long passed.

Having expected his grandson to be starving upon waking up, Nan Zhengde had the kitchen prepare lunch. The former had breakfast and lunch as a single meal.

"Do you not have plans today?" Nan Zhengde asked with concern. "Take the time to rest. It had been a trying period. Put aside the company's affairs for now. You're too tense."

"Yes, Grandpa. I'm not going anywhere today. I'll just keep you company while you write and read, all right?" Nan Chen offered with a grin.

Nan Zhengde laughed. "Sure, if you don't mind getting bored. I've read a few books recently, and I would enjoy sharing my thoughts with you."

"I look forward to a good lesson from you, Grandpa," Nan Chen replied. "It's been a while since we've had a chat."

Those words were not merely of flattery. Nan Chen had always viewed his grandfather's mind as a treasure trove from which he could learn much.

The experience and wisdom his grandfather had accumulated over the decades in the business world could not be obtained even from the best business schools.

The most valuable part of his experience was not just learning how to succeed but also how to remain steadfast in the face of adversity.

Though success was critical, the premise of success was preservation. Survival.

Surviving was the most crucial thing in the world. It was the premise and foundation of everything one strove for, which was why one dedicated ninety percent of their behavior over their lifetime toward that end.

Elderly people understood the game of survival better than anyone.

"Did Chai Hua tell you about Ouyang Duo?" Nan Zhengde asked.

Nan Chen nodded as he took a sip of soup. "He told me early yesterday morning."

"What do you think?"

"There must have been somebody helping him. He wouldn't have been able to escape otherwise," Nan Chen mused. "It was a premeditated escape plan, and I think Ouyang Duo would escape successfully."

Nan Zhengde nodded. "Yes, I think so—"

"Bad news. Ouyang Duo has escaped!" Nan Xing dashed in before Nan Zhengde could finish speaking.

"What's with all the yelling?" Nan Zhengde scolded. "We knew about it long ago. Have you only just heard?"

"How are you still so calm after finding out?" Nan Xing cried, panicked. "We must find a way to help the police catch him."

"No," Nan Zhengde said. "Let him go."

Nan Chen was bewildered. "Why? Are we just going to let him get off scot-free?"

"With the criminal charges against him, Ouyang Qi will undoubtedly find him the best lawyer if he goes to trial," Nan Chen said. "He will serve a few years and be released in the blink of an eye. Now that he's on the run, he's become a fugitive and has added a new charge to his crimes. He would not dare appear publicly in China for at least ten years, which is worse than going to prison. Those who helped him escape appeared to be saving him but had, in fact, sabotaged him by costing him the chance to redeem himself."

Nan Zhengde laughed. "Yes! Just as I thought. You should learn a thing or two from your brother, Xing. You can't see things clearly as he does!"

Nan Xing thought there was some truth to the reprimand, but that did not stop him from feeling upset. "I didn't manage to think carefully about it. I could have figured it out if I did."

Nan Zhengde turned to his grandson. "Then think about this. Who helped Ouyang Duo escape?"

"What's there to think about?" Nan Xing said impatiently. "It has to be his subordinates or family members. My money is on Ouyang Qi."

"Most definitely not," said Nan Zhengde shortly.

Nan Xing was puzzled. "Why not? It's only natural for the son to rescue the father. Why wouldn't Ouyang Qi do that?"

"Ouyang Qi came to the Nan residence and begged us to let Ouyang Duo go, demonstrating his capacity for rational thought. He knows he cannot take his father away by force, which would only do more harm than good. Even if he did manage to break Ouyang Duo out, Ouyang Duo would not be able to clear his name from the shadows.

"The best-case scenario would be to send Ouyang Duo to a country with no extradition treaty with China. At best, he would lead a slightly more comfortable life than in prison, but at the price of never returning within this lifetime. Ouyang Qi must have considered all that since he is no fool, and he would not put his father in a more significant predicament than he is already in. So he was not the one who rescued Ouyang Duo."

Nan Xing tilted his head to the side and mulled it over before nodding.

Although he was incapable of considering some things, it did not mean he could not follow.

"Who could it be if not Ouyang Qi?" Nan Xing wondered. "What is their purpose in helping Ouyang Duo escape?"

"We don't know who it is," Nan Zhengde agreed, "but hasn't the purpose already been stated? Weren't you listening carefully?"

"I was, but you didn't mention that." Nan Xing did not understand.

"Did we not mention that the person only appears to be rescuing Ouyang Duo?" Nan Chen chimed in. "Since he wasn't interested in rescuing him, the purpose is obvious."

Nan Xing appeared to have understood at last. "So, the person who rescued Ouyang Duo was actually sabotaging him? He prevented Ouyang Duo from being processed by the book of spending a few years in prison and making a comeback after getting out."

"Yes, exactly that."

"If that's the case, isn't the person who rescued Ouyang Duo our ally?" Nan Xing exclaimed. "Is there not a saying that the enemy of my enemy is my friend?"

"That's not necessarily the case, but I know who this person is," Nan Chen said. "At least, I know he must be related to this matter."

Nan Zhengde immediately grasped Nan Chen's meaning. "Are you referring to the person who bought Sunshine Corporation shares in bulk?"

"Yes. They were bought up as quickly as we could dump them last night. The buyer obviously intends to hold on to them for the long haul. If he wanted controlling rights in Sunshine Corporation, he would naturally not give Ouyang Duo a chance to recover. With Ouyang Duo put away, only Ouyang Qi and Ouyang Qing's elder sister and Feng Jialing are left in the Ouyang family.

"Ouyang Qi, the Nine-Fingered Prince, is well-known for his proclivities in food, drink, and play, and not for his business acumen. With her husband in prison, it is unlikely that Feng Jialing would take over, as she has no experience in running a company. The only one left would be Ouyang Qing's sister, who rarely appears in public. In other words, the chances of the Ouyang family making a comeback are minuscule if Ouyang Duo cannot recover. That is why the mystery man helped Ouyang Duo escape."

Nan Chen explained things so well that Nan Xing understood them perfectly.

Read Novel My Wife Is A Superstar Chapter 642

Chapter 642 No Good Intentions

"Somebody wants to take over Sunshine Corporation?" Nan Xing exclaimed. "Ouyang Duo failed to take over Nanshi Corporation, and his own company is taken instead?"

"Ouyang Duo set his sights on Nanshi Corporation, and others can have theirs on Sunshine Corporation," Nan Zhengde postulated. "This is normal. Perhaps they have been eyeing them for a long time and were merely waiting for the right moment. Ouyang Duo's rash and failed attack on Nanshi Corporation has given them the perfect opportunity to do so. This is karma at its finest."

"In that case, why don't we take advantage of the situation and perform a hostile takeover of Sunshine Corporation?" Nan Xing suggested. "Ouyang Duo intended to take over Nanshi Corporation, didn't he? Since we have now defeated him, why don't we press home our advantage?"

Nan Zhengde exchanged a glance with Nan Chen before motioning for the latter to explain.

"Have you heard of Coke and Pepsi?" Nan Chen asked his brother.

"Of course I have. How can I not know about the world's two famous carbonated beverage companies? Do I look that stupid?" Nan Xing was displeased.

"There was once an executive of Coke who tried to sell Pepsi a huge trade secret that was enough to threaten Coke's position. However, Pepsi disclosed the matter to Coke, implying to its competitors that there was something wrong with them internally. The thing is, Pepsi is Coke's biggest competitor. Do you know why Pepsi did that?"

Nan Xing shook his head. "I don't."

"Pepsi's top management believed that it was because of the existence of competitors that filled them with a sense of crisis. That's why the company has been going strong for a hundred years. If their only competitor collapsed, they alone would dominate the market. Without a competitor, they would have no sense of crisis and slowly regressed."

Nan Xing understood. "Oh, so it's equivalent to the catfish effect."

"That's right. Grandpa often told me this story before I became CEO, and I still remember it. Because of Ouyang Duo's watchful eyes, I was always filled with that sense of crisis, and that's why Nanshi Corporation has maintained steady growth. Nanshi Corporation would have no more rivals in the province if I took the opportunity to take over Sunshine Corporation. Who would I compete with then?

"Moreover, Sunshine Corporation is immense. It has undergone a series of blind expansions in recent years and contains many hidden dangers. If I take over, it may not help Nanshi Corporation improve but will instead be a liability. Being unprepared for

mergers and acquisitions is like forcibly swallowing a piece of half-cooked food. Not only can it not be digested, but it will also damage your body.

"Also, if I take the opportunity to take over Sunshine Corporation, how am I different from Ouyang Duo? Others will not think it's due to my wolfish ambition like his. They'll say it's a plan I've laid out long ago. Though I could short-sell Sunshine Corporation and make a fortune just to prove that I can take them, I don't want to do that."

Nan Xing completely understood after his brother finished. However, another question crossed his mind.

"I'm wondering about the person who's trying to take over Sunshine Corporation. Could he have bitten off more than he could chew?"

"This person must not be monopolizing but is instead carving up Sunshine Corporation with foreign capital. Or perhaps he doesn't want the controlling right but simply intends to bottom-fish. If he manages to buy them for a cheaper price and help Sunshine Corporation regain its stability, he will still make a fortune when the stock price rebounds later.

"Another possibility is that his own company needs to lay out some plans in the banking industry and have Sunshine Corporation mainly focus on them. Holding shares in Sunshine Corporation will complete his strategic layout, so he bought a large number of shares. Whatever his reasons are, this man is a master and our future competitor."

"Then we have to find out who he is as soon as possible," Nan Xing said anxiously. "Otherwise, how can we be on our guard against him?"

Nan Chen nodded. "This person should show himself soon."

"All right, enough work talk. Let's finish up our meal," Feng Wan reprimanded her husband. "That's all you do, Darling. Chen seldom comes home for a meal. Can't you talk less about work?"

Nan Zhengde laughed. "You can't blame me for this! They were talking about it among themselves. How is that my fault?"

The family chatted and laughed as they ate. It had been a long time since they had been so at ease.

Suddenly, Nan Chen's phone vibrated. Jiang Zhe was calling.

Nan Chen picked up. "What's the matter?"

"I found out about the offshore company that had been buying Sunshine Corporation shares en masse, Mr. Chen," Jiang Zhe reported. "One of the major shareholders is from the province, and his name is Rong Yi."

"Rong Yi? The Rong Yi we know?" Nan Chen could not believe his ears.

"That's right," Jiang Zhe confirmed. "It is the young pianist Rong Yi, the one who doesn't care about the family business and devotes himself only to art."

"Are you sure?" Nan Chen was still in disbelief.

"I am sure. What's more, somebody photographed Rong Yi in Flower City purchasing Sunshine Corporation's building to house Prosperity Holdings in the city."

"Is Sunshine Corporation's office building in Flower City that old building, Century Plaza?"

"Yes, Mr. Chen, it is indeed that old building. However, Prosperity Holdings bought it at a very high price."

"All right, I got it." Nan Chen hung up the phone and sank deep in thought.

He did not expect the mystery man to be Rong Yi, of all people.

Rong Yi was a well-known young pianist in China who had won many international awards.

The man was handsome and elegant like a prince. He was a rare superstar in the piano world.

However, those who knew the truth were also aware that Rong Yi was a wealthy heir and that his family was the Rong family behind Prosperity Holdings.

Rong Yi, however, had never cared to participate in his family business. He had lived abroad for many years to devote himself to art and had outstanding achievements in that field.

If Jiang Zhe had not discovered that he was a shareholder in that offshore company, Nan Chen would never have imagined the mysterious mastermind to be a musician.

It seems that he is not only a master in the music world but also in the financial world. Moreover, he is a master who knows how to conceal himself.

Nan Zhengde and Nan Xing saw that Nan Chen was preoccupied, so they did not bother him.

Jerking himself out of his reverie, Nan Chen asked Nan Zhengde abruptly, "Does that old Century Plaza have anything to do with the Rong family in the past?"

"Why are you asking this all of a sudden? Century Plaza is not as old as it was over twenty years ago but is a landmark building in Flower City. Back then, it was the headquarters of Prosperity Holdings. Later, Prosperity Holdings fought us many times and lost Flower City. The building seemed to be mortgaged to some company and later became the office of Sunshine Corporation in Flower City."

"That makes sense," Nan Chen said thoughtfully. "Prosperity Holdings bought back that old building to be their office in Flower City."

"Were they also the ones who bought Sunshine Corporation?" Nan Zhengde exclaimed in surprise.

Nan Chen nodded. "Yes. It turns out that they are returning to Flower City with no good intentions this time!"

Read Novel My Wife Is A Superstar Chapter 643

Chapter 643 Are You Crazy

In Livingsfill, Ning Ran finally got a break. The sun shone brightly as she reclined on a lounge chair in the yard, reading her script.

The production team was filming at Livingsfill at the moment, but Ning Ran didn't return to work immediately. Instead, she took a break for a few days to recover.

Cheng Xiangyun left the film site and immediately returned to update Ning Ran about the latest happenings in the production team. Ning Ran figured she could still get another day off from Cheng Xiangyun's report.

Ning Ran leaned back against the seat and closed her eyes, feeling the warmth of the sun on her skin and the peacefulness of the moment.

Living safely and peacefully is the happiest life one can have.

"Cheng, the losses will be around hundreds of thousands per day if I delay the filming, right?"

"Yep, it's around that amount. Don't worry about it, though, since your Sir Chen is holding the fort. Even if the losses are millions per day, it's still no biggie." Cheng Xiangyun chuckled.

"What do you mean by my Sir Chen? He's not mine. We don't know who he belongs to," Ning Ran denied.

"What's wrong? Why are you acting cold and denying it? Both of you went through hell and back, so I thought you guys should have already warmed up to each other. Oh right! How did you guys escape? Why aren't you willing to tell us the specifics?"

Cheng Xiangyun had always been a gossiper. There was no way she would drop such a juicy topic.

"Nan Chen won't let me," Ning Ran answered truthfully.

"Why? Why is he asking you to stay silent about it? Of course, you can't tell others. That's because they're outsiders, but I'm different. I, on the other hand, am your friend, so tell me. I promise you this stays between us. It's the perfect time to tell me now since there's no one around. No one will know," Cheng Xiangyun urged softly.

It wasn't like Ning Ran didn't believe in Cheng Xiangyun, but she thought that there must be a reason why Nan Chen wanted her to keep it a secret.

However, Cheng Xiangyun was her best friend. What kind of best friend was she if she kept a secret from her?

"I'll tell you the gist of it, but don't ask for the details, especially the ones that concern the Nan family," Ning Ran warned.

Cheng Xiangyun agreed instantly, "Sure! Tell me already!"

"It was mainly Nan Chen taking advantage of the boatman's greed. The boatman asked the Nan family to give him a hundred thousand and, during that process, exposed his personal information. Nan Chen then used that as a threat to have them send us back to Gerton's border, and that was where we got to shore. We were lucky after that since we met a cultured family and spent the night there. The couple was a pair of high school teachers. After hearing about our encounter, they searched the web for Nanshi Corporation and confirmed our identity. However, we didn't dare to contact any of the Nan family members impulsively for fear of the mole within the Nan family. Nan Chen worried we would expose our whereabouts if we got ahold of the Nan family. Hence Nan Chen borrowed the teacher's computer and sent an email to Zheng Lunlun, then had Zheng Lunlun inform the Nan family of our hiding spot. Things were straightforward after that. Under the Nan family's coordination, Nan Chen secretly returned to Flower City while I came to Livingsfill to meet up with you."

Cheng Xiangyun listened with relish. "Woah, that's so exciting! It's like you're part of a TV show! An incident like this can actually happen in reality?"

Ning Ran rolled her eyes at her. "We almost died, yet you think that's exciting? You don't feel the same way we do because you didn't experience it yourself. Why don't you give it a try?"

"I want to, but I'm not that lucky. Oh my goodness! Being stuck on an island with a handsome and rich guy is just so romantic! Dying would be worth it if I could have one chance like that!" Cheng Xiangyun exclaimed.

"Please leave. What is more important than life in this world? We were hanging onto life by a thread. Do you even understand what that entails?"

Ning Ran felt fear pumping through her as she recalled her precarious situation a few days ago.

"Well, one is bound for good fortune after surviving a great catastrophe. You guys survived all that, so you're fine. I see now. Sir Chen asked you not to say anything because he is worried it would reveal to the public that there is a mole in the Nan family. It's not even an assumption at this point. The fact that something like that still happened despite the tight security in the Nan residence merely showed that someone had knowledge of your whereabouts and planned everything accordingly. That was how the mole got you guys to fall for it. Who do you think is the mole within the Nan family?"

Ning Ran refused to answer that question. "Hold it. This is not a topic that you and I should discuss. I, as a victim, don't even dare to offer any opinion on this matter, much less you, an outsider. Do you know how sensitive this subject is?"

"You're right. Since the Nan family are a part of high society, even a tiny issue is considered a serious matter to them. We shouldn't even be talking about it, but I'm curious. There must be someone on your mind. Who do you think it is?" Cheng Xiangyun guestioned.

"I have no idea, and even if I do, I won't say it aloud without any proof. The Nan family will find out the truth soon, so an outsider like me doesn't have to be worried on their behalf."

After spending time with Nan Chen, Ning Ran learned to be cautious.

Despite Ning Ran having put a full stop to the conversation, Cheng Xiangyun still wasn't satisfied with the lack of answers. She was displeased but couldn't do anything about it.

"One more thing. I got acquainted with an incredible person, along with two incredible children," Cheng Xiangyun said with a mysterious tone.

"Incredible children? There are children more incredible than my Dabao and Erbao?" Ning Ran asked jokingly.

"They're almost the same. They're incredible because they're slightly similar to Erbao. Sometimes, I even wonder if Sir Chen has another pair of female twins running around outside—"

Cheng Xiangyun suddenly paused midsentence.

However, it was already too late. Ning Ran leaped to her feet. "What did you say?"

"I'm just blabbering. Don't overreact. It's scary," Cheng Xiangyun said with worry in her voice.

"Nan Chen has another pair of daughters running around freely outside? He's doing pretty well, huh? Leaving his legacy everywhere he goes, no?" Ning Ran hissed.

"Hey, don't simply speculate without any proof. Didn't I say it was only a joke? It's just a joke!"

"Then what exactly happened?"

"Remember how the lady boss of the inn wasn't around before? She suddenly returned one day, and she was beautiful. She was truly beautiful! Even from a woman's perspective, she's the kind that has a good figure, a beautiful face, and an excellent temperament. I think her temperament is even better than yours."

Ning Ran gave her the stink eye. "Why are you comparing me to her? I'm special! You don't have to put me and her together for comparison!"

"Fine. You're special but listen to me. She also has a pair of twins. The only difference is the twins are girls. The girls take after her maiden name. One is Lu Yunxue, and the other is Lu Yunbing. They're pretty as a doll and don't lose to Erbao or Dabao in terms of appearances."

"You're comparing my children with other children? Are you crazy? Will it kill you if you don't compare? Can we even have a proper conversation?"

Ning Ran was mostly mad because Cheng Xiangyun said the twin girls might be Nan Chen's children earlier.

"Don't scold me, okay? What? We can't even talk now?" Cheng Xiangyun started to get angry too.

"You're the one asking to be scolded. Stop comparing my children and me with other people. It's irritating!"

Read Novel My Wife Is A Superstar Chapter 644

Chapter 644 Do Not Play The Victim

Erbao came out at that time and ran toward Ning Ran.

"What are you guys talking about, Mommy?" the girl asked, hugging and rubbing her head against her mother.

"I'm talking to Aunt Xiang here. Why don't you go there and play first?"

"When is Daddy coming to see us?"

"Don't worry. He'll be here after he's done with work. Go on. Go play."

"We're meeting Lu Yunxue later for dinner, Aunt Xiang. Don't forget about that," Erbao reminded as she looked at Cheng Xiangyun.

"I remember, you little greedy cat. We still have a lot of time before dinner. Are you thinking about dinner already?" Cheng Xiangyun replied with a laugh.

"What? Are you guys meeting someone for dinner? Why didn't you tell me?" Ning Ran asked.

"Well, I'm telling you now. Do you remember Lu Jingyuan? She's the one who brought the Erbao to see Dr. Ding."

"Right, you mentioned her. I remember you had high praises for her. Actually, I should buy her something to thank her for bringing Erbao to the doctor, but what should I get for her?" Ning Ran asked with a frown.

"I don't think she would want anything. She's not into socializing. Besides, she lacks nothing."

"It seems that you're really fond of her. I can't wait to see her."

"I'm sure you'll like her too. She's an extremely nice person. She's pretty, frank, and modest. It's easy getting along with her. She's our type."

"Did you say she has twin girls who look like Erbao?"

"Well, just a bit. They are not that similar."

"Is she a single mother too?"

"Yes. She's from the capital but moved to Livingsfill with the two children. This inn belongs to her."

Ning Ran looked around the place. The inn was strategically located beside the mountain and the river, and the view was splendid, so it went without saying that the accommodation was expensive. In fact, the price exceeded that of some rated hotels.

Since the inn took up a vast area, the owner must have many connections to gain approval from the government to build an architecture like that.

Even after a project was approved, building everything from scratch would still require a lot of investment.

Besides, its state-of-the-art facilities showed that constructing that inn cost tens of millions.

Judging from how the inn looked, Ning Ran was convinced that Cheng Xiangyun was right. Lu Jingyuan lacked nothing.

To be precise, the owner did not even need to work. The sole profit from this inn would be enough to provide a comfortable living for the whole family.

Since Nan Chen had other people book this inn for that trip, Ning Ran had no idea if Nan Chen had explicitly chosen this place for their accommodation.

Well, if he did, then there must be something going on between the inn owner and Nan Chen. It'd better not be the case because I would be deeply offended.

The more Ning Ran thought about it, the more she felt something was wrong. She took out her phone and called Nan Chen.

As Nan Chen was resting, he picked up almost immediately. "What is it?" He sounded sluggish.

"Did you get your men to book this inn for us?" Ning Ran asked.

"Yes. What about it? Is it not good enough?"

"Oh, no. We're having a good time here. Tell me. Did you book this place so you can get a jolly good time too?" Ning Ran questioned.

"Of course. I want to have a good time there too. Don't tell me you prefer staying in a shady place," Nan Chen teased.

"Do you know the owner of this inn?"

"The owner? I don't even know the owner. Qiao Zhan's the one who made the booking. What's going on? What happened?"

"Do you really not know her?" Ning Ran interrogated again.

"I really don't. What's going on? Is there something wrong with the place? Is it not safe? It cannot be. Qiao Zhan should have made sure the place was safe before asking his men to book it. You can just move to another place if you don't like it."

"So, you didn't book this place yourself." Ning Ran was still doubtful.

"Do you think I have the time to look into little things like this?" Nan Chen asked in return.

"I don't know. You might have taken the time to look into this because of a woman," Ning Ran replied with a hint of jealousy.

It was then that Nan Chen sensed something was wrong. "What are you talking about? What woman? What's going on?"

"Do you really not know the boss here?"

"I really don't know her. Tell me what's happening."

"It's nothing, then. Get back to work. I was just asking," Ning Ran answered and hung up.

"Seriously? Did you get into a fight with Sir Chen because of this? That was so unnecessary. I was just saying. You don't have to get so suspicious. Sir Chen's gonna blame me for talking too much now," Cheng Xiangyun complained, unable to understand Ning Ran's action.

"Don't worry about it. He said he didn't know her," Ning Ran assured, but she changed her mind the next second. "Actually, do you think Nan Chen knows her? He wasn't lying, right?"

Cheng Xiangyun stared at Ning Ran in disbelief. "For real? How could you say that? There's no point in lying to you. Sir Chen can just say he knows her if he does."

"God knows if he's lying because he feels bad." Ning Ran was not convinced.

"What's there to feel bad about? You're not married to him, so it doesn't matter if he knows all the women outside. There's nothing you can do about it," Cheng Xiangyun pointed out.

"Seriously, Cheng Xiangyun? Whose side are you on? You're my assistant; I'm your boss. How could you take his side?"

"Come on. I'm an employee at Star Entertainment. Sir Chen's the one who pays me. You're not my boss. Besides, I didn't say anything wrong. Why are you so worked up?

Don't play the victim. Even if Sir Chen arranged for you to stay here, it didn't mean that he had an ulterior motive. There's nothing threatening about what's happening."

Ning Ran thought about it and realized that she might have overreacted.

"Don't tell me you're in love with Sir Chen. Are you jealous?" Cheng Xiangyun asked as she moved closer.

"Get lost. I don't like him. Stop talking nonsense."

"Now, now. I must be right, or else there's no point getting angry," Cheng Xiangyun teased.

Suddenly, Ning Ran's phone rang. It was Qiao Zhan.

It turned out that Nan Chen had called Qiao Zhan asking him what the issue was. Qiao Zhan was grocery-shopping outside and had no idea why Ning Ran was upset either, so he called Ning Ran himself.

Ning Ran felt better when she found out that Nan Chen cared so deeply about her feelings that he called Qiao Zhan. However, she could not bring herself to admit that she had been overreacting for no good reason, so she just told Qiao Zhan that she had called Nan Chen because the children missed him.

She also added that Nan Chen should visit the children when he was free.

When Ning Ran hung up, Cheng Xiangyun was smiling on a phone call.

"Ms. Lu's glad to know you're here. You're also invited for dinner at her house later. She also asked if there are any dishes you like in particular so she can prepare them," Cheng Xiangyun informed after the call ended.

"That's nice of her. I hope she has no ulterior motive," Ning Ran questioned, frowning.

Cheng Xiangyun let out a cry of disappointment. "Come on! People are just being nice. Can you please stop being so skeptical?"

Read Novel My Wife Is A Superstar Chapter 645

Chapter 645 Intuition

At six o'clock that evening, Ning Ran brought two bottles of fine wine and went to Lu Jingyuan's house with Cheng Xiangyun.

Although Cheng Xiangyun had told her that Lu Jingyuan was wealthy, Ning Ran was still shocked when she saw the villa Lu Jingyuan had built for herself.

She's not just wealthy. She's ultra rich!

The villa was not enormous, but the three-story building was luxurious.

Its fence wall and exterior were painted light blue with a cool undertone, giving the place a particular character.

Once they entered the courtyard, they saw a pathway paved with colorful natural pebbles.

On both sides of the path were blooming flowers.

Most of the places were still cold during early spring, but over at Livingsfill, the temperature did not go through drastic changes throughout the year. There was no extreme cold, and flowers bloomed all year round.

However, despite the geographical advantage, most plants had their own flowering period.

Although some flowers were out of season then in Livingsfill, Lu Jingyuan's garden was still filled with flowers of all kinds.

This went to show that Lu Jingyuan was a flower connoisseur. Not only could she collect all the different types of flowers, but she could also make them blossom at that time of the year.

This was enough to attest to her refinement and knowledge—two invaluable traits unable to be bought with money.

The nouveau riche could well build huge mansions with their money, but cultivating good taste and an informed mind would take time. One would need to read a lot and see the world.

This realization only made Ning Ran more vigilant.

I'd better not underestimate this woman. She stays in a border town with two children but has the ability to run a big inn and stay in a villa. This is impossible unless she has a strong background. Could it be that she's Nan Chen's secret lover? He can definitely do that, though. He has the ability to keep more than one lover, actually. In fact, I won't be surprised if he has a hundred women outside.

While Ning Ran was thinking, Lu Jingyuan came out to welcome them, holding her two girls.

Woah! She's pretty. It only took Ning Ran one glance to agree with Cheng Xiangyun.

Ning Ran was a beautiful woman herself, so she had her standards, but even then, she still considered Lu Jingyuan a rare beauty.

When Ning Ran saw the two children, she agreed that they looked like Erbao.

Ning Ran gasped in her heart. She would not be surprised that a woman like Lu Jingyuan would know Nan Chen, for she totally had what it took to be in his circle.

Her appearance and demeanor were exceptional. More precisely, she was way above those ladies from affluent families like Ouyang Qing.

"Hi, Ms. Lu. This is Erbao and Dabao's mother," Cheng Xiangyun introduced warmly.

"Hi. Nice to meet you. I'm Lu Jingyuan."

"I'm Ning Ran. Nice to meet you too."

The two women gazed at one another and were amazed by how gorgeous each other was.

"I knew you must be pretty when I saw your kids, but I'm still surprised. You're the most attractive woman staying at my inn," Lu Jingyuan praised with a smile.

"Thanks. You're dashing yourself too. Thank you for taking care of my children," Ning Ran replied, smiling, as she gave the two bottles of wine to the host.

"This is good wine. Let's try them during dinner."

Lu Jingyuan was straightforward and elegant, and Ning Ran had a good impression of her.

Their first encounter assured Ning Ran that Lu Jingyuan was not cunning, so she put away her suspicion. However, that was solely based on her intuition.

One's sixth sense was not entirely baseless. Human emotions were the product of experience and knowledge, and they made sense sometimes.

"Come. This is Ms. Ning. Say hi," Lu Jingyuan said to her daughters.

"Hi, Ms. Ning," the two girls greeted politely with a bow.

Lu Yunxue went forward and pulled Ning Ran's hand. "Ms. Ning, I'm Erbao's best friend. We always play together!"

Ning Ran bent down, pulled the girl's hand, and patted her. "You're a sweet little girl. Who's older? You or Erbao?"

"I'm older; she's younger," Erbao chimed in.

Erbao felt proud because it was the first time she could consider someone else her younger sister. She had always been the younger sibling at home.

"Well, then, you should take care of your younger sister, all right?" Ning Ran said.

"No. I can take care of myself. We can take care of one another," Lu Yunxue replied frankly.

Her answer made everyone laugh except Lu Yunbing, who had been observing Ning Ran since they met.

Seeing this, Ning Ran approached the girl. "Hi, are you Yunbing? Are you the elder sister?"

"Yes." Although Lu Yunbing's answer was short, it did not sound rude.

Interestingly, the girl had a cold expression on her face, which was rare for children her age.

Ning Ran exhaled deeply, recalling Nan Chen's emotionless face.

They don't look exactly the same, but I can see hints of Nan Chen in her. If I were to compare the four children, Erbao would look more like Yunxue, while Dabao would look more like Yunbing. I won't say they are the same, but I can definitely spot some common ground.

Ning Ran tried to shake off the thought, but deep down, she felt slightly disturbed.

The family would get too complicated if Nan Chen really had two other children outside.

"Ms. Ning, you may wash your hands here. Dinner's about to start," the housekeeper said.

"Sure. Thanks."

Everyone sat down after washing their hands. Lu Jingyuan had arranged a smaller table for the children.

That was a telling sign that Lu Jingyuan came from a big family because children would not join the adults at their table until they turned eighteen.

It would also give the adults more freedom during mealtime if the children ate on their own.

"Welcome to Livingsfill, Ms. Ning. I'm glad to host you at my inn," Lu Jingyuan said.

Ning Ran lifted her glass and smiled too. "The honor is mine. Thank you for having us. Cheers."

Everyone raised their glasses and drank.

"Did you make these dishes yourself, Ms. Lu?" Ning Ran inquired, smiling.

"Most of them. I bought the rest. The food here is on the spicy side, so I'm not sure if you'll like it," Lu Jingyuan said.

"They're not bad. I like them. Your cooking is really good. It'd be great if you could spare some time to teach me."

"I'm more than happy to do that. I enjoy cooking. It gives me a sense of achievement. Do you like cooking as well?"

"I'm okay. I just know how to cook a few simple dishes. Nothing fancy."

"That's good enough. I heard you're an actress?"

Erbao quickly said, "Mommy is a celebrity! She's the female lead in The Sound of Thunder 2. The movie was a big hit!"

Ning Ran felt embarrassed at the compliment. "I'm not that famous. Don't listen to her."

"I'm sorry. I don't watch TV a lot."

Lu Jingyuan's honesty made Ning Ran feel awkward.

"But I'll check the movie out. I'm sure your acting is good. Your eyes tell me you're a person who has a story," Lu Jingyuan added.

"Thanks. I can equally say the same about you. I'm sure you'll be better than me at the craft if you become an actress," Ning Ran said.

"Well, let's put platitudes aside, shall we? I'm glad I met someone like you. Cheers," Lu Jingyuan said, raising her glass.

"Cheers!"

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After dinner, the children played while Ning Ran and Lu Jingyuan chatted in the little garden.

It was a fine night in Livingsfill. It was not cold, and the weather was just lovely.

To everyone's pleasant surprise, they could even see the moon shining brightly in the sky that evening.

Lu Jingyuan took out some fruit wine she had made for the guests.

It tasted sweet and refreshing, but Ning Ran felt the wine tasted familiar after the first sip.

She recalled drinking the same wine when she and Nan Chen and were in Lightspring. They had a meal at a romantic restaurant in the old mansion they visited.

The wine they drank at that place tasted more or less like the one Lu Jingyuan had served.

Ning Ran had her guard up instantly. It occurred to her that Nan Chen had admitted to her that he had once gone to the same restaurant with another woman.

It even seemed that Nan Chen had such a fond memory of that woman that it felt as though she were his first love.

Don't tell me Lu Jingyuan is the woman who went to that restaurant with Nan Chen. Her children look a lot like Dabao and Erbao too. I can't be wrong...

"What's the matter? Do you not like the taste? How about I let you try another wine?" Lu Jingyuan asked when she saw Ning Ran staring blankly into the air.

Ning Ran quickly snapped out of it. "I'm good. I like it. Did you make this yourself? You're so talented."

"It's easy making something like this. I usually make this when I'm free. It's just something I do to fill up my time." Lu Jingyuan smiled.

Ning Ran smiled back at her. "That's good. You're good at everything. Where's your husband? Is he also in Livingsfill?"

The truth was that Ning Ran had already found out from Cheng Xiangyun that Lu Jingyuan was a single mother, but she still asked Lu Jingyuan about her husband because she was suspicious.

Lu Jingyuan smiled at her question and just shook her head.

Her response meant a lot. Lu Jingyuan did not want to explain the situation, nor did she want to continue the conversation.

However, Ning Ran was so overtaken by her curiosity, especially after she had tasted the wine, so she continued, "Is he not in Livingsfill? Then where is he?"

It was rude for Ning Ran to pursue a topic the host did not wish to continue, but because she was dying to know if Lu Jingyuan's children were related to Nan Chen, she insisted on asking.

The answer meant a lot to her, and she simply had to find out.

Lu Jingyuan was taken aback when Ning Ran asked the question again.

"He is not with us. The children have never seen him before. Actually, this is not something I feel comfortable talking about. Why don't we talk about something else?" Lu Jingyuan replied, smiling politely.

Ning Ran suddenly felt embarrassed. Since Lu Jingyuan had made it clear that she did not wish to continue the conversation, Ning Ran could only drop the topic.

"I'm sorry. I thought the kids were cute and got curious about their father. I shouldn't have asked," Ning Ran said with a rigid smile.

Lu Jingyuan shook her head. "It's okay. I understand your curiosity."

"I'm curious because I bring up the kids myself too. I'm a single mother as well. In fact, I gave birth to them when I was abroad. I didn't even know who the father was at that time, so I really understand how hard it is being a single mother. That's why I got interested in your family. I hope you don't mind," Ning Ran explained.

Lu Jingyuan was stunned when she heard that. She stared at Ning Ran, making her feel uneasy.

"It's true. I'm not lying," Ning Ran assured.

Lu Jingyuan nodded. "I believe everything you said. I knew you were someone with a story. To be honest, I don't know who the children's father is either."

Ning Ran was in for a shock this time. She had told Lu Jingyuan about her not knowing who the father was simply because that was what she had gone through.

It was not Ning Ran's intention to elicit any information from Lu Jingyuan, but her sharing somehow encouraged Lu Jingyuan to also open up about her own encounter.

What a coincidence! It's as if everything is meant to be.

Despite what Lu Jingyuan went through, Ning Ran was certain that, unlike herself, Lu Jingyuan would never fall prey to someone else's trap and accidentally get pregnant.

After all, Ning Ran did not believe that someone else would experience the same thing as her.

"But how did you get pregnant?" Ning Ran blurted out.

Again, Lu Jingyuan smiled and shook her head.

Obviously, she did not want to relive the details of her experience.

Ning Ran could understand her feeling. After all, what happened concerned her privacy, and it was definitely not something one could talk about with just a few sentences.

"Whatever it is, I understand you've had it hard. I hope everything goes well for your family."

"Thank you. You too. By the way, where's your husband? What does he do?" Lu Jingyuan asked.

Ning Ran immediately saw the chance to test the waters, so she took out her phone and looked for Nan Chen's photos.

"He's the kids' father."

Lu Jingyuan took her phone and glanced at the photos. Her face froze for a second.

"He's very handsome. He looks familiar, though."

Lu Jingyuan's reaction did not go unnoticed by Ning Ran, for she had had her eyes on Lu Jingyuan's face the moment she passed the phone.

Lu Jingyuan's reaction was not drastic, but neither was it expected.

Anyone who saw a photo of a stunning man would be astonished or amazed, but Lu Jingyuan's reaction was more than that.

Doubt clouded Ning Ran's heart. Do they know each other?

"His name is Nan Chen. He's the CEO of Nanshi Corporation in Flower City," Ning Ran said, still observing Lu Jingyuan, but the latter did not seem perturbed.

She simply nodded and replied, "He has a graceful aura. He's handsome too."

Her reply sounded as if she had never seen Nan Chen before.

In fact, she sounded as if she had never even heard of him before.

Ning Ran was perplexed. Her color changed when she saw the photo, but she didn't sound as if she knew the man. Nan Chen is not that famous, so it makes sense that she doesn't know him. But if he's really a stranger to her, why did she react that way? Is she trying to act as if she doesn't know him?

Ning Ran was having second guesses. To her, Lu Jingyuan did not seem like someone who would put up a front.

Indeed, I can't judge a book by its cover. Some people may look harmless and innocent, but deep down, they can be evil, just like Ouyang Qing. But it's okay. I have nothing to fear even if Lu Jingyuan is putting on an act. I'll just arrange for Nan Chen to come here and meet her. I don't believe they'll continue faking it when they see each other. Even if they do, I'm smart enough to see through them. I'm not stupid!

Ning Ran felt relieved at the thought.

"What about I ask him to join us for a meal when he comes to Livingsfill? He must be glad to meet someone like you," Ning Ran suggested with a smile.

"It's okay. Socializing is not my thing."

Ning Ran did not expect Lu Jingyuan to turn down her offer, and that put her on edge again.

Why does she not want to meet Nan Chen? I get that she's quiet and prefers having her own space, but meeting him is no harm. She doesn't have to refuse my offer.

At that point, Ning Ran found it hard to convince herself that there was nothing fishy going on, but she had no proof, so she could not come to any conclusion and could only accept Lu Jingyuan's answer as it was.

"All right, then," she said, smiling rigidly.

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Chapter 647 My Turn To Toy With You

At a temporary detention center in Flower City, the haggard Ouyang Qing stared at Nan Xing sitting across from her with a vicious expression on her face.

She stared at him intently to try to tell whether the person before her was Nan Xing or Nan Chen, as the two looked very similar. If they wanted to exchange identities, outsiders would never be able to tell.

"Don't look at me with such an expression. You're my wife," Nan Xing said with a chuckle. "You're shameless!" Ouyang Qing screamed.

"You're wrong. You were the one who suggested marriage. No, you didn't suggest it. You forced it on me. I'm forced to marry you, yet you're saying I'm shameless now? The woman forced the man to marry her, so am I the shameless one, or is it you?" Nan Xing retorted.

"I heard from Ouyang Qi that you have been lying to my dad and me all along. Is that true?"

"Yes. You wanted to snatch my family's company away and destroy the Nan family. Do you expect me to be honest and cooperate with you wholeheartedly?"

Unable to think of a comeback, Ouyang Qing could only glare at Nan Xing. "When did you exchange identities with Nan Chen? Have you two already switched places when we went to get our marriage certificate?"

"No. Do you think Chen, with his bad temper, would accompany you to get married and play house with you? Of course, only someone with a nice personality like me could do such a boring thing. Chen would never do that. Since you're in this state, let me tell you something. Actually, my leg isn't injured. The Nan Xing, who was in a wheelchair, wasn't me. It's easy to tell us apart now, right?"

"How shameless! Your family is despicable!" Ouyang Qing spat.

"You lot were the ones who did all the bad things, yet you're scolding me now? I won't argue with you. I'm here today to ask you to sign the divorce papers. Our charade as a fake couple has come to an end," Nan Xing declared.

"I won't sign it! I'll be clinging to you! We are still lawfully wedded. As long as I'm here, you can't get married. If not, you'll be committing bigamy. Nan Xing, you hurt me by lying to me. I will never make life easy for you!"

Ouyang Qing chuckled coldly.

Nan Xing also smiled. "I'm in no hurry. I just wanted to discuss it with you."

"There's no need to discuss. I disagree! Don't you even think of it!" Ouyang Qing yelled.

"Hey, don't be so agitated. Even if you don't sign the papers, I can sue you to get a divorce. You married me to harm my family, so if I sue you, I can definitely successfully get a divorce. Regardless of whether you're willing, we'll definitely divorce, no?" Nan Xing said, smirking.

"I don't care. There are procedures you need to go through to file for a divorce in court. I'll ask my lawyer to drag out the divorce as long as possible. You try me."

"I don't believe you. Not even a d*mn word! I'm not in a hurry to marry, so how will you dragging out the divorce affect me? I know there's a limitation period for litigations. I'm not in a hurry, but how long can a limitation period be? How can a divorce case drag out for eight or ten years? So you can't hurt me by dragging out the divorce, but you'll anger me! I have a better temper than Chen, but I'm not a pushover for you to be toyed with. I let you toy with me because Grandpa forced me to let you do that, but now, I refuse! If you anger me again, it'll be my turn to toy with you!"

Though Nan Xing was stating facts, his talking about toying with her sounded weird.

He was stating the situation objectively, but it sounded like he was making sexual innuendos.

"You shameless scoundrel!" Ouyang Qing also felt it sounded strange.

"Jeez, I have no interest in you. Even if you want me to behave as a scoundrel, I'm not willing to do that. I'm telling you seriously, do not make me angry. Previously, you and Ouyang Duo bullied me, and I'm still holding in that anger. If you infuriate me again, I'll make your life difficult," Nan Xing said solemnly.

"Then what are you going to do? Are you going to kill me?"

"There's no need for that. Although you hurt my niece and deserve to die, the law will prosecute you. I have no need to kill you myself and risk myself. You don't deserve to be punished by me. However, I have some friends in Flower City. If I want to, I can let them introduce a few burly friends to stay in a cell with you after you enter prison. Aren't you the daughter of a rich family? When the time comes, I'm afraid those strong individuals won't treat you as a rich woman. As for how they will treat you... Tsk, tsk. I really don't know."

Ouyang Qing's face turned pale.

She knew Nan Xing wasn't trying to scare her. He could indeed do the things he said.

Although she was the daughter of a rich family now, she would be nothing once she was in jail.

A pretty woman like her would be welcomed everywhere, but the way others welcomed her would differ under different environments.

"Nan Xing, I did make mistakes back then, but that was because I was jealous of Ning Ran! That woman is the root cause! If she didn't exist, I wouldn't have hurt the kid and become a cruel person," Ouyang Qing shouted.

"Everything you say is useless now. Regardless of whether you did those things out of jealousy or other reasons, it remains a fact that you ordered people to poison my niece. Do not push the blame onto others. You will bear the responsibility yourself. Now, you should obediently sign the divorce papers and serve your term in jail well. You're still young. After you are released a few years later, you can still marry someone, have kids, and carry on with your life. I assure you, you'll only receive the punishment you deserve, nothing more. You can even get your sentence reduced if you behave well. If you really want to confront me head-on and treat me as a pushover, I only need to make use of some of my connections to ensure you stay in jail for the next twenty years. You will already be old when you get released twenty years later. Imagine how pitiful you will be when you get out of jail as a middle-aged woman. So, I repeat, cooperate with me and not make trouble. You have already lost, so you should accept reality. I'll give you one day to consider my words. If you don't sign the divorce papers, let's see what will happen to you. I'm really not in a hurry. In the near future, I'm afraid you will be the one in a hurry."

Nan Xing waved his hands and made a move to leave.

"Wait!" Ouyang Qing hurriedly stopped Nan Xing.

She was truly terrified now as she suddenly realized that she was now only an ordinary convict.

Her pride was all gone.

If I don't cooperate with Nan Xing, my life will be miserable. I don't want to stay that long in jail. I still want to start a new life. I don't want my life to be doomed.

"Changed your mind?"

"I'll agree to get a divorce, but I have a condition."

Nan Xing got up to leave. "You don't have the right to negotiate with me."

"Fine, no conditions. Then I'm begging you. I'm begging you to let me see Erbao so I can apologize to her in person. I shouldn't have done that to a child," Ouyang Qing said.

"Ha, I see. You want to make use of this chance to gain Chen and Ning Ran's forgiveness. You're worried they'll make you serve a long prison sentence."

The clever Nan Xing immediately saw through Ouyang Qing's tricks.

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Chapter 648 Open And Honest Relationship

Meanwhile, in Livingsfill, Ning Ran arrived early at the outdoor filming location at the foot of a mountain. This was her first official day back with the production team.

In the film "I Am You," every time the female lead teleported to a parallel world, she needed to find a suitable place with comfortable weather and temperature before she could teleport again.

This outdoor filming location was one of the "exits" of the teleportation. Many of the scenes would also be shot here.

When Ning Ran's car reached the site, the production team, led by the director, stood in two groups and held fresh flowers to welcome her return.

Ning Ran was a little embarrassed by the high-profile welcome ceremony.

Although she had received the Best Newcomer Award and her television drama was now showing high popularity, she did not see herself as a celebrity.

Moreover, if she really became a celebrity one day, Ning Ran did not want to be so high-profile as others might be repulsed by it.

"Director, there's no need for such a large-scale ceremony. I'm just coming back to work, just like everyone else," she said awkwardly.

"We haven't seen you for a long time. I heard you weren't feeling well. We're all very happy that you have finally recovered and returned."

"Thank you, everyone. I apologize for delaying the filming schedule due to my personal reasons," Ning Ran declared before bowing earnestly to everyone.

"It's fine. Everyone has personal matters to settle once in a while. It's great that you're back," the director hurriedly replied.

"Then, I'll get my makeup done. Let's get ready to begin."

The instant Ning Ran sat down in the temporary makeup room, a bouquet of red roses appeared before her from behind, shocking her.

Turning around, she realized a handsome man was holding it. He was Huang Zichao, the famous actor and male lead in the film.

"Hello, Mr. Huang."

Ning Ran hurriedly stood up and greeted him.

After all, he entered show business earlier than her and had won many accolades, so she should address him politely.

"Hi, Ms. Ning," Huang Zichao replied with a smile. "Are you refusing my flowers? I've been holding them for a long time."

Ning Ran was perplexed. "Why are you giving me flowers?"

"Because I like you!" Huang Zichao grinned.

Unable to find a suitable answer, Ning Ran froze for a moment, feeling awkward.

"Don't get all nervous. I was joking. The flowers are to celebrate your return to work. I heard that you were sick and went on leave. Are you all right now?" Huang Zichao asked.

"Oh, yes. Thanks for your concern. I'll accept your flowers. Thank you."

He has already bought the flowers. If I reject him, he will be embarrassed. Still, it feels weird to accept roses from another man. After all, the love language of roses is love. If people from the production team saw this, they might gossip about us.

After accepting the roses, Ning Ran then placed the flowers on the table.

"Your dear CEO didn't come along this time?" Huang Zichao asked, standing beside her.

"No. He doesn't come along often as he has his own business to attend to."

"That's good."

"Huh?"

"Haha, what I meant was I would be less stressed if Mr. Nan didn't come along. I know he doesn't like me shooting a film with you. I even heard he's preparing to replace me with another actor. I guess it's because he loves you too much. As a man, I can understand."

Huang Zichao seemed interested in talking about Nan Chen.

However, Ning Ran didn't want to continue talking about Nan Chen as she felt bad discussing him with another man.

Yet, she couldn't tell exactly how it was inappropriate.

"Let's not chat about him anymore. Mr. Huang, why don't you go get ready? When I'm done, we can start shooting."

"Okay. Why don't we go out tonight since it has been so long? There are many bars in Livingsfill. We can go to one."

"Oh, I don't think I can…" Ning Ran immediately refused.

Huang Zichao was surprised by her speedy rejection. Even she herself was shocked.

"Why? Your CEO husband isn't here. Can't you go for a drink with your friends? Moreover, we're partners. If we interact more and build rapport, our shooting will also go smoother, right?" Huang Zichao persuaded.

There were no flaws in his logic, so Ning Ran could only nod.

After all, it was important to build rapport between actors. Only when actors were in tune with each other could they get into character and perform well.

Also, a famous actor was the one who invited her. If she repeatedly rejected him, it would do no good for their collaboration since they were in the same production team and needed to work together for a long time.

Only when Huang Zichao saw Ning Ran nod did he become happy again.

Once the preparations were complete, the shoot officially began.

As she had not filmed for a long time, she couldn't get into her working mode. It was only after the director yelled "cut" multiple times did she slowly get into character.

To make up for the delayed time, they shot till eight at night before wrapping up.

Everyone was tired, and Ning Ran was about to return to the inn when Huang Zichao came.

"Shall we have a drink or supper first?"

He directly gave her two options, leaving her no room for refusal. After all, Ning Ran did agree in the morning.

"I'm tired and want to go back to rest," Ning Ran replied with a smile.

"Then you should let loose when you're tired. Plus, it's still early. We don't need to stay till late at night, so it won't affect your rest. I've already booked our seats, and I'll be very disappointed if you don't go."

I don't think Huang Zichao is going to give up easily. If I continue to refuse him, I'll be humiliating him.

"Fine, but we can't stay that late," Ning Ran agreed reluctantly.

Then, she turned around to speak to Qiao Zhan. "I'm going out to eat with Mr. Huang. If Nan Chen calls, tell him I won't stay out too late."

Her words were meant for both Qiao Zhan and Huang Zichao, signaling to the latter that Nan Chen now knew she was going out with him.

Since everyone knew, it meant her relationship with Huang Zichao was open and honest.

"Why don't I accompany you? Sir Chen said that I must ensure your safety," Qiao Zhan suggested.

Ning Ran didn't mind. As nothing was going on between her and Huang Zichao, it didn't matter if Qiao Zhan went along.

However, Huang Zichao disagreed. "We'll be chatting about things related to the film, so it will be inconvenient if outsiders come along."

"Can you bear the responsibility if something happens to Madam?" Qiao Zhan retorted.

"Nothing will happen. If something really happens, I will bear the responsibility," Huang Zichao declared assuredly, patting his chest.

"How will you bear the responsibility?" Qiao Zhan was unconvinced.

"Nothing will happen. Don't worry."

Ning Ran was conflicted. She didn't want to chase Qiao Zhan away, nor did she want to offend Huang Zichao.

Huang Zichao had a high status in the entertainment industry, so she didn't want to make things awkward between them.

Moreover, he always acted gentlemanly and never behaved frivolously or inappropriately.

"Why don't you return first and let two of your subordinates follow me? Sorry for causing trouble for you," Ning Ran said apologetically to Qiao Zhan.

"Don't say that, Madam. It's my duty. Then, I'll return first. If anything happens, call me immediately."

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Chapter 649 Sing For Me

The trip from the shooting location to the city took roughly forty minutes by car. Ning Ran felt slightly tired. She rarely spoke while sitting inside Huang Zichao's car.

On the other hand, Huang Zichao was in an excellent mood. He bobbed his head in time to the music and occasionally hummed.

Ning Ran kept quiet. She closed her eyes to rest and left Huang Zichao to his own devices. Eventually, she fell asleep. When Huang Zichao woke her up, they were already in the city.

"Are you exhausted? If you are, I can send you home to rest." Huang Zichao felt somewhat disappointed.

"It's nothing. I'm feeling much better now. I wasn't exhausted as well. It's just that the music you played in the car was too soothing. I felt relaxed and fell asleep because of it." Ning Ran was embarrassed. "Your sleeping face is quite attractive."

Ning Ran's face warmed. "Sorry about that." "It's fine. If you aren't tired, why don't we have a few drinks?"

"Okay." The bar Huang Zichao chose was not the noisy sort. It also did not broadcast loud music. Instead, a young girl with an acoustic guitar was singing a folk ballad inside.

Ning Ran immediately took a liking to the place the moment she stepped inside. Ever since she returned to the country, she had been embroiled in various inexplicable situations. She was mentally fatigued.

The life-and-death situation she encountered some time ago continued to plague her dreams. Feeling relaxed upon arriving inside, she truly liked the atmosphere.

Apart from Huang Zichao, there was no one here who knew her. Everyone was a stranger. There was no need to keep her guard up as there was no beneficial relationship that needed to be made or maintained.

Huang Zichao ordered a platter of fruits, some snacks, and fruit beer. "The alcohol concentration in this is very low. You won't get drunk so don't worry." Huang Zichao laughed.

"Thanks." Ning Ran smiled. "That girl is quite good at playing the guitar. Should I request she sing you a song?" Huang Zichao teased.

Ning Ran waved her hand. "No need. She can sing anything, and I'll still enjoy it. She doesn't have to sing something just for me."

"She can earn extra income if we pick a song. A song costs a hundred. If you like her, you should make a request," Huang Zichao said.

Ning Ran had never been here before. Hence, she had no idea that was how it worked. "But what if she doesn't know how to sing the song I selected?"

"Then, you'll just have to pick another. The girl is a performing arts student working here for the holidays. She has quite a personality. The other performers are willing to sing any song, but that girl only sings songs she likes. She'd never sing if it's not a song she likes, no matter how much you pay." Huang Zichao smiled.

"Haha. That's interesting. All right, let's have her sing 'Yesterday Once More.' I wonder if she'd be willing to sing it. If she refuses, have her pick something else. You're the one paying anyway." Ning Ran was amused.

Huang Zichao called for the waiter and gave him the money. Then, he wrote the name of the song, "Yesterday Once More," on a slip of paper and had it sent over.

The waiter went over and passed the paper to the girl.

The girl glanced over at Ning Ran. Bathed under the lights, her features were very attractive.

Smiling in response, Ning Ran nodded and flashed the girl a thumbs up.

The girl began to sing as she strummed the acoustic guitar.

The original accompaniment for the song was not complicated. Hence, the girl's simple acoustic guitar accompaniment did not feel out of place.

The thing that was unusual was that a girl as young as her managed to give the song a retro feel.

She was extremely devoted to her performance, which was pleasant to listen to.

"Stop! What the heck is that song? I don't understand it at all. Sing something else."

All of a sudden, someone complained. His voice was very loud, and everyone heard him.

The person who interrupted the performance was a slightly plump man. He wore a pink colored suit jacket while a huge gold chain dangled in front of his chest.

He had the air of a nouveau riche. Such people were often unbearable and hard to get along with.

The girl appeared to have not heard him. She continued to sing and strum along, showing no signs of being affected.

"I told you to sing something else! Didn't you hear me? What are you even singing?"

Holding the beer in his hand, the slightly plump man strode toward the girl.

The waiter who tried to stop him was shoved to the side.

"I ordered you to stop. Sing something else. I can't understand the gibberish you're singing. Do you understand me?" The man pointed at the girl.

Still, the girl did not lift her head. She acted as if she did not hear anything and cradled her guitar with her head lowered. She continued to give the song her all.

Ning Ran could not help but feel impressed. The girl strived to perform the song in its entirety without being influenced.

The girl had accepted the money. Thus, she was going to give Ning Ran a perfect performance and not react to the man.

Truthfully, the girl had already done so. She did not pause for even a moment and played at a good pace.

"Are you ignoring me and putting on airs? I told you to stop singing gibberish!" the man yelled, dumping the beer from his glass onto the girl's head.

The audience let out a surprised gasp.

Ning Ran and Huang Zichao both got to their feet.

What happened next astounded the onlookers. The girl only paused for a brief moment before she continued to sing.

The slight pause lasted only about two seconds.

After splashing beer on the girl, the man expected her to fly into a rage.

Unexpectedly, she buried her head and continued to sing. The plump man was flummoxed.

"I told you to sing something else! Didn't you hear me? I'll pay you! Just sing something else!" the man shouted.

Ning Ran could not bear to watch it any longer.

He's such a bully! How can he pour his beer on her? The girl's not even complaining. How dare he continue to sully her?

The girl did not respond. She continued to sing and play the guitar until she finished the last note of the song.

Only then did she stand up and bow in the direction of Ning Ran and Huang Zichao.

"Miss, I apologize for being unable to perform the song perfectly. I'm sorry. If you don't mind, you can select another song. Free of charge of course," the girl said.

Obviously, the words were directed at Ning Ran.

Ning Ran was astonished. That girl is something else! She's so young. Even in the face of being doused with beer by someone, she did not flinch and continued to finish the song. She even expressed her apology as soon as the song ended. She flawlessly ignored the provocative man in front of her.

Only a person with an open mind was able to do that. After all, the strongest reproach for a person was to look down on him—to treat him as if he were air.

The girl treated the man as if he did not exist, completely ignoring him.

The man was disconcerted at being ignored. He pointed at the girl and shouted, "Hey, I'm speaking to you. Sing me a raunchy song. I'll pay you a thousand!"

"Sir, I don't know the song you requested. Please don't disrupt my work."

Unflustered, the girl fished out some tissues and wiped the beer on her head. Following that, she readjusted her guitar and prepared to perform once again.

"F*ck! How dare you ignore me?" The man flew into a rage and kicked the girl.

The girl had been preoccupied with her guitar and was caught unaware. She was directly kicked down by the man, and her guitar fell to the side.

Ning Ran could no longer bear to keep watching.

The jerk actually hit her in front of so many people. She's only singing to earn some cash, and yet he got provoked and bullied her.

Before Huang Zichao was able to hold Ning Ran back, the latter had already rushed over.

"Why did you hit her? She didn't even do anything to you."

Ning Ran turned to glare at the man as she reached out and helped the girl up.

The man scrutinized Ning Ran. What a gorgeous woman. She's way more beautiful than the singing girl.

"Who the h*ll are you? Are you her accomplice? She refuses to sing for me, and yet you stand up for her. Okay then, why don't you sing instead?" The man pointed at Ning Ran.

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Chapter 650 Unbearable

Ning Ran was bewildered. I'm not a singer, so why are you asking me to sing? Even if I could sing, who are you to order me around?

"Why are you looking at me like that? Come on, sing! Since you came forward, then I'll have you sing instead!" the man shouted as he pointed at Ning Ran's face.

Ning Ran glared at the man. "Sh*t! Stop glaring at me! Believe it or not, I'm going to slap you if you keep looking at me like that," the man threatened.

"I'd like to see you try." Ning Ran's obstinacy was also triggered. "You think I won't dare? Do you know who calls the shots here? Know your place and bend over like a good—"

Thud! Before the man could finish cussing at Ning Ran, he received a blow to the head.

The singer had lifted her guitar and smashed it over the man's head. Ning Ran and the man were both stunned.

The girl had been tolerant and appeared to have no temper at all. Yet, unexpectedly, she had suddenly lost her temper and smashed her guitar over the man's head.

Evidently, it was not that she had no temper; rather, she had been trying to stay out of trouble. However, the man was truly despicable. The girl was no longer able to tolerate him.

The man recovered from his surprise and turned around to slap the girl. He wrested the guitar from her, threw it onto the ground, and stomped on it.

Furious, the girl returned the man's slap. The man grew angrier and kicked at the girl, causing her to fall.

All the scuffle was unbearable for Ning Ran. She lifted a chair and smashed it onto the man's head, effectively joining the three-ring circus.

"How dare you? Go to h*ll!" The man gripped Ning Ran's throat and clenched his other fist. "Stop it!"

Huang Zichao finally made his way over. "I've called the police. Let her go!" "Yet another good-for-nothing? Out of my way!" The man shoved Huang Zichao to the side.

Still, Huang Zichao persisted. He did not do anything to the man but stood in front of Ning Ran instead.

"Let's have a civil conversation. Don't hit women," Huang Zichao said. "Should I beat you up instead?" The man glared at Huang Zichao arrogantly.

"If she angered you in any way, I'll apologize on her behalf!"

Ning Ran was displeased when she heard Huang Zichao's words. The jerk is the bully. I did nothing wrong! Since I'm not in the wrong, why do we have to apologize to him?

"There's no need to apologize. He's the one at fault," Ning Ran raged.

"See, this b*tch refuses to apologize. Hey, you good-for-nothing! Step aside if you don't want your facial features rearranged," the man hollered at Huang Zichao.

"You can hit me, but you absolutely mustn't hit the women!" Huang Zichao refused to back down, but he also did not make a move. It was obvious that Huang Zichao was stalling for time for the police to arrive.

"Get out of the way!"

"I refuse!"

"Fine. You asked for this!" The man raised his fist and prepared to launch his attack.

"Hey, aren't I the one you're after?" Once again, the girl spoke up. She had scrambled to her feet.

The man's kick had been vicious. Despite that, she still managed to get up. The girl clutched her stomach, and her complexion did not look too great.

"Oh, I didn't expect you to be able to get up. Don't worry. I didn't forget about you. I'll take care of you in a bit." The man pointed at the girl.

"This happened because of me. Forget her and take it out on me instead."

The pretty girl was steadfast. Although she knew she would be beaten up, she remained unfazed.

Compared to the cautious Huang Zichao, she appeared to be more courageous.

Of course, Huang Zichao was not a coward. However, he was a famous actor. He did not want to cause a scene and negatively affect his career.

The place they were at was a small border town with its own laws. Over here, connections were important, and they had their own local protectionism.

Since the man dared to act so arrogantly, he was likely a local bigshot or had someone backing him.

Although Huang Zichao was a famous actor, he was only an outsider in a place like this.

This was a common occurrence. Small towns were often less inclusive, and the outsiders were left vulnerable.

Hence, Huang Zichao wanted to smooth things over instead of worsening the incident.

Naturally, Ning Ran was not going to stand by and let the girl shoulder all the blame.

"You aren't the one at fault. There's no need for you to shoulder it alone. We'll stand together!"

"Be quiet, you," Huang Zichao cautioned Ning Ran.

"It's none of your business. Step aside! I'd like to see him try to hit me." Ning Ran pushed Huang Zichao aside. She knew he was trying to avoid causing a scene, and she was not about to drag him into this.

Huang Zichao felt embarrassed, and his expression soured at that.

"Ms. Ning, what's the matter?" At that moment, the bodyguards sent by Qiao Zhan came over.

Initially, they had been following Ning Ran. But when they saw that Huang Zichao and Ning Ran had entered the bar, they deemed it safe and left to get some food.

They did not expect to encounter the commotion when they returned. Thus, they hurried over.

"Well, well. What do we have here? I knew it! For him to address you so distantly, you must be out here selling yourself. You're quite a looker, so I'm sure you fetch a pretty good price," the man blabbered.

The two bodyguards rushed over the moment the words left the man's lips.

The people chosen by Qiao Zhan were not ordinary people. They were professional bodyguards.

To professional bodyguards, it did not matter if there was a right or wrong. They would put their lives on the line if someone tried to hurt the person they were protecting. They did not care about the risks or the consequences. It was the gravest of crimes to let the person they were protecting get hurt.

One of the bodyguards landed a punch on the man's face.

The man was pretty pudgy, so his weight could not have been light.

Yet, the bodyguard's unremarkable-looking punch sent the man careening backward.

Someone who did not know better would think that the man was putting on an act.

However, the man knew the strength of the fist and the magnitude of the impact on him. He knew he was up against a professional he could not beat.

Just as the man was about to call it quits, the bodyguard's feet kicked at him, landing squarely on his chest.

The force felt even more excessive. The man felt as if his chest was hit by a heavy hammer. As a result, he fell backward with a thud.

A foot immediately pressed down on his face. "How dare you bully Ms. Ning?"

"Let go of me! Don't you know who I am?" shouted the man.

"Pray tell," the bodyguard said contemptuously.

"My name is Li Xiaolong! No one in Livingsfill would dare do this to me!" the man screamed.

Li Xiaolong? Wasn't that the name of the deceased martial arts superstar?

"How dare a thug like you tarnish the name of the legendary superstar?" the bodyguard scoffed in disgust as he put more weight on his foot.

"That's my name! My brother-in-law is the sheriff!" the man yelled.

Sure enough, the man had someone backing him. That was the source of his arrogance.

"Forget it. Let him go and we'll leave."

Ning Ran no longer wanted to prolong the fight. She no longer felt like staying here.

I have my professional bodyguards, so I'm okay. But if the commotion continues, what's going to happen to the girl? We were able to protect her today. But what will happen tomorrow, or the day after?