

## Crippled 41

### Chapter 41: Do As You Deem Fit

Ji Qian closed her eyes and recalled Shen Hanxing's expression earlier. Ji Qian raised her hand and slapped Chen Tingting.

Slap!

'When Chen Tingting looked at her in disbelief, Ji Qian said clearly, "Chen Tingting, from today onwards, we are no longer friends. This slap is what you owe me."

After saying that, she slapped Chen Tingting again. "This slap is for your betrayal even when I treated you so sincerely. From now on, the two of us will have nothing to do with each other!"

With that, Ji Qian turned around and walked to Shen Hanxing's side without any hesitation. She leaned against Shen Hanxing and hugged her arm tightly for warmth. Her chest, which was filled with anger and grievance, gradually calmed down.

Ji Qian took a deep breath and regained her composure befitting that of her status as the fourth daughter of the Ji family. "Miss Zhuang, I've made a fool of myself. The culprit who destroyed the orchids has been found. Please do as you deem fit."

Her decisiveness surprised Zhuang Yu. She could only think that Ji Qian was indeed from the Ji family. Zhuang Yu smiled at her kindly and said, "Alright, I misunderstood you, Fourth Miss Ji. I hope you don't mind."

After she finished speaking, she looked at Chen Tingting and her expression instantly turned cold. Zhuang Yu ordered, "Men, please escort Miss Chen out. From now on, she is not welcomed at the Zhuang family's banquets. Nobody from the Chen family will be welcomed as well."

Chen Tingting screamed in despair, "No!"

If she was the only one being chased out, it would only be slightly embarrassing. However, if the whole Chen family was also blacklisted by the Zhuang family, her parents, who have always valued sons over daughters, would not let her off. They would beat her to death!

"Qian Qian, Qian Qian, I really know my mistake. Please forgive me, okay? I was just obsessed. I won't do it again," Chen Tingting cried and begged, "Qian Qian, didn't you treat me the best? We're best friends. Please forgive me one more time. I really didn't do it on purpose. It was Cheng Liu. Everything was Cheng Liu's fault. She was the one who urged me to do this to you!"

Unfortunately, no one believed her explanation. It was just like when Old Master Zhuang was angry to the point where he did not care who was really the one behind the scenes. He simply chose to chase out Ji Qian, who seemed like the most likely culprit, so that he would calm down. In this situation,

Chen Tingting now replaced Ji Qian's role. No one would care if what she said was true or false. They only wanted to quickly get rid of her.

As the shouting gradually faded away, everyone returned to the banquet hall. The soft music that had stopped abruptly started playing again. The banquet hall returned to its previous lively state as if the chaotic scene from before had never happened.

If there was any difference, it would be that Shen Hanxing had two people by her side instead of one now. Ji Qian and Ji Ning, one was on the left while the other was on the right. They wished they could hang onto Shen Hanxing.

The two little girls looked at Shen Hanxing with sparkling eyes filled with admiration and adoration. Like puppies that needed to be appeased, Shen Hanxing could only allow them to cling onto her.

Other than that, the socialites who originally looked down on Shen Hanxing also came forward to chat with her. Their eyes were filled with curiosity and a hint of hidden adoration.

“Mrs. Ji, you’re so beautiful and your skin is so good. How do you usually take care of your skin? Can you share it with us?”

“Mrs. Ji, when you attacked just now, your movements were crisp and neat. Did you learn it? Where did you learn it? Can I join the same class as you?”

“Mrs. Ji, can I add you on WeChat?”

No one knew which girl was the first to muster up the courage to ask this question. Instantly, all the socialites who were chattering and finding excuses to strike up a conversation quieted down. They waited eagerly and expectantly for Shen Hanxing’s reply.

Shen Hanxing was stunned for a moment. She felt as though she was with a group of kindergarten children. She laughed helplessly and said, “Of course.”

She took out her phone to look for her QR code. The socialites were extremely happy. One by one, they took out their phones and scrambled to scan Shen Hanxing’s QR code to add her as a friend. They completely disregarded their statuses as socialites and the elegant demeanor they were supposed to adopt. They were acting as though they would never have the chance to add Shen Hanxing on WeChat again if they were one step slower.

‘When Ji Qian saw this scene, warning alarms rang in her heart. She took a deep breath and shouted, “My sister-in-law is usually very busy. You can add her on WeChat, but don’t go and disturb her whenever you have nothing to do.”

‘Hmph, don’t think that I don’t know what you girls are thinking. This is my sister-in-law, no one can snatch her away from me!’

Ji Ning didn’t say anything. Her thin and weak body trembled slightly as if she was frightened by this scene. She placed her forehead carefully on Shen Hanxing’s shoulder and called out timidly, “Sister-in-law....”

## **Chapter 42: Sisters Fighting For Attention**

Ji Ning's psychological problems were more serious. Being able to attend the banquet with Shen Hanxing was already a big step forward for her. Shen Hanxing had been paying attention to her the whole time. When Shen Hanxing heard her faintly trembling voice, she couldn't be bothered about anything

else.

She asked with concern, "What's wrong? Are you not feeling well? Do you want to find a place to rest?"

"No, no need. I can endure this," Ji Ning lowered her head. Her eyelashes trembled slightly. Her pale little face looked fragile and pitiful. She was obviously very scared, but she pretended to be strong and tried to tough it out. "Sister-in-law, I-I'm fine. I just need to lean against you, sister-in-law."

"I'll take you somewhere for you to rest first," Shen Hanxing made a prompt decision. She nodded at the socialites around her. "I'm sorry. My sister is not feeling well. I'll chat with everyone another day."

Sly little thing!

How could they have not have known that this little coward from the Ji family was so cunning! She actually pretended to be pitiful to gain Shen Hanxing's sympathy. A scheming child!

The socialites gritted their teeth inwardly, but on the surface, they had to put on a docile and sensible smile. They agreed and said, "It's okay, it's okay. The Ji family's fifth miss health is important. Mrs. Ji, we'll chat with you another day."

Ji Qian also hated that Ji Ning had stolen Shen Hanxing's attention, but she felt happy that the other socialites finally did not pester Shen Hanxing anymore.

Ji Qian rolled her eyes and simply grabbed Shen Hanxing's arm. She asked uneasily, "Sister-in-law, I... I want to stay with you guys too. Is that okay?"

Her long hair was slightly curly, and when she lowered her head, the ends of her hair naturally fell. She looked both wronged and downcast. Shen Hanxing thought about how Ji Qian had experienced so many things earlier; Ji Qian was misunderstood by others, and she was even betrayed by her best

friend. Shen Hanxing's heart instantly softened. She took the initiative to hold Ji Qian's hand, "It's okay."

Ji Qian's heart instantly bloomed with joy.

Ji Zhou's gaze darkened as he watched his two sisters fight openly and covertly as if they were in a harem, fighting for the husband's attention and affection. He drank the wine in his glass and pursed his lips, "Boring."

Ji Yang sneered, "Hypocrite."

Time gradually passed. At ten o'clock at night, the soft music that had been playing in the banquet hall gradually stopped. The main event of this banquet was finally about to begin.

The Zhuang family's old master returned to the banquet hall and grandly introduced the award-winning violin maestro, Lin Ran, on stage. Lin Ran was a middle-aged man who had not even reached 40 years old. Although his appearance was not outstanding, his temperament was very good. He was filled

with the refined aura of an artist, making people feel exceptionally comfortable.

Even though he had just won an international award that was extremely valuable, he was still modest and calm. After saying a couple of words on stage, he played a piece of music and then left the stage. Although he did not say it explicitly, everyone who came here knew that he intended to take in students. If Lin Ran took them under his wing, it would be a very good advantage for these socialites. Thus, they tried their best to show off their talents.

Lin Ran listened to everyone's performance very patiently. Every time a socialite had finished performing, he would give pointers seriously. Though he was gentle, it was not difficult to see that he had a very high standard for violin performance.

After waiting for a while, no one went on stage to perform. Lin Ran's expression was a little regretful. Just as he was about to stand up and say something, a delicate and beautiful voice sounded from below the stage, "I would also like to ask Maestro Lin Ran to give me some pointers, but I don't know if I have the privilege to go on stage and perform for you."

Dressed in a small gown and wearing light makeup, Shen Sisi looked like a lotus flower in clear water when she stood up. With a pure and innocent smile on her face, she looked at Lin Ran with anticipation.

Lin Ran smiled warmly and sat back down on the chair. He raised his hand and said, "Please go ahead."

Shen Sisi looked pure and striking to people. She had deliberately dressed up for tonight's banquet to highlight her strengths. When she stood on the stage, everyone's eyes lit up.

Shen Sisi was very talented with the violin, and the Shen family was willing to spend a lot of money to train her. With her already beautiful appearance, once she picked up the violin, her charms were even more irresistible. People could not help but want to look at her. They would feel that this little girl was as beautiful as a fairy.

Shen Sisi knew that this was a rare opportunity for her to show off in high society. She took a deep breath and pulled the bow of the violin. The banquet hall rang with moving notes.

Shen Hanxing watched this scene coldly.

Shen Sisi had indeed put in a lot of effort practicing the violin. She demonstrated her professionalism to the crowd with extremely high standards. At the end of the performance, everyone was amazed regardless of their knowledge about the violin.

Lin Ran's eyes also showed some relief, but he did not have the excitement of someone who had found a potential student. He simply nodded and praised, "Not bad. Your violin skills are very good. I can see that you have only put a lot of thought into it. Continue to maintain your enthusiasm for the violin.

You will definitely become an excellent violinist."

### **Chapter 43: First Idol**

This was the best evaluation Lin Ran had given tonight. However, Shen Sisi was not satisfied. She smiled and thanked him humbly, but in her heart, she was sneering. Become an outstanding violinist? She was a wealthy young lady. How could she become a violinist with no prospects? That was not what she wanted. She wanted a higher evaluation to raise her status, she wanted to become the object of everyone's pursuit.

There were countless violinists in the world. Lin Ran's evaluation was of no use to her.

Lin Ran had met countless people. He could see the disdain in Shen Sisi's eyes at a glance. He wanted to say something more, but when he met Shen Sisi's gaze, he suddenly lost interest. Instead, he turned his head to the back and asked with a smile, "Is there anyone else who wants to come up and give it a try?"

Although that was what he said, he no longer held any hope.

He was naive. These pampered young ladies were thinking of ways they could use to raise their status and marry into a wealthier family of a higher status. They were not trying hard to improve their violin skills.

Hearing Lin Ran's question, Ji Ning subconsciously moved forward by half a step, but she quickly retreated. She lowered her head and bit her lips.

'When Ji Ning was young, she was kidnapped and sold to a small mountain village. The villagers there were unruly and unreasonable. The family that bought Ji Ning originally wanted to buy a son, but the human trafficker didn't have a boy available. In order to facilitate this transaction, the human trafficker lied to the family and said that they could give birth to a boy if they bought her and named her Zhao Di. Unfortunately, they could not give birth to a boy even after buying Ji Ning and keeping her for several years.

They vented their anger on Ji Ning by making her live in a pigsty, giving her animal feed to eat, and she got beaten and scolded every day. Living in this kind of living environment had caused Ji Ning to become introverted and cowardly. Every time there was a slight movement, she would be afraid. And every time she did something wrong, her whole body would tense up in fear, afraid that she would be beaten up.

Later on, when she returned to the Ji family, the materialistic lifestyle had taken care of her bony body. However, the dark shadows of her childhood still lingered and followed her. Furthermore, her family was not very friendly to her. If anyone unintentionally said a word or looked at her with a mocking gaze, she would become afraid and uneasy, unable to control her tears.

Ji Ning did not open her mouth to ask for anything, She did not dare to express her desires either, except for the violin.

She remembered that on the day she returned to the Ji family home, the television in the living room was broadcasting a party. Lin Ran was standing on the stage and playing the violin. He was so immersed and the performance was so moving. It was as though only when he held the violin, would all the

noise in the world have nothing to do with him.

Such a small musical instrument could carry a range of emotions of a person, and it could make sounds that represented all kinds of emotions. Ji Ning could not help but yearn for it.

Therefore, Lin Ran was her first idol.

Sensing Ji Ning's actions, Shen Hanxing paused slightly. Just as she was about to lean over and say something, she suddenly heard laughter. Such a burst of laughter was especially abrupt in a quiet environment.

"Theard that the fifth miss of the Ji family likes to play the violin very much."

The voice belonged to a person who was part of a socialite circle that Shen Hanxing had never come into contact with before. She laughed evilly, "This is such a rare opportunity. Won't the fifth miss of the Ji family go up and give it a try? Let Maestro Lin Ran listen to your high-level performance."

"Hahaha, high-level? From a lunatic with a mental illness?"

The few girls surrounding her burst into laughter. Their waves of laughter were filled with ridicule.

"Sun Qinglian," Ji Qian was so angry that her face turned red. Her eyes widened, "Are you deliberately looking for a fight?"

The Sun family was a company that had returned from abroad in recent years. They had some designs on S City's commercial market. Sun Qinglian and her lackeys were constantly competing with the Ji family's girls. They were trying to push the Ji family down from their position as they wanted a share of S City's profits.

"Fourth Miss Ji, what are you talking about?" Sun Qinglian chuckled. She curled her red lips and said, "I just wanted to give Fifth Miss Jia chance to showcase herself. Perhaps if she performs well, Maestro Lin Ran might even take a fancy to her. I'm doing this for her sake. How can you say that I'm looking

for a fight? Looking at your attitude... do you think that she'll embarrass the Ji family if she goes on stage and performs?"

Ji Ning lowered her head and her body hunched, wishing she could curl up into a ball and hide. She tried her best to hold back her tears as she did not want to embarrass the Ji family by crying in public.

She knew that she was worthless and a disgrace to the Ji family. She was not worthy of being a member of the Ji family. She was cowardly and useless, and she would only tamish the Ji family's reputation.

Ji Ning's eyes were red, and tears were welling up in her eyes. If she was so embarrassing, sister-in-law would definitely hate her, right?

#### **Chapter 44: Let's Have a Good Talk**

If it was possible, she really wanted to shout and shut that woman up. However, she didn't dare. She could only stiffen her body, not daring to move as she felt their mocking gazes and listened to their insults.

"Tsk, Qinglian, don't say anymore. You've only been back from abroad for a short period, so you don't know what happened to the Fifth Miss of the Ji family," the socialite beside Sun Qinglian covered her mouth as she introduced Ji Ning pitifully and mockingly. She continued, "The Fifth Miss of the Ji family isn't talented with the violin at all. Even a three-year-old child can play the violin better than her. To let her play the violin on stage, wouldn't that be ruining Maestro Lin Ran's ears?"

"That's right. How can someone like her be qualified to play the violin? Haha, look at the Ji family, they're too embarrassed to let her come out and humiliate them!"

"What is the Fifth Miss's name? Ji Ning, right? I heard that she hides at home every day like a mouse and can't stand to see the light of day..."

"The Fifth Miss is timid and cowardly. She cries now and then. To let her play the violin in front of so many people... She would probably be crying and playing at the same time, right? Hahaha."

"Then forget it. I don't want to let such an unpleasant sound taint my ears."

Every word they uttered was like a knife stabbing into Ji Ning's heart.

'Don't say anymore. Please I beg you, don't say anymore.'

Ji Ning's eyes were red, and large drops of tears fell from her eyes. She bit her lips tightly, her mouth was filled with the sweet taste of fresh blood.

At this moment, her self-loathing had reached its peak. She was a useless good-for-nothing, a disgrace, and a coward who only knew how to cry! Ji Ning cursed herself repeatedly in her heart, wishing that she could immediately disappear from this world.

At this moment, a pair of warm hands were placed on her face and held her face up. Ji Ning was stunned for a moment. She raised her eyes and met Shen Hanxing's eyes, which were faintly emitting a fierce aura.

Ji Ning's body trembled twice. Sister-in-law... was sister-in-law angry with her? Was she looking down on her because she was embarrassing?

Shen Hanxing's face was cold. She took a tissue and wiped away Ji Ning's tears bit by bit. Then, Shen Hanxing held Ji Ning's hand and stood up.

Sun Qinglian's smug expression froze for a moment. After witnessing Mrs. Ji's mightiness tonight, she felt an inexplicable fear in her heart. This woman from the slums wouldn't hit her when she was angry, right? If Shen Hanxing really wanted to slap her, Sun Qinglian wouldn't allow herself to be bullied.

Heh, only the people from the slums would hit her at the slightest disagreement. It was crude and embarrassing.

“Miss Sun, right? And the daughters of the socialites from other families,” Shen Hanxing looked at them coldly, the corners of her eyes slightly raised. “Is it fun to mock others? Does it feel good picking on the pain of others?”

Sun Qinglian refuted, “When did I mock her? I only recommended her to Maestro Lin Ran. I was kind enough to give Ji Ning a chance to show off. Is this called mocking?”

“You know very well whether you were mocking her or not.”

Shen Hanxing’s gaze was like an arrow, and her shoulders and neck were straight. She said in an imposing manner, “You used your status to incite others to bully the kind and weak. You thought you were standing on the moral high ground, and you tried your best to stomp on the pain of others to show off your status. I really want to cut open your heart and see if there’s black blood flowing inside.”

Sun Qinglian was caught by her gaze and subconsciously covered her chest. She did not know why, but she felt her heart throb with pain. It was as though Shen Hanxing had really used a knife to cut open her heart.

This lady’s aura was so powerful?!

“It’s not up to you to judge what the Ji family’s fifth miss wants to do,” Ji Qian also reacted. She sneered, “What right does a small third-rate family have to talk to the Ji family when they can’t even squeeze their way into \$ City?”

“You!”

This was the first time Sun Qinglian had been so blatantly insulted.

“You what?” Ji Zhou appeared out of nowhere, he rolled his eyes. “Do you really think there’s no one else in the Ji family? So what if my fifth sister likes the violin? No matter what she likes, our family can get it for her. What are you trying to do, forcing her like that? If Ji Ning wants to play the violin, she can do as she wishes. You’re a girl with such a big mouth, aren’t you afraid that you won’t be able to get married?”

“Second brother, your words are too unsophisticated,” this was the first time Ji Yang was standing on the same side as his annoying older brother.

He twisted his wrist and smiled evilly, “I don’t like to talk too much. I prefer to be straightforward and attack directly. Of course, our family’s upbringing doesn’t allow us to attack women. But there should be men in the Sun family, right? I think we can find some time and have a good talk with them..”

#### **Chapter 45: Shall We Give It a Try?**

Have a good talk? How were they going to do that?

Everyone in S City knew that Ji Yang was an unreasonable madman. He was someone who would beat people up at the slightest disagreement. The Sun family members were all scheming and conniving. They could slowly dig a hole and watch their opponents fall into it and die. But what could they do to a



madman? What was even more terrifying was that this madman had the Ji family backing him.

Although the head of the Ji family was disabled, the Ji family had not collapsed yet.

Sun Qinglian's expression instantly turned ugly.

Ji Ning did not expect these to happen. She thought that she would have to bear the humiliation alone. And then she would have to hide somewhere and tend to her wounds by herself. However, her family protected her and braved the storm together with her.

No, that was not the right way to put it. Her family blocked out the storm and provided her with a safe space and protected her.

Ji Ning's heart was filled with warmth and bitterness. The tears that had just been wiped away flowed down again when she looked at her brothers and sisters' figures. However, this time, the tears weren't tears of sorrow, but warm and touching tears.

Ji Ning knew that all the changes were brought about by her sister-in-law. Her sister-in-law came to her side like a savior, giving her a new life and the ability to trust again.

Shen Hanxing held Ji Ning's hand and then she smiled at everyone in the banquet hall. She said, "You all seem to think that our family's Xiao Ning doesn't sound good when she plays the violin. Who gave you such a misconception? In my opinion, Xiao Ning is more talented than anyone here. In my heart,

she's a child prodigy."

Ji Ning's eyes sparkled as she looked at her. It was unknown if it was because of her tears that reflected the light or something else, but her eyes were astonishingly bright. "Sister-in-law..."

"pee"

Sun Qinglian, who was initially frightened by Ji Yang's words, could not help but laugh out loud. "Mrs. Ji, do you know what you're saying? It's fine to cover up for her, but there's no need to lie through your teeth, right? Everyone knows what level Ji Ning is at."

"Miss Sum, as Ji Ning's family, I think I know her better than you do," Shen Hanxing was calm. "Miss Sum, it's best to show some restraint when you speak. Where I was from, a gossipy woman who spoke nonsense would have been beaten up."

Gossipy woman? Shen Hanxing actually dared to call her a gossipy woman?!

Sun Qinglian was so angry that her face turned red. She thought she was an elegant socialite, and this was the first time she was called a gossipy woman. Shen Hanxing, this uncultured woman!

Sun Qinglian was furious. She said angrily, "You're so sharp-tongued, Mrs. Ji! Even if you're defending the Ji family to maintain your position, so what? Ji Ning is a piece of trash who can't even play a complete piece of music! Ask her now, would she dare to perform on stage? Would she have the guts to do

that?!"

“Sun Qinglian, don’t go too far!” Ji Qian scolded angrily. “You clearly know that Ji Ning has a psychological trauma, yet you’re still so aggressive. Don’t you have any shame!”

“Heh, you mean she doesn’t dare to go on stage?” Sun Qinglian thought that she had the upper hand. She couldn’t help but say proudly, “I’m not being aggressive. It’s your sister-in-law who is distorting the facts and making Ji Ning seem better than she actually is. If Ji Ning can’t do it, then shut up and obediently receive this ridicule.”

Shen Hanxing ignored Sun Qinglian’s ugly face and turned to look at Ji Ning. She discussed with Ji Ning, “Xiao Ning, do you want to go on stage and give it a try? This is indeed a very good opportunity for you. Becoming Maestro Lin Ran’s student will allow you to further develop your talent in the violin, and...”

Shen Hanxing paused for a moment and patted Ji Ning’s head. “You have to take the first step in some things, right?”

Ji Ning was stunned for a moment, then she met Shen Hanxing’s gentle and powerful eyes.

“I will always be with you,” Shen Hanxing did not rush her. She gently assured Ji Ning, “Not only me but also your brothers and sisters. We will always be with you and be your strongest support. You can do whatever you like. No matter what, as long as you take the first step and break through the shackles and restrictions of those things, you will see a different sky.”

Shen Hanxing would not force Ji Ning to perform just because of Sun Qinglian’s words. The reason she encouraged Ji Ning was that she saw Ji Ning’s desire. In Ji Ning’s heart, she hoped she would be able to interact with Lin Ran or learn from him. Shen Hanxing did not want Ji Ning to have any regrets. She also hoped that Ji Ning could use this opportunity to overcome her inner demons and stand in front of others bravely.

Ji Ning was very outstanding, She should not be shackled by her past experiences and live a miserable life..

#### **Chapter 46: Public Apology**

Ji Ning was stunned. She subconsciously looked up at her brothers and sisters.

“Xiao Ning, if you don’t want to go on stage, don’t force yourself,” Ji Qian felt a little awkward. However, she continued, “It’s your freedom to learn whatever you want to learn. It doesn’t matter how well you play the violin. Who cares about what they would say?”

Although Ji Zhou and Ji Yang did not speak, the way they looked at her was absolutely not filled with disdain or disgust. Instead, they looked at her gently. She had heard mostly insults and dismissals throughout her life. She had also habitually dismissed herself and was used to constantly retreating.

However, this time, she suddenly did not want to retreat.

Her brothers and sister's figures had morphed into her strength. Shen Hanxing was by her side, holding her hand. It was as if an endless amount of energy had surged into her body, allowing her to stand up straight in front of everyone.

The night was dark, and the sky outside the banquet hall was pitch black. However, at this moment, dawn had come for Ji Ning. Her bent back straightened gradually. Although her body was trembling from nervousness, her eyes were very, very bright. She nodded lightly at Shen Hanxing.

Shen Hanxing smiled and she raised her hand to pat the top of Ji Ning's head. Her gaze turned to Sun Qinglian. She said, "If Xiao Ning plays a full piece of music, you and your friends will apologize to her in public. How about it, Miss Sun?"

Sun Qinglian and the socialites beside her looked at each other.

"Apologizing isn't a big deal to me. I don't believe that this trash can really make a name for herself," Sun Qinglian gritted her teeth. "No matter how much trouble Shen Hanxing makes, she can't make Ji Ning play the violin perfectly out of thin air!"

"That's right."

The girl beside Sun Qinglian also nodded. "She started acting crazy after getting a little attention tonight. She doesn't know where she stands. Let's teach her a lesson today!"

Shen Hanxing had left too deep an impression on them tonight. The other socialites hesitated. However, since Sun Qinglian nodded, they could only follow suit.

"Alright, I agree."

Sun Qinglian raised her voice and said, "But I also have a condition. If Ji Ning can't perform a full piece of music, I want you to bow down and apologize to me in front of everyone, Mrs. Ji!"

"No problem," Shen Hanxing replied without hesitation.

After she replied to Sun Qinglian, she turned around and smiled at Ji Ning. She said, "Xiao Ning, whether or not I can save my pride today will be all up to you now."

Her tone was relaxed, without any hints of negative emotions. It was as if she firmly believed that Ji Ning could do it. Ji Ning clenched her fists, and she became more resolute.

"Don't be afraid. No matter what happens, we are here for you," Ji Qian walked up uncomfortably and gave Ji Ning a hug. "We, the Ji family, are never afraid of trouble."

If Ji Ning really didn't perform well, at worst, they wouldn't admit their loss. Or she could apologize to them on behalf of her sister-in-law. There was always a solution.

Ji Zhou, who hardly interacted with Ji Ning, lazily rubbed Ji Ning's head. He said, "Your second brother is here for you too."

Ji Yang also said, "It's fine. If it really doesn't work out, I'll go beat up the Sun family members. Doesn't Sun Qinglian have an older brother? I'll beat him to death!"

Since Sun Qinglian was bullying his younger sister, he would go and bully Sun Qinglian's older brother. It was the perfect plan!

However, when he was saying those harsh words, Ji Yang secretly glanced at Shen Hanxing. He did not forget the consequences of the previous fight... However, even if his sister-in-law wanted to beat him up this time, he would not back down from this. If he said he would beat up Sun Qinglian's older brother, he would definitely do so!

Shen Hanxing smiled as she watched this scene. She did not stop them from supporting Ji Ning even with Ji Yang uttering those harsh words. This act of supporting their sister was a good thing. Why would she punish them for it?

Shen Hanxing held Ji Ning's hand as they walked up the stage step by step. Wherever they passed by, the socialites who had previously approached them to chat would look at them encouragingly and cheer them on softly.

The countless encouragements she had received in this short walk to the stage formed a certain kind of warm and resolute strength. This strength morphed into a pillar that supported her weak shell.

Many years later, Ji Ning would step onto a bigger stage. She would walk on an even longer red carpet, and she would walk through a crowd. No one held her hand, but her steps were still firm and calm, and her eyes would not flicker in the slightest. Because she knew that from that night onwards, she would never dismiss herself, and she would never doubt whether she should have been born.

She was not wrong.

However, at this moment, she had only just begun to embrace her new life. She stood on the stage, trembling a little as countless gazes focused on her.

The fingers holding the bow were curled up and trembling. The very light bow seemed to weigh thousands of kilograms at this moment. It was as if she did not even have the strength to put the bow on the string..

#### **Chapter 47: You've Done It**

Ji Ning remained silent on stage for too long, causing Sun Qinglian and the others to let out sharp jeers. She subconsciously wanted to turn her head to look.

She was always too conscious of other people's gazes. When she performed in front of people, she couldn't help but look at their expressions and reactions. If someone frowned ever so slightly, she would panic as if she had done something wrong.

Because she paid too much attention to it, the smooth sound of the violin became obscure and unpleasant. The arm holding the bow gradually got stiffer. In the end, her fingers felt as though they were heavy and couldn't move at all.

When Ji Ning was stuck in this predicament and could not get out of it, a warm palm gently landed on the top of her head. Shen Hanxing's gentle and firm voice rang in her ears, "Don't bother about them. You only need to care about the violin in front of you. After you stand on stage, the only thing that is intimately connected to you is the violin. The violin is your partner."

Shen Hanxing smiled as she looked at Ji Ning warmly. Her slender fingers landed on the violin. Shen Hanxing bent her back slightly. Her body was seductive, making it impossible for anyone to look away.

"Pay attention to your violin. Pour your heart and feelings into it," Shen Hanxing held Ji Ning's hand and placed the bow on the violin's string. She pulled it gently, producing a piercing sound.

Shen Hanxing chuckled, "Look, your violin is protesting. Protesting that you're not paying attention to it."

After experiencing so many absurd situations, Maestro Lin Ran did not show the slightest bit of dissatisfaction. He even encouraged Ji Ning, "It's alright. Just pretend that we don't exist and play as you wish."

Ji Ning thought about Shen Hanxing's words and allowed her entire mind to become one with the violin. Her originally perturbed heart slowly calmed down. She nodded her head vigorously. When she opened her eyes again, her pair of evasive eyes carried a certain determination. She placed the violin on

her shoulder and placed the bow on the strings. She moved her arms slightly and the flowing notes danced and leaped like butterflies.

It was said that the music of the violin contained all the thoughts and emotions of the violinist. In the past, Ji Ning's music sounded lonely and full of despair. It sounded majestic yet shaky, giving people a sense of danger and the feeling of falling. However, this time, her music contained hope amidst the

loneliness and despair. It was like a light that suddenly rose from the darkness, like a butterfly that had broken out of its cocoon, giving people a new life.

Shen Hanxing could not help but smile.

The sound of the violin could express many emotions. When she played the violin, she was more valiant and passionate about fighting against fate. Ji Ning had shed her darkness and was draped in light, welcoming the hope of a new life. Death and hope fought against each other. In the end, the power of light defeating darkness was extremely inspiring.

'When Ji Ning's last note rang in the air and slowly faded away, the entire banquet hall fell into dead silence. The emotional girl shed tears, but her eyes were shining.

Ji Ning's hands trembled as she put down the violin bow. She was agitated and excited. She exclaimed, "Sister-in-law, I did it!"

"That's right, you did it," Shen Hanxing smiled and stroked her head. "Xiao Ning, you're really awesome. Your music was so powerful. This is the best performance I've ever heard."

This was not just a violin piece, it also represented a girl's new beginning from inside out.

Lin Ran thought about it and clapped hard, causing the audience below the stage to clap enthusiastically one after another. Ji Ning blushed under the applause that was filled with cheers, and her pale little face turned pink. Although she was shy, she did not choose to hide this time. Instead, she tried her best to face it.

“You are the most spiritual and talented violinist I have ever seen,” Lin Ran was not stingy with his praise. “You will definitely be able to achieve more than me in the future. You are amazing, You’re able to convey words through your violin playing, and it contains so much emotion.”

He smiled as he looked at the young lady who seemed to have been reborn. He asked excitedly but restrained himself, “Would you be willing to learn the violin from me? I promise that I will teach you everything I know.”

As soon as he finished speaking, the entire place was in an uproar.

They were already mentally prepared and knew that Lin Ran had plans to take in a student. However, the fifth daughter of the Ji family, who was a nobody, was chosen as his student. They found it very unbelievable.

He was Lin Ran. He was a maestro violinist who had won all the major international awards. He was a representative figure at the top of the international violin level, and he was also considered a national treasure.

Lin Ran was not from a wealthy family, but thousands of wealthy families wanted him. It was not only because he was a symbol of elegance, but he was also considered a national treasure.

But now, Lin Ran said that Ji Ning would be able to achieve more than him in the future. How could this not be shocking?

Ji Ning was filled with excitement. She looked at Shen Hanxing who was standing by her side smiling happily. She was filled with gratitude. She tried hard to control her emotions. She nodded slightly anxiously, “I’m willing, I’m willing. Maestro Lin, I.

#### **Chapter 48: Let’s Line Up to Apologize**

“silly child, you should call me teacher now.” Lin Ran stood up and walked to her side. Facing the crowd below the stage with her, he announced, “From now on, Ji Ning will be my student.”

The reporters who had been invited to the performance pressed the shutter one after another, recording this seemingly historical moment. The reporters would not know what the scene they were recording with the continuous clicking of the shutters, would represent.

They were recording the historic gathering of the two legends in violin history.

The applause below the stage was thunderous. Sun Qinglian and the group of socialites turned pale. They wanted to silently leave the venue. However, they were stopped by Ji Qian, who was already prepared. She said, “Miss Sun, the bet hasn’t been fulfilled yet. Isn’t it inappropriate for you to leave now?”

“Who did you say was leaving?” Sun Qinglian’s expression was unsightly as she glared at her. “I just wanted to go to the bathroom!”

“So long you’re not leaving, it’s all good,” Ji Qian smiled at her. “No matter what you plan on doing, you don’t have to do it now. Apologize first.”

“You!” Sun Qinglian only felt embarrassed when things had reached this stage.

If she apologized to Ji Ning in public, wouldn’t that be utterly humiliating? How could she face the Ji family when she sees them in the future?

“Miss Sun, are you trying to back out?” Ji Qian was extremely happy. She gave Sun Qinglian a push and urged her, “Hurry up, don’t waste everyone’s time.”

It was embarrassing enough to make a fool of herself. If she didn’t admit her mistake and tried to back out from the bet... The Sun family couldn’t afford to be humiliated. Sun Qinglian gritted her teeth.

“I shouldn’t have agreed to apologize. Now I’m so embarrassed!” one of the girls complained in a low voice.

“So you’re blaming me now?” Sun Qinglian turned around abruptly and glanced at them. The girls lowered their heads and didn’t dare to make eye contact with her. Their attitude made Sun Qinglian’s heart turn cold.

She sneered, “Was I the one who forced you to agree to the bet? Didn’t I ask for your opinions before the bet? You didn’t dare to refute back then, and now you’re blaming me?”

Sun Qinglian was quite angry about it. Being humiliated wasn’t that important anymore. She simply made her way up the stage and took the microphone. She said to Ji Ning straightforwardly, “I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have laughed at you. I even purposely mocked you. I hope you can accept my apology.”

After saying that, she didn’t wait for Ji Ning’s reaction. She put down the microphone and turned to leave. When she passed by the girls, she sneered, “I advise you to quickly apologize as well. Mrs. Ji isn’t someone you can mess with.”

After saying that, she left.

The remaining socialites looked at each other. In the end, no matter how dissatisfied they were, they still went up on stage to apologize to Ji Ning.

“Ji Ning, I’m sorry.”

“Ji Ning, I was wrong, I apologize.”

“Ji Ning...”

Several socialites queued up to apologize. It was almost a famous scene in the upper-class circles. Ji Ning watched this scene in a daze as she listened to them apologizing to her one after another. She used to think that she didn’t care anymore. After being hurt too many times, she thought she had become

numb to all these. She thought that she would be able to ignore these malicious and mocking words. However, when she heard these belated apologies, she realized that she was angry.

It was not her fault, it was never her fault. They were in the wrong!

The pent-up feelings in her chest seemed to be slowly dissipating. With tears in her eyes, Ji Ning held Shen Hanxing's hand and smiled brightly.

Ji Qian had originally booked a hotel room as she did not want to return to the Ji family's house after the banquet. However, after the banquet ended, Ji Qian did not bring it up. She instead thickened her skin and got into the car with Shen Hanxing. They returned to the Ji family's house together.

The living room of the Ji family's house was brightly lit. Ji Yan, who was supposed to be resting in bed, was sitting on the sofa with a book in his hands. When Shen Hanxing saw him, her eyes lit up slightly. She quickened her pace and walked over, her gaze lingered on his legs for a long time. Eventually, she simply asked, "Why aren't you resting?"

Ji Yan raised his head to look at her. His pair of dark eyes were suppressing his surging emotions. It seemed that she was the only one left in the world in front of him. After a long while, he finally revealed a faint smile. He said, "I couldn't sleep, so I wanted to wait for you... wait for you guys to come back."

He wanted to wait for her. He wanted to witness this very important night with her.

Ji Yan did not say this out loud. There seemed to be thousands of words hidden in his eyes that were as dark as ink.

This night held a different meaning for everyone in the Ji family.

The next day, the whole Ji family gathered for a rare breakfast together. After Ji Yang and Ji Mo finished their breakfast, they went off to class. As usual, Ji Zhou stayed at home and seemed like he had nothing to do. Ji Qian had requested for leave of absence to return to the country. Since she didn't have anything important to do, she also stayed at home and didn't leave the house.

#### **Chapter 49: Which Teacher Did You Learn From**

Ji Ning looked at her brother and sister who stayed at home. She silently tightened her grip on her spoon. For the first time, she bravely brought up her idea. She asked, "Sister-in-law, I have a lesson with my violin teacher today. Could you accompany me?"

Without waiting for Shen Hanxing to respond, Ji Yan frowned slightly, and his dark gaze fell on her. He said, "I get the driver to send you over. You're already so big, you still need someone to accompany you there?"

"L.." Ji Ning shrank back a little and looked timidly at her serious and cold big brother. After a pause, she turned her gaze to Shen Hanxing and looked at her pitifully. Her eyes were slightly red. Ji Ning said, "I'm just a little nervous when I think about being alone with the teacher. After all, it's my first time...I... Sister-in-law..."

Her thin and small face was filled with attachment and unease. It was as though she would burst out crying if Shen Hanxing rejected her.



The children who grew up in the slums were all stubborn. Even when they were beaten up, they still had to stubbornly have the last say. How could there be a small crybaby that could cry so easily?

This was the first time Shen Hanxing realized that she was so afraid of other people crying. She quickly replied, "Okay, I'll send you over after breakfast."

Ji Ning instantly revealed a satisfied smile, revealing two shallow dimples on her cheeks. This was when the others realized that the girl who had always let her hair down to cover her cheeks, as though she wanted to stay in a dark corner, had pinned her long hair behind her delicate and small ears. More than half of her face was revealed now.

Her once timid appearance was nowhere to be seen. She looked like a slightly shy and ordinary little girl.

"sister-in-law," Ji Qian bit her lips. She wanted to stick to her sister-in-law, but she could not find a legitimate reason to do so. It was not like she could be thick-skinned enough to go to Maestro Lin Ran's house with Ji Ning. Thus, she was very dissatisfied.

For the first time, she felt that it was so boring to be the daughter of a rich family who had nothing to do.

Shen Hanxing looked over when she heard her voice. She did not seem to sense Ji Qian's annoyance. Shen Hanxing said, "You just returned home. Stay at home and rest. Wait for me to bring something back for you to eat."

Shen Hanxing was going to bring food back just for her?

"Okay," Ji Qian instantly tuned from being sullen to cheerful as she smiled brightly.

The way his sisters fought for attention was really unsightly, and Ji Zhou curled his lips in disgust.

Ji Yan's eyes darkened as he watched this scene. For the first time, he felt that his father had left too many children. Why were all of them pestering his wife? Unfortunately, his wife was easy to talk to. She would also mostly concede to every plea, and she was very well-tempered as well.

"Mr. Ji," Shen Hanxing wiped the corner of his mouth. She smiled and stood up, then walked and stopped in front of Ji Yan. She bent down and asked, "How are you feeling today?"

Ji Yan's body still had the disinfectant smell from the surgery yesterday, and his face was a little pale. The breakfast that Ji Yan ate was different from theirs. The kitchen had specially prepared a meal to be consumed after the surgery. It was light and nourishing, but Shen Hanxing realized that he only ate a small amount.

Although the doctor said that it was a minor surgery, it involved breaking and reconnecting the long and crooked bones. One could imagine what kind of pain he would experience after the anesthetic wore off.

"I'm okay."

Ji Yan shifted his gaze, not looking at her beautiful face that was very close to him. He said lightly, "My wife, please go and come back early."

The two of them exchanged a look that only they could understand.

“What’s wrong, sister-in-law?” Ji Qian subconsciously asked, “Is there something wrong with Big Brother’s body?”

The conversation between the two of them was obviously very normal. However, for some reason, it gave people the feeling that the conversation contained a little secret between them. There seemed to be a cryptic tacit understanding that no one else could intrude on.

Shen Hanxing could not help but laugh. She replied, “It’s nothing. If you’re bored at home, you can read more books.”

“Reading more would always make you smarter.”

When Maestro Lin Ran returned to the country this time, he stayed in a small villa on the outskirts of the city. The environment was quiet, and there was a beautiful wetland park nearby. It was a very suitable place to live.

When Shen Hanxing brought Ji Ning to visit, Lin Ran had just finished his daily practice. He warmly welcomed the two of them.

“Mrs. Ji,” Lin Ran’s eyes were kind and full of appreciation. “I wanted to ask you something yesterday but it wasn’t very convenient. Actually, I wanted to know whether you also play the violin? I wonder which teacher you learned from.”

Yesterday, Shen Hanxing had casually moved the bow and strings of Ji Ning’s violin. She helped Ji Ning adjust the sound of the violin discreetly in areas others couldn’t see.

Tuning was something easier said than done. If it wasn’t for her extraordinary knowledge and understanding of the violin, it would have been very difficult to tune it accurately.

Last night, he saw Shen Hanxing casually fiddle with the violin twice. After that, the violin which was originally slightly out of tune was tuned perfectly. He was very surprised to see that.

“Me?”

Shen Hanxing was a little surprised. After being stunned for a moment, she smiled and said, “Maestro Lin, you’re flattering me. I’m sure you’ve heard some things about me. I didn’t come from a good background. How could I have the chance to learn from a great teacher? I just dabbled in it a little when I

was bored.”

## **Chapter 50: The Eldery Couple Hiding In The Depths Of The Park**

She had indeed never learned from any violin master. It was simply a coincidence that she encountered and learned the violin from a few elderly who lived in seclusion for a while. Shen Hanxing had once asked for their names. However, they said that their names were already meaningless, so they did not tell her.

She was immersed in her memories and did not realize that Lin Ran's eyes were filled with complicated emotions.

Shen Hanxing was younger than 20 years old, but her violin skills were already unfathomable to him. Lin Ran thought of Shen Hanxing's outstanding talent several times at night. He felt that he might not be capable enough to teach her. Otherwise, he would have taken Mrs. Ji as his student on the spot that night.

But what did Mrs. Ji just say earlier? She only dabbled in it when she was bored? If she didn't practice the violin all year round, how could she perform like this?

Lin Ran thought that Shen Hanxing was being modest and didn't want to say anything more. Thus, he didn't ask any further. He asked Ji Ning to go upstairs with him to the music room for class. After all, it was the first day of class, so it was more about getting to know the basics. It wouldn't take too long.

But Shen Hanxing didn't plan to sit there and wait. After waiting for Lin Ran and Ji Ning to go upstairs, she got up and walked around the wetland park in front of the villa.

The wetland park was a key project of the City's Environmental Protection Bureau. The wetland park essentially retained the most primitive state of the surrounding ecology. The air was fresh and the environment was beautiful.

Shen Hanxing walked as she looked around. Unknowingly, she arrived at the center of the park. She heard hearty laughter coming from the side.

A gray-haired elderly couple were sitting in the pavilion, drinking tea and discussing something. When they heard the footsteps, they looked back in unison. They looked friendly.

One of them, a short-haired old lady, looked at Shen Hanxing. She smiled and asked, "Are you Lin Ran's new student?"

The wetland park project had just been completed, and the surrounding buildings were not officially open for sale yet. Most of the people who could move in at this point had extraordinary identities. For example, only people like Lin Ran, who brought glory to the country, had the special privilege to move in early.

As the two of them were examining her, Shen Hanxing was also slowly sizing them up. They looked kind and good-natured, their eyes were wise and peaceful, and they carried the gentleness and calmness that one would possess after experiencing many things. She could not help but think of her grandmother.

Moreover, these two addressed Lin Ran rather familiarly. They were probably Lin Ran's elders or something like that. Shen Hanxing adjusted her expression then she smiled and shook her head. She replied, "No, I'm Ji Ning's sister-in-law. I sent her to class today. My name is Shen Hanxin;

"Shen Hanxing?" the short-haired old lady wiped her reading glasses. Suddenly, she smiled and said, "I remember this name. Isn't she that Mrs. Ji that Lin Ran was talking about after he came back yesterday? The one who is very talented with the violin. Old Lin, do you remember?"

“Yes, of course, I remember,” the old man who was called Old Lin waved at Shen Hanxing. “Come here, if you don’t mind. Come over and have some tea with us.”

“As long as I’m not disturbing the both of you,” Since there was nothing to do, Shen Hanxing didn’t refuse. She followed the old man’s suggestion.

After entering the pavilion, Shen Hanxing realized that the elderly couple was not just drinking tea and chatting. The old lady had a set of music scores in her hand and seemed to be composing music. Old Lin had an easel and paint beside him, and the canvas had green flowers on it.

“This is my partner, his surname is Lin,” the old lady introduced with a smile. “He doesn’t have any other hobbies, he just likes to draw something.”

If his surname was Lin... they were probably Lin Ran’s parents or relatives or something like that, right?

As expected, the environment in which one grew up was very important. Maestro Lin Ran’s parents were also very carefree, and they were still very much immersed in art even in their later years.

Shen Hanxing greeted them, and Old Lady Lin waved at her. She asked, “Since you also know the violin, don’t mind coming over to take a look at this score of mine. What do you thin

Shen Hanxing sat closer to her and looked at the score written on the paper. She slowly played it in her head, and her slender, white fingertips gently tapped on the stone table.

Seeing this, a hint of a smile appeared in Old Lady Lin’s eyes. The opening of this piece of music was very lonely and heroic. It was like a lonely boat traveling on the surface of a stormy sea. It survived through the cracks, faced difficulties and obstacles, and constantly struggled. Finally, it cut through the wind and waves and gradually sailed towards a bright and peaceful future.

At the end of the piece, there was a sense of tolerance and peace towards the world that had been honed over the years. It was as though a small boat that had experienced thousand of sails would gently ripple on the surface of the sea with the waves. The boat would greet the seagulls that occasionally flew past the surface of the sea with a smile.

“What do you think?” Old Lady Lin’s eyes were filled with anticipation as she asked, “What do you think of this piece?”