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Shi Nuan paused before saying, "I'll sit over there." She pointed at the seat beside Su Yumin. Su Yumin, who was already exhausted by the series of events, waved to her when he heard the woman's words. "Nuan, come to Grandpa."

Shi Nuan smiled and walked over. "Grandpa."

Su Yumin froze for a moment before coming back to his senses. He looked at his surroundings and then at Shi Nuan, it was as though he was making sure it was not a dream. When he saw Shi Nuan's smile, his tears spilled. "Nuan."

Shi Nuan's change stunned Su Huainan and the other two Su family members. They, too, turned to look at Shi Nuan, who did not seem to have any difference in expression. In other words, it seemed like Shi Nuan had accepted the Su family.

Fu Chengyan's bright eyes landed on Shi Nuan and the Su family members before he smiled. He then reached out to stroke his fingers through Shi Nuan's hair. "Are you tired?" His voice was soft as a feather when he spoke.

Shi Nuan shook her head. "No."

"All right."

The surgery continued for another two hours before the surgeon came out. When he saw Su Shaoqing, he exclaimed, "Director, why are you here?"

"The patient in there is my uncle. How is he?"

"He's been stabilized, but he can't go through any more shock. Otherwise, the condition of his heart will worsen, and it'll be difficult to deal with." The surgeon answered truthfully. "He's still in a coma, and he'll be sent to the ICU."

"Okay."

Su Shaoqing nodded. "Thank you."

"It's nothing. He'll be fine after a day."

After the surgeon left, Su Shaoqing turned to look at the rest of his family. "Since Uncle Huaibei's fine, everyone can go home to rest first. I'll inform you of any updates about his condition."

"Qing." Su Yumin reached out to pat Su Shaoqing's shoulder. "Get someone to watch over your Uncle Huaibei. I'll send someone to take care of him tomorrow."

"Of course." Su Shaoqing nodded. "Grandpa, why don't you head back with the rest of the family first?"

Su Yumin glanced at Shi Nuan. "Nuan, Grandpa's old. I won't be able to stay up all night."

"Rest early, Grandpa." Shi Nuan smiled at him. "We'll visit you when we're free."

"Nuan, do you mean what you say?" Upon hearing her words, Su Yumin grabbed her hands excitedly. "You're not lying to me, are you? Will you really visit me?"

Looking at Su Yumin's tearful eyes, Shi Nuan nodded. "Yes. Yan and I will pick a day to visit you."

"All right. Okay. Grandpa's free all day. I'm retired and staying at home all the time. If you're uncomfortable with your stay at the Fu family's, you can visit me anytime." Su Yumin was so delighted by Shi Nuan's words that for a moment, he forgot his son was still in the ICU.

"Dad, let's go home." Both Su Yunwan and Su Yunqing were amused by their father's reaction as they dragged him toward the exit.

After they left, Shi Nuan turned to look at Fu Chengyan. "You won't blame me, will you?" Her cautious demeanor made Fu Chengyan's heart softened. He reached out to gently rub Shi Nuan's temple. "How can I? I told you before that I'll respect your decision."

"Hey, hey. Can the two of you stop having your PDA moment everywhere you go?" Su Shaoqing shot a scornful look at them. "Do you know where you are?"

Shi Nuan froze for a second. When she saw Shu Qing, who was still on the ground, she mouthed to Su Shaoqing, "What's going on?"

"I'm guessing nothing important," Su Shaoqing said dismissively. He could not muster any good thoughts when facing Shu Qing. He then patted Fu Chengyan's shoulder. "Let's have a talk."

Fu Chengyan nodded. "I'll look for you in a bit."

"All right. I have something to attend to right now anyway."

After Su Shaoqing left, Shi Nuan and Fu Chengyan shared a look. Fu Chengyan reached out to squeeze Shi Nuan's hands, and she gave him a relaxed smile before stepping forward to look at Shu Qing.

As if she did not see Shi Nuan, her eyes continued to stare blearily at the spot in front of her.

Shi Nuan could see Shu Qing's mouth opening and closing, but she did not know what the other woman was mumbling under her breath.

Shi Nuan then crouched down to look into Shu Qing's eyes. At that moment, Shu Qing's eyes widened as if she saw something horrifying. She quickly moved backward before staring at Shi Nuan, terrified. "Don't come any closer."

Shi Nuan's brows knitted. "Shu Qing?"

Shu Qing froze. In the next moment, she came back to her senses, although her gaze still seemed unfocused, there was recognition in her eyes when she looked at Shi Nuan. An image flashed across her mind, and she glared at Shi Nuan. "Why are you here?"

Shi Nuan raised a brow. She could not help but feel amused at how quickly Shu Qing had changed her expressions. "It looks like being an actress is the perfect career for you."

Shu Qing frowned. "What do you mean?"

"Nothing." Shi Nuan sensed something was amiss about Shu Qing tonight, and she lost her interest in continuing the topic. Instead, she glanced at Shu Qing before smiling at her. "You're a popular Hollywood actress. If someone were to take a photo of you like this in the hospital, it would be a piece of sensational news."

Still frowning, Shu Qing lowered her head to look at herself before she hurriedly stood up. Perhaps she had been in the same position for too long, she stumbled when she rose. Luckily for her, Shi Nuan was there and the woman reached out to support her in time. "Are you okay?"

Feeling as if she had touched something dirty, Shu Qing shook off Shi Nuan's hand and spat, "I don't need your fake sympathy."

Shi Nuan's hand froze in midair. A dim look flitted across her eyes, but she was quick to hide it away. Shi Nuan dropped her hand before retracting her arm. By now, a look of indifference had returned to her face. "I'm afraid Ms. Shu has mistaken something. Even if it were a stranger in your place, I'd have helped them."

"You..." Shu Qing paled.

Shi Nuan chuckled, "Since Ms. Shu is fine, please leave. After all, a famous celebrity like you in a place like this is eye-catching."

"What I do is none of your business!"

"Well, I don't want to have anything to do with you, too," Shi Nuan uttered in a frigid tone. She paused before continuing, "But since you've made your choice, please don't' appear in the Su family's home anymore. Don't appear before Su- my father again."

Shu Qing's back was facing Shi Nuan when the latter said her piece. When she heard Shi Nuan's words, she stiffened.

With her arms hanging by her side, Shu Qing realized that even a step forward was a step too difficult for her. "Do you think that's what I want? If it weren't for Su Huaibei forcing me to stay, I wouldn't have even spend a day by his side," Shu Qing grounded out.

"Good. I hope you'll be able to do what you say," Shi Nuan voiced. "As for my grandfather's place, I hope Ms. Shu won't go there anymore too."

"On what grounds?"

"On the grounds that my Grandpa said he only has one daughter."

Shu Qing's heart clenched as she trembled. Shi Nuan continued, "If Ms. Shu wants to leave, no one can stop you. If you found that you can't, my husband can help you with that. He'll make sure no one can find you."

At that, Shu Qing left in a hurry.

She had to admit that when she was faced with Shi Nuan, she found herself at a loss on what to do.

In comparison with Shen Qianan, Shi Nuan was someone who could steel her heart; Shi Nuan was someone who could draw the line between her emotions and rationality.

Shu Qing stumbled her way to the road after exiting the hospital. She did not know where she wanted to go and where she could go. She felt that in this big world, there was no place she belonged.

Just then, a car stopped in front of Shu Qing. The man in the car stared at her, who was still wandering aimlessly.

"Mr. Shen?"

Shen Shixiu stared at Shu Qing as the corner of his lips turned upward. "Stop the car."

The car quickly stopped around a hundred meters away in front of Shu Qing. The car door swung open, and the man stepped out of the car.

Shen Shixiu tidied his suit before his eyes landed on the nearby Shu Qing. Behind him, Jiang Zhan had also alighted from the car. "Mr. Shen, the president said that the plane will reach Jiang City tonight. Please take a look."

Shen Shixiu smirked. "Sounds fun." Then, he strode toward Shu Qing.

Meanwhile, Shu Qing felt like she had been walking for centuries. She knew nothing about where she had walked to. It wasn't until a shadow enveloped the front of her path that she raised her head. When she saw the man's face, she stiffened. "It's you."

Shen Shixiu flashed her a faint smile. "What an honor that Ms. Jiang still remembers me."

Shu Qing took a few abrupt steps back and gulped. "You... You're Shen Feng's son?" The sky was getting dark, and Shu Qing was unsure.

On the day of the press conference, she had not seen Shen Shixiu's face clearly amid her panic.

However, the shape of Shen Shixiu's face looked similar to Shen Feng's. That was why Shu Qing thought the man in front of her might be Shen Shixiu.

With a mysterious smile, Shen Shixiu responded, "Ms. Jiang, you've walked down this dark path for quite a while now. Are you afraid of meeting a ghost of your past?"

Shu Qing shuddered from shock. "I don't know what you're talking about."

"Is that so? I thought a woman as smart as you will understand what I'm talking about." Shen Shixiu approached her slowly. "It's been a long time. Let me think. How long has it been since we've met the last time? Was it twenty-three or twenty-four years ago?"

"Shen Shixiu, what do you want?"

"I don't want anything. My father will be reaching Jiang City today, and I'm sure you haven't seen him for quite a while. I was thinking of inviting Ms. Jiang to meet with my father. That's all," Shen Shixiu replied as he looked at Jiang Zhan from the corner of his eyes.

Instantly, Jiang Zhan walked over. "This way, please, Ms. Jiang."

"I don't know who this Ms. Jiang is, and I won't follow you," Shu Qing rejected as she turned to leave. However, Jiang Zhan stood in her way and stopped her. "Ms. Jiang, Mr. Shen is inviting you to board the car."

With a scowl on her face, she snarled, "Shen Shixiu, is this how you treat your elders?"

"Of course not. If Ms. Jiang isn't interested in meeting my father, what about your daughter, Shen Qianan then?" Shen Shixiu smiled again, looking like a harmless man. "By the way, Qianan gave birth to a child named Yu. Congratulations, Ms. Jiang, you're now someone's grandmother."

Shu Qing's face turned ashen. "What did you say?"

"I said, Ms. Jiang, you're a lucky woman. Qianan has given birth to a son, and you're a grandmother now." Shen Shixiu's sly eyes landed on Shu Qing. "Say, if the public found out that the famous Shu Qing not only has an illegitimate daughter, but her illegitimate daughter also has an illegitimate son..."

"That's enough, Shen Shixiu. What do you want? Do you want me to go with you? Fine. I'll do just that!"

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"Did Ms. Shu just come out of the hospital?"

The moment Shen Shixiu's words left his mouth, Shu Qing straightened and glared at him. "You were tracking me?"

"I have no need to track you, Ms. Shu." Shen Shixiu chuckled. His constant calmness infuriated Shu Qing. "What are you trying to do?"

"Nothing. I'm just feeling glad that Ms. Shu is having a great life now."

"You... Shen Shixiu, you're trying to take revenge on me, aren't you?" Shu Qing shook from anger. "I told you I didn't destroy your family. Those are rumors!"

"When did I say that Ms. Shu destroyed my family?" Shen Shixiu looked up at her. The look in his eyes was so cold that Shu Qing could not help but shudder in fear.

"[..."

"My father's plane will be reaching here today. Do you want to guess why he's coming here?"

"How can I possibly know?" Shu Qing mumbled, but her eyes shifted away.

Shen Shixiu snorted. "You'll find out when you meet my father later."

Shu Qing's lips parted, but she realized anything she said would be useless. "What happened to your father and your mother really has nothing to do with me." I was only forced to it back then...

Shen Shixiu's eyes darkened. "Ms. Shu, do you think I'm talking about that matter?"

"What else could it be?" Shu Qing lifted her head to look at him. No matter how hard she thought about it, she could not think of anything else that would make Shen Shixiu come to her.

Shen Shixiu scoffed, "Jiang Zhan, call my father and ask him where he is."

Soon, Jiang Zhan came back with a reply. "He already got from the plane. Our men have picked him up. Mr. Shen, where do we go now?"

"We're going to the hotel."

At that, Shen Shixiu closed his eyes and rested. On the other hand, Shu Qing furrowed her brows at his carefree look.

She did not know how things had turned out this way. In fact...

Shu Qing clenched her fists, but she could not relieve the tension in her heart.

It wasn't long before they reached the hotel. Shen Shixiu was the first to leave the car while Shu Qing hesitated. However, Jiang Zhan was quick to walk over. "Ms. Jiang, please leave the car."

Hence, she was forced to come down from the car. When she saw Shen Shixiu entering the elevator, Shu Qing quickly rushed in.

The elevator stopped on the seventeenth floor, and Shen Shixiu strode out. It was then that he bumped into a person entering the elevator.

The person was none other than Lin Zhao. She was stunned for a moment before she collected herself. She then jumped onto Shen Shixiu. "Uncle Shixiu, are you surprised? I know you'll be coming back at this time, so I've been waiting for you here!"

Like an octopus, Lin Zhao clung tightly onto Shen Shixiu. The more Shen Shixiu tried to pry her off, the tighter Lin Zhao clung to him; she was adamant about clinging onto Shen Shixiu. "Uncle Shixiu!"

"Get off me!" Shen Shixiu's deep voice held a cold tone. He pinched Lin Zhao's arm, and the latter whined in pain, "It hurts! Let go!"

The look in Shen Shixiu's eyes darkened as he glared at Lin Zhao. Instantly, Lin Zhao let go of Shen Shixiu and climbed down. She huffed, "You don't know how to be gentle with women at all."

Shen Shixiu scoffed. "Why are you here?"

Lin Zhao pouted. "Uncle Shixiu, have you forgotten that I've always lived here?"

"What I'm asking is—haven't you already gone back?" Shen Shixiu's sharp gaze was fixed on Lin Zhao. Lin Zhao frowned before looking behind Shen Shixiu. She then pointed at Shu Qing. "Who's this old woman? Uncle Shixiu, do you have someone else? Is that why you don't want me anymore?"

Feeling a headache coming on, Shen Shixiu massaged his temples as he grabbed Lin Zhao's hand. He then turned to sweep his gaze across Shu Qing and Jiang Zhan. "Jiang Zhan, lead Ms. Jiang to my father's room. Without my permission, she's not allowed to go anywhere."

"Understood, Mr. Shen."

Seeing that Shen Shixiu was still holding onto her hand, Lin Zhao raised a brow as she smiled. She mumbled, "Oh my, so that woman isn't your new lover. You should've said so earlier. I was jealous for no reason!"

"Shut it."

"But I miss you so much. I haven't seen you in ages. A day of absence feels like a year, don't you know? Don't you miss me at all?"

"Lin Zhao!"

"Why are you so angry? I admit I haven't visited you because I wanted to test you. I didn't think you'd be... like this when you see me, Uncle Shixiu."

"Call me Uncle Shixiu again, and I'll break you neck!"

"Unc- I mean, Xiu!" Lin Zhao called out with an intentionally high-pitched voice.

Shen Shixiu halted in his tracks. Putting his hand around Lin Zhao's shoulder, he pulled her and shoved her against the wall. The gloomy look in his eyes was as though he was about to devour her.

Lin Zhao could not help but gulp, but she stubbornly raised her brow and grinned at him. "What's wrong? You won't let me call you Uncle Shixiu, but I can't call you Xiu either. What should I call you then? Dear? Honey? Babe? Or should I call you darling?"

At that, Lin Zhao even shyly reached out to smack Shen Shixiu's shoulder. Emotions crashed in Shen Shixiu's eyes and he suddenly grabbed her hand. His Adam apple bobbed, but his eyes remained fixed on her face.

His expression frightened Lin Zhao, but she forced herself to calm down. Her eyes continued to have the same delight in them. In the next moment, Lin Zhao's hands crawled onto Shen Shixiu's shoulder, and she leaned her lips close to Shen Shixiu's and chuckled. "So, which one do you like?"

Shen Shixiu grabbed her hands again and uttered, "You're playing with fire."

"I'm not. I'm just afraid you'd be holding yourself back too much. After all, for a high and mighty man like yourself, most women won't be of your interest, especially after you've got a taste of me. Everyone else will taste like nothing to you." As she spoke, she even licked her lips and fluttered her lashes at him. "Look at me. I'm already so passionate. Can't you give me even a hint of reaction?"

A fire burned in Shen Shixiu's eyes, but the gaze on her remained cold. "Are you not giving up yet?"

"Give up? How can I? Uncle Shixiu, you're my first man." Lin Zhao pretended not to understand his words. "Men and women all feel something for their first times. Although I'm not your first time, you're mine!"

Shen Shixiu pinched his nose bridge. "I'm talking about the project. Stop trying to change the topic." He gripped Lin Zhao's chin and repeated, "Are you not giving up yet?"

"Oh," Lin Zhao exclaimed in realization as she slapped her head. "So that's what you're talking about."

Shen Shixiu scoffed, "Keep faking it."

"I'm not faking it. Yes. I'm here for the project, but you can't kill the passion I have for you. I feel love for both the project and you."

"I told you to give up on the project. It doesn't matter even if you've gotten Kang Zicheng for it." Shen Shixiu pried Lin Zhao off. "Go back to Sheen City right away."

"I'll definitely get this project." Lin Zhao clenched her fists. "And you too."

There was a glint in Lin Zhao's eyes as she said those words. She smiled and winked at Shen Shixiu. "I'm going to look for Mr. Kang now. If you didn't stop me earlier, I might have already been meeting Mr. Kang now."

"Didn't you say you were waiting for me?" Shen Shixiu's tone was frigid as he said that, making Lin Zhao froze. She then smirked. "Are you jealous?"

Shen Shixiu frowned at that. "I won't ever."

Lin Zhao shrugged nonchalantly. "You're enjoying your time with me here. Aren't you afraid that middle-aged woman will get anxious?"

Shen Shixiu narrowed his eyes. He was about to reach out to grab her again, but the latter dodged him easily. "Don't get too anxious, Uncle Shixiu. The night is long. Wait for my return!"

With that said, Lin Zhao sent a flying kiss in Shen Shixiu's direction before speeding off.

Shen Shixiu frowned, looking in the direction she disappeared to as his heart sank.

"Mr. Shen."

Seeing that Jiang Zhan was walking over with an apprehensive look, Shen Shixiu questioned, "What's wrong?"

"The young lady has found out that you've brought Ms. Jiang back. She's now..."

"How did she find out?" Shen Shixiu walked toward the room as he instructed, "Send someone to follow Lin Zhao."

"Understood."

When Shen Shixiu pushed the door open, he heard Shen Qianan and Shu Qing's voices.

"Why are you here? What's wrong? Giving up on that acting career you got? Why have you come here?" Shen Qianan glared at Shu Qing with spiteful eyes.

Shu Qing's heart ached when she saw Shen Qianan's expression. "An, Mom isn't..."

"What Mom? You are not my mother," Shen Qianan interrupted. "Stop acting like you're my family. Do you think anyone who claims to be my mom can enter the Shen family? Ms. Shu, how do you feel now? How does it feel to be judged by everyone when you walk down the streets?"

Shu Qing stared at Shen Qianan in disbelief. "How can you say this to me? I'm your mom."

"Why can't I say that to you? I'm unrelated to you. I'm Shen Feng's daughter, Shen Shixiu's sister, and the young lady of the Shen family. As for you, you're just a slutty entertainer." Mockery was in Shen Qianan's eyes. "What can you do as an entertainer? It's not as if you can change the world."

"Shen Qianan!" Shu Qing gritted out. "Is this what the Shen family has taught you all these years?" Shu Qing could not believe that these words came from Shen Qianan's mouth.

"What the Shen family taught me is the Shen family's business. It has nothing to do with you." Shen Qianan fixed her stony gaze on Shu Qing. "Look at you. You make it seem like I'm related to you."

"I'm your mother. Your biological mother!"

Right then, the door suddenly swung open to reveal Shen Shixiu standing there, watching Shu Qing with interest. "Ms. Jiang, it's time for you to change your nasty habit of trying to make everyone your family."

"Shen Shixiu, what are you trying to do? What are you going to do after bringing me to this place? Are you going to humiliate me?"

"Humiliate you? You're not even worthy of that." Shen Shixiu couldn't be bothered with Shu Qing. "It's my father who wants to meet you. Otherwise, do you think you're someone that's worthy enough to make me do things myself?" Shen Shixiu narrowed his eyes and glanced at Shen Qianan. "What are you waiting for? Come out now."

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Unwillingly, Shen Shixiu walked out of the room. However, before she fully stepped out of it, she shot a bitter look at Shu Qing. Upon noticing it, Shen Shixiu closed the door before looking at Jiang Zhan. "Keep an eye on the room. Without my permission, no one is allowed in or out of it."

Shen Shixiu then brought Shen Qianan back to her room. After making sure Yu was asleep, he then stared at Shen Qianan.

Shen Shixiu sat in silence, but the tense atmosphere he created suffocated Shen Qianan. Although she was anxious, she dared not say a word before Shen Shixiu did.

"Well? Do continue. Weren't you talking a lot earlier?"

"Why did you bring that woman back here?" Shen Qianan could not understand why Shen Shixiu had brought Shu Qing here. Shen Shixiu's gaze remained fixed on his sister as he answered, "Father is coming here today. He wants to meet with her. Is this answer satisfactory to you?"

Shen Qianan's face turned pale at the answer. Shen Shixiu then stood up before looking at her. "Before Father comes, you're not allowed to see her again. I won't care what you do after that."

With that said, Shen Shixiu left.

Shen Qianan stood transfixed in her room. All she could think of were the words Shen Shixiu had just said. Father's coming?

Two hours later, Shen Feng finally arrived, and Shen Shixiu went to pick him up personally. Behind him were two other bodyguards. "Father."

Shen Feng nodded before looking at Shen Shixiu. "Where is she?"

"Upstairs." Shen Shixiu paused before continuing, "You're here because..."

Shen Feng huffed, "Don't assume I don't know what you're trying to do. I've told you she has nothing to with that matter."

"Father, are you still defending her?" A bitter look crept into Shen Shixiu's narrow eyes. "My mother..."

"That's enough. I'll explain to you later. I want to meet with her first. After this matter is settled, you may go back."

Without giving Shen Shixiu a chance to continue speaking, Shen Feng went upstairs.

By now, Shu Qing had been in the room for several hours. Although Shen Shixiu did nothing, the several hours she spent there felt like years for Shu Qing. If not for Shen Shixiu telling her that Shen Feng would be coming, Shu Qing would not have followed Shen Shixiu here so easily. However, it had been hours since the moment she stepped into the room, and the long wait made Shu Qing uneasy.

Just then, the door swung open, informing her of Shen Feng and Shen Shixiu's arrival.

Shu Qing's eyes widened as she stood up. "Feng!" Right as the name left her lips, she regretted it. She then muttered, "Mr. Shen."

Shen Feng nodded before turning to look at Shen Shixiu. The younger man nodded. "I'll leave you two to have a talk then."

Shen Feng entered the room and closed the door behind him. "It's been a while, Qing."

Hearing his words, the light in Shu Qing's eyes dimmed. "It's been a long time since I've heard you call me that." She then smiled at him. "Come, have a seat."

Shen Feng nodded. Noticing her pale pallor, he asked, "Are you feeling unwell?"

Shu Qing shook her head. "Since you've asked your son to take me here, is there anything you need?"

"There is indeed something." Shen Feng gazed at Shu Qing for a moment before continuing, "I heard from Shixiu that you and he have come back. That's why I'm here to visit you, as well as to put an end to what happened back then." Upon hearing his words, a shudder ran through her body. She jumped to her feet and cried out, "Shen Feng."

"You're still with him? I've guessed that you still have feelings for each other. How can you stop having feelings just because you wanted it to? Back then, both Shixiu's mother and I owed you two favors. It's been more than twenty years since then. I'm sure we're done with returning the favors."

Hearing Shen Feng's words, Shu Qing's expression turned grimmer. "Shen Feng, what are you trying to do?"

"What can I do? Qing, there are some things that you have to face instead of avoiding it."

"I don't know what you're talking about." Shu Qing moved to leave, but Shen Feng stopped her. "I've taken care of Qianan for you for so many years. I'm sure I've returned the favor of you saving my wife back then."

Shu Qing's hand on the door handle stiffened before she gripped it tighter.

"You saved my wife back then, and I've raised Qianan for you. We don't owe you anything anymore, but..." Shen Feng trailed off. "You shouldn't have involved the kids into your grudge against Su Huaibei."

"I didn't. I just don't want to hurt them, that's why I'm doing this. You don't understand. Su Huaibei is a lunatic. He refused to believe that I was pregnant with his child. He was the one who kept suspecting that Qianan wasn't his. I... If he treated me in that way, I'm scared he would hurt Qianan. That's why I..."

"What about Shi Nuan?"

"What?" Shu Qing snapped her head up in surprise. Then, she asked again, "How did you know about Shi Nuan's matter?"

"When you left the capital to go to C Country, my wife went to the Shi family to visit her. She then let Shixiu visit the Shi family," Shen Feng muttered. "You've shifted the hatred you have for Su Huaibei onto Shi Nuan. It's not fair to her."

"Fair? Tell me what is fair?" Shu Qing sneered. "I never asked you to do these. It's true that I saved your wife's life back then. That's why I asked you to raise Qianan. That was the end of

it. Why did you have to stick your nose into Shi Nuan's business? Shen Feng, you're generous, aren't you? You even sent your son to the Shi family. Why didn't you just take Shi Nuan back to the Shen family too?"

Shu Qing hastily said, "The things that happened afterward have nothing to do with you. And here I was wondering why your son hates me that much. You..."

"You've forgotten that I was the one who asked you for a meeting the last time. I wanted to help you, but I didn't expect those things to happen to you afterward. This is... what I owe you," Shen Feng murmured, feeling guilty. "I didn't think those people would hurt you in that way and make things worse between Su Huaibei and you. This is my fault."

"You were the one who hired those people? Not Su Huaibei?" Shu Qing stumbled backward. "Do you mean you were the one who hired those people who did those horrible things to me?" In a fit of anger, Shu Qing rushed forward. "Shen Feng, do you know that you've destroyed me? You've destroyed me!"

"I'm sorry."

"Do you think a word of apology will make things better?" Shu Qing tugged Shen Feng's shirt vigorously. "You made me live in a nightmare for so many years. I've always thought that it was Su Huaibei who made me entertain those people. I thought he gave me up to them for money. But now you're telling me that it was you all along? Why did you do that? Why?"

"Qing, calm down. I didn't know that they would violate you. They were capable investors and presidents of production companies. I just wanted to introduce you to them. Didn't you say you want to make a living with acting? I just..."

"That's enough, Shen Feng!" Shu Qing glared at him with reddened eyes. "Why are you only telling me about this now? Why didn't you tell me earlier? Why didn't you bring this secret to your grave?"

"Qing!"

"Don't come any closer. Otherwise, I might kill you!"

••••

Fu Chengyan brought Shi Nuan to Su Shaoqing's office. When Su Shaoqing was done with his rounds, he returned to see the couple in his office. He closed the door and inquired, "Anything you'd like to drink?"

"I'm fine. Tell me what you want to say. It's getting late, and May needs to rest." Bringing Shi Nuan here had delayed his schedule. After looking at his watch, Fu Chengyan swiftly continued, "Are you planning to talk about Su Huaibei's matter?"

Su Shaoqing nodded. "Why don't you have a seat first?"

Fu Chengyan helped Shi Nuan to a chair before he heard Su Shaoqing said, "I think Uncle Huaibei has a misunderstanding with Shu Qing. I don't exactly know what happened back at home, but I know Uncle Huaibei was injured when he was younger. It was a knife to the heart. Although he survived, the heart is still a weak spot of the body." Su Shaoqing pinched his nose bridge. "I'm sure you've heard what the surgeon said. He had a heart transplant in the past, but I'm afraid he doesn't have long left."

As he spoke, he glanced at Shi Nuan. "I think that's why he's determined to take you back into the family."

Shi Nuan parted her lips. She thought that she felt nothing for this father of hers, but after hearing Su Shaoqing's words, she couldn't help but shudder.

Looking at Su Shaoqing, she muttered with difficulty, "What do you mean? Are you saying he won't be living for long?"

"Yes. I've asked Liang Lin to hack into the database of various major hospitals, and he found Uncle Huaibei's medical reports. The reports stated that he had a heart surgery over twenty years ago, and he had a heart transplant a few years back. You should know how fragile a heart is. Being able to live this long is already a miracle."

Shi Nuan jumped to her feet when she heard his words. "What then?"

"I'm afraid I'll have to ask Fu Chengyan to find out how he got his injury. What I'm about to say is something else." Su Shaoqing cast a rare solemn look at Shi Nuan. "I know you might think this is a tough request. Although you've promised Grandpa earlier, I know it was because you have a moment of sympathy. You haven't truly forgiven Uncle Huaibei, have you?" In response, Shi Nuan clenched her fists and remained silent.

Su Shaoqing sighed. "I hope you can forgive Uncle Huaibei and keep him company as much as possible. He... doesn't have long to live."

"Su Shaoqing, aren't you a capable doctor? Since he already has a heart transplant, why don't we let him have another again? It's not as if he can't have another transplant. There are so many capable doctors in the country. If they can't do it, we can bring him overseas. He... He doesn't need to die."

"Another heart transplant? Do you think it's such a simple thing? How long can he wait for a heart that's suitable for him? We can't delay something like this."

"But..."

"That's enough," Fu Chengyan interrupted, and the room fell silent for a moment. He stood up and held onto Shi Nuan's arms. "I'll ask someone to work on it, okay?"

Shi Nuan raised her head and pursed her lips. "Yan."

"Trust me. I'll find it." He then looked at Su Shaoqing. "I've always done what I've said. You have to give him the best treatment. At the very least, you have to let him wait until I've found a suitable heart."

Su Shaoqing stared at Fu Chengyan in shock. "Chengyan, do you know what you're saying? It's likely that he..."

"Trust me!" Fu Chengyan tightened his grip on Shi Nuan's arm. "It's getting late. I'll bring May here again tomorrow."

"Hey, Fu Chengyan," Su Shaoqing cried out when he saw Fu Chengyan bringing Shi Nuan away.

"This damn lunatic!"

Su Shaoqing pursed his lips, resisting the urge to beat Fu Chengyan up. He shot a glare at Fu Chengyan's back as he huffed, "He's driving me crazy!"

He had wanted to use the situation to make Shi Nuan's heart softened so that she would forgive Su Huaibei. He did not know if Fu Chengyan had done it intentionally, but the latter had disrupted his plans.

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"Don't worry. He'll be fine."

After reaching home and noticing Shi Nuan's inability to sleep, Fu Chengyuan pulled her into his arms and patted her back. "Don't worry, okay?"

"But..." Shi Nuan's eyes reddened. "I'm pathetic, aren't I? I didn't think I'd feel anything. After all, I'm already an adult, and the feelings that I have seem pointless to me now. But when I heard Shaoqing saying that he might not have long to live, I feel upset."

"It's normal to be upset. You can't really break off your blood ties." Fu Chengyan sighed, "You've done well. Sleep. When you wake tomorrow, we'll visit him at the hospital. Then, you can tell him what you feel, all right?"

Shi Nuan nodded and whispered, "Okay."

"Good girl." Fu Chengyan planted a kiss on her forehead. "Sleep now."

Shi Nuan did not have a good night's sleep. However, perhaps it was because Fu Chengyan was around, she was still able to sleep until eight o'clock the next morning.

Fu Chengyan walked out of the bathroom and pulled Shi Nuan's blanket away. He gently patted her face and murmured, "Are you awake?"

Shi Nuan nodded, and Fu Chengyan scooped her into his arms. "Aunt Zhang has prepared breakfast for us. I've been told he's awake by the hospital staff."

"Really?" Feeling instantly alert, Shi Nuan said, "Then let's hurry and wash up before we head to the hospital."

When Fu Chengyuan and Shi Nuan reached the hospital, the members of the Su family were already there. Shi Nuan's arrival surprised them, but they were glad about it.

They had transferred Su Huaibei from the ICU ward to a normal ward. Worried about Su Huaibei's safety, the Su family members then transferred him into a private ward.

Although Su Huaibei was awake, he was only half-conscious. The doctor advised that it was best for fewer people to visit him so that the patient could rest better. In the end, everyone decided to let Shi Nuan be the one to enter the room.

When she pushed the door open, the pungent scent of medication assaulted her nose.

She took a few careful steps in. When the man on the bed heard noises from the door, he turned to see Shi Nuan. Upon noticing her, he tried to sit up, and Shi Nuan hurriedly walked over. "D-Don't move. I'll help you."

Shi Nuan swiftly walked over to help Su Huaibei into a sitting position. She then grabbed a pillow to support his back. At the sight of his pallid face, she asked, "Are you feeling better?"

The entire time, Su Huaibei's eyes never left Shi Nuan. Shi Nuan voiced, "Um... Shaoqing called us yesterday, telling us you've been admitted to the hospital, so we're here to visit you."

The corner of Su Huaibei's lips lifted. "I'm happy to see you here."

Shi Nuan smiled as well. But the atmosphere was still slightly awkward. Feeling helpless, Shi Nuan started fidgeting with the edge of her shirt. "Are you thirsty? Do you want to eat something?"

Su Huaibei nodded, a glint in his eyes. "Can you pour me a cup of water? I haven't drunk since waking up."

"Of course." Shi Nuan stood up and shook the jug before pouring a glass for him. "It's still hot. Please be careful with it."

Su Huaibei nodded. With one hand holding the cup, he tried to pull the blanket away with the other.

"What's wrong? Where are you going?"

"Nowhere. I'm trying to get my phone."

"You can tell me if you want to get your phone." Shi Nuan walked over to take Su Huaibei's phone for him. "You've just come out of surgery. The doctor advises you to spend less time on your phone. Are you going to make a call?"

Su Huaibei nodded before calling Fu Yi. "Where is she?"

Fu Yi had instantly picked up the call. Surprised by Su Huaibei's abrupt question of that woman, he replied in the next second, "Mr. Su, you were in the emergency room yesterday. I didn't pay attention to where Ms. Shu went."

Narrowing his eyes, Su Huaibei ordered, "Look for her immediately. If you can't find her, don't come back."

Su Huaibei ended the call and set his gaze upon Shi Nuan. The look in her eyes was calm, but the calmer she was, the more fear he felt. Looking at her eyes, Su Huaibei mumbled, "I..."

"Can I ask you a question?"

"Ask away." Su Huaibei put down his phone. "I'll tell you anything you want to know."

Shi Nuan smiled. "Don't be in such a hurry to promise me that just yet. What if you can't do it?"

Upon Seeing Shi Nuan's smile, Su Huaibei's chest tightened, and Shu Qing's face emerged in his mind. Smiling, he commented, "You look a lot like her when she's younger."

Shi Nuan's smile froze before she dropped it. "If I were to tell you that I'll call you Dad and go back to the Su family with you, staying by your side from now onwards, but on one condition, what do you think about that?"

"What condition is it?" Su Huaibei broke into a smile from the pleasant surprise. He hurriedly said, "Even if you tell me a hundred conditions or a thousand, as long as I can do it, I definitely will."

"Good." Shi Nuan nodded. "I want you to cut ties with Shu Qing. From now on, you no longer have any relationship with her.

It was Su Huaibei's turn for his smile to freeze. He tightened his grip on the glass and asked, "What did you say?" He stared at Shi Nuan in disbelief.

Shi Nuan stood up. "You can't do it?"

"Tell me the reason first. She's your mother. You..."

"Honestly, it's not important to me whether or not I have parents anymore. I now have a husband who loves me very much, and soon, I will be a mother of two. I have two grandfathers who love me, and the Fu clan treats me well. My husband is financially stable, and I don't need anything." Shi Nuan looked downward at Su Huaibei. "You and Shu Qing are nothing more than individuals who gave me life. You never raised me, have you?"

Su Huaibei hung his head. "You're right." Although Shi Nuan's words were ruthless, they were the truth; they were words that Su Huaibei could not refute.

"I don't know what grudge or love you have with Shu Qing for the two of you to change from lovers to enemies and frankly, I don't care. You wanting to take me back is only because you feel guilty, and you feel the need to fix your mistake. I can give you the chance to do just that. Since Shu Qing isn't interested in that, I won't force her to do the same. You can force her to stay with you, but you can't force me to accept her."

Su Huaibei plastered on a forced smile. "You're a rational kid." Too rational.

Shi Nuan smiled at that. "It depends on who I'm talking to. Mr. Su, think about it. Once you have your answer, you can ask Shaoqing to contact me, or you can contact me yourself."

With that said, Shi Nuan left without hesitation. Meanwhile, Su Huaibei was leaning back on the pillow, having fallen into deep thoughts after hearing Shi Nuan's words.

When Fu Yi came, it was already night. "Mr. Su, we've found her."

"Where is she?"

"Ms. Shu has gone back to Emerald Garden."

Su Huaibei froze. "She went back there herself?"

"Yes. Our men have been following her. After you were admitted to the hospital, Ms. Shu came for a while before she left," Fu Yi responded as he carefully watched Su Huaibei's reactions.

With a frown, Su Huaibei commanded, "Anything else you want to say?"

"How are you feeling?"

"Fantastic."

Although that was what Su Huaibei told him, Fu Yi still felt worried. After a short while of hesitation, he finally found the words to compose his reply. "After Ms. Shu left the hospital, she wandered on the streets. Then... Shen Shixiu took her away."

"What did you say?" Su Huaibei's eyes flew open. "Shen Shixiu took her away?"

"That's right. Shen Feng is here as well. I don't know what happened to Shen Feng, Shen Shixiu, and Ms. Shu in the hotel. When she came back out, she did not look well. Our men dared not walk so closely to her, so we're not sure what exactly happened. After Ms. Shu left Shen Feng's place, she went back to Emerald Garden. She has yet to emerge since then."

Su Huaibei did not know whether to feel relieved or to tense up. "She..." In the next moment, he cocked his head and said, "Who is it?"

His naturally sharp senses made him straightened his body. At the same time, Fu Yi walked toward the door and opened it. When he saw the figure by the doorway, Fu Yi stiffened.

"It's you."

"Who is it?" Su Huaibei stood up. When his gaze landed on the figure by the doorway, his face darkened.

The one standing by the doorway was none other than Shen Feng. He nodded before looking at Fu Yi. "Are you not going to let me in?"

Fu Yi glanced at Su Huaibei, who nodded, before letting Shen Feng into the room.

"Fu Yi, guard the room."

"But, Mr. Su... Of course." Fu Yi glanced worriedly at Shen Feng before he reluctantly closed the door and guarded the room outside.

Shen Feng looked around before his gaze landed on Su Huaibei's pale face. "It's been a while, Mr. Su."

"Sit." Su Huaibei pointed at the chair. "If you want a drink, you can help yourself to it. There are fruits there too."

"I'm fine." Shen Feng then found a chair to sit on. Both men fell into momentary silence before Shen Feng continued, "I heard you were hurt, so I'm here to visit you."

Su Huaibei narrowed his eyes. "Just cut to the point."

Shen Feng nodded. "I came from the capital for reasons none other than Qing and the secret that I've kept in my heart for over twenty years."

Shen Feng sighed, "I didn't think that Qing will still be in touch with you after so many years. I should've known that the two of you will never separate. Hence, you have to know about this." As he spoke, Shen Feng took out a piece of paper and handed it to Su Huaibei. "I'm sure you'll know what this is with one look."

However, Su Huaibei only frowned, making no move to take it.

A helpless smile crept upon Shen Feng's face. "I know you and I have always been up against each other, and I know you never liked me." Shen Feng forced the paper into the other man's hands. "Take a look. If you have any questions after reading it, I'll answer them honestly."

Su Huaibei's knitted brows were almost in a knot. He closed his trembling fingers around the paper and brought it closer to himself. The moment he saw the words, his grip on the paper tightened. The document that Shen Feng handed him was none other than Shen Qianan's birth certificate and her DNA report with Shen Feng. It was an old report from over twenty years ago, and in bold were the words that declared Shen Qianan having no blood relations with Shen Feng.

"What's the meaning of this?"

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Su Huaibei's grip tightened around the paper. His eyes were round in shock, and he had on the same expression as Shu Qing when she first found out the truth. "Shen Feng, what are you trying to prove with this?"

"I'm not trying to prove or do anything. I just want to clear all of our age-old misunderstandings from before." Shen Feng shook his head. "I thought Qing would've broken off all contact with you after she left, but I didn't expect the two of you to be still together after so many years. It was then I know your love towards Qing has never wavered even after so long."

"That's my business with her and it's not up to you to make comments about it!" Su Huaibei retorted icily. "What? Are you trying to gloat or something? Are you showing off the fact that she chose you over me back then?"

"Mr. Su! I know your misunderstanding towards me is much ingrained in you, so I have to tell you this; there's nothing going on between me and Qing!"

"What?" Su Huaibei looked at Shen Feng in shock. Judging from his expression, Shen Feng now knew that Shu Qing had never spilled a word about their past. In fact, Shu Qing had even made use of Shen Feng himself to cover the truth from Su Huaibei. "Yes, I have been nice to Qing, but that's not because I love her."

"Do you think I'll believe such nonsense from you?"

"I don't care if you'll believe me or not, but I have to make myself clear here. I love my wife deeply. Even though I've divorced her, I've never courted any other ladies other than my wife. Qing and I are not in a relationship at all. As for why Qing makes you think that I'm in love with her, that I have no idea."

"No man can stand the temptation of a beautiful woman. Shen Feng, you dare say that you have no coveted thoughts towards Qing for treating her so nicely?"

"I really don't," Shen Feng sighed. "I got acquainted with Qing at a cocktail party when she was not famous then. As a business person, you must've seen young girls socializing at such events in search of opportunities. I am already used to mingling around with pretty ladies and no longer harbor any feelings towards them. Qing was there to search for opportunities too, so I offered to give her a chance to shine, but I never asked for anything in exchange from her. As for why I helped her, it was because she had once saved my wife's life."

Su Huaibei looked at him in disbelief. "Then what about this report. She told me back then that the child isn't mine, it's-"

"She said it's mine?" Shen Feng shook his head. "No, it cannot be mine. We are not even in a relationship, so how can the child be mine? But..." Shen Feng closed his eyes. "Do you remember how her temperament changed drastically after that tragic incident? During that period of time, she shut herself inside her house. Do you remember this?"

Su Huaibei's expression changed at his words. The veins on his hands popped out so prominently that they threatened to burst right then.

Of course I remember. I...

"Qing said that she couldn't find you and because she was pregnant then, she begged me to take her in so that she could wait for your return. You did come back later on, so she went ahead to look for you, only to come back with cuts and bruises all over her. She looked so lost right then when she muttered about you not believing the baby to be yours and even asked her to abort the baby. She had no choice other than taking refuge at my place until she gave birth to the child."

Su Huaibei's hands trembled at his words. What have I been doing back then?

After finding out that Shu Qing was raped, Su Huaibei had gone to beat up those rapists. He beat them up so bad that most of them were either dead or rendered paralyzed, but he himself was also severely injured in the fight. Someone had stabbed a dagger into his chest but had narrowly missed his heart. He had almost died right then.

After narrowly escaping his death, Su Huaibei tried looking for Shu Qing the moment he recovered, only to find her happily residing in Shen Feng's villa. She was already heavily pregnant when he saw her chatting away with Shen Feng. Fury overtook his sense of logic

when he saw them together, which made Su Huaibei humiliate Shu Qing and even asked her to scram when she came looking for him.

"Qing was afraid that you wouldn't accept the child and would harm her, that's why she asked me and my wife to raise the child. That child is none other than Qianan."

Su Huaibei's hands trembled violently, and the report floated to the floor from his hands.

"Qing had wanted to leave the country, but she ended up getting imprisoned by you before she could leave. I have no idea what happened between the two of you during that year. By the time I've received news about her, half a year has flown by. It was then Qing wrote to me that she had flown overseas and asked me to take good care of Qianan."

Su Huaibei lifted his head. His bloodshot eyes were menacing, yet it held tears as he spoke, "Why are you telling me this now?"

"To atone for my sins!" Shen Feng sighed, "I know you have punished all the perpetrators who had directly harmed Qing back then, but there is one person you have yet to punish."

Shen Feng stood up from his place and bowed towards Su Huaibei. "I am the one who caused Qing to get raped by those bastards. If I didn't introduce her to the audition, she wouldn't have joined those producers for dinner, and she wouldn't have gotten herself raped as a result. Qing had always thought you're the one behind it. She thought it was your idea for making her sell her body in exchange for the acting role she wanted. That's why she hates you to the core."

"All this while, I thought you have explained to Qing and cleared all misunderstandings between you two. But after seeing her yesterday, I now realized how deep her misunderstanding toward you was. I thought she hates you because you didn't want the baby, but turns out it's because of the raping incident."

Hearing that, Su Huaibei suddenly flipped his blanket away and tried to get down. His feet had just touched the ground when he felt a sharp pain in his chest, causing him to sit back on his bed. Holding his hand to his chest, he tried to get back up without success.

"Where is she?"

"Hey, don't move around yet!" Shen Feng rushed over to help him back into his bed. "I know everything's my fault, that's why I have been atoning for my sins. It wasn't until later that I

came to know that Qing has given birth to another daughter for you, but then she dumped the child and left. My wife was worried about the baby, so she went to check on her. In order to protect the baby girl, I asked Shixiu to take Nuan in and care for her. All of these are for the sake of atoning for my sins toward Qing."

At that, Su Huaibei took a deep breath and closed his eyes. "I think you should leave now."

"Mr. Su, Qing has suffered a lot over the years. It's not that she doesn't want to acknowledge her children, it's just that she..."

"She hates me. Hates me to the core." Hence, she diverted all her hatred towards our child, Shi Nuan.

I bet the darkest days in her life were not the time when she got raped. It's the time when she was imprisoned by me!

Su Huaibei balled his hands into fists but relaxed them afterward. "Please leave."

Shen Feng frowned at his reply. "I know it's useless for me to say anything else, but the children are innocent. Qing... She's innocent as well. I don't want to see the two of you torturing each other anymore. Please, just take it as my wish to atone for my sins!"

After Shen Feng left, Su Huaibei remained quiet for a long time before calling Fu Yi in. "Arrange for some caregivers to care for her."

"Understood!"

Su Huaibei remained hospitalized for almost a week before his wound finally healed. He might be fine now, but that didn't mean he had fully recovered.

According to the doctor, Su Huaibei must have his heart surgery now before his illness accelerates further. However, the surgery itself also comes with risks.

But risky or not, Su Huaibei no longer cared, since he was not afraid of death. He only asked Fu Yi to get Shi Nuan to see him as he had something important to tell her.

A while later, Shi Nuan followed Fu Yi into his ward. The ward was quiet as Su Huaibei was reading. The moment he saw Shi Nuan, Su Huaibei closed his book and greeted, "You're here."

Shi Nuan nodded. "You feel better now?"

"Yes, much better."

After the previous incident, Shi Nuan had come to visit Su Huaibei a few times. But they hardly spoke and only exchanged polite greetings. For the past few visits, both Shi Nuan and Su Huaibei never mentioned the Su family issue, nor did they mention about Shi Nuan's return to the Su family.

Hence, Shi Nuan could guess Su Huaibei's intention of asking her here. She was just about to sit down when Su Huaibei uttered, "I agree to your condition."

Shi Nuan was stunned in place. "What?" She asked in confusion.

Su Huaibei put down his book and looked at Shi Nuan with a serious expression. "You said that you will accept me as your father under the condition that I stop all contact with Shu Qing. I agree to that condition."

Shi Nuan was taken aback as she stared at him in disbelief.

She didn't think Su Huaibei would suddenly change his mind after getting hospitalized once. She reckoned something must have happened for him to change his mind. But Shi Nuan was not interested to find out about it and merely nodded. "Okay. We've reached a consensus then."

Pursing his lips, Su Huaibei nodded. "Then, would you like to come home with me?"

Su Huaibei asked cautiously.

Shi Nuan gave it a thought and nodded. "Sure, but we shall do that after you've recovered and discharged from the hospital. About that, I've been raised by the Shi family for all of my life. My adopted parents may have mistreated me, but not my granddad. He has been the one who gave me all the care I needed while growing up, so I have to inform him before going back with you."

"Of course, I am fine with that." After all, Su Huaibei himself had never fulfilled his role as a father to Shi Nuan. It was Old Master Shi who had raised her throughout the years. He was so kind to Shi Nuan that he even gave all the shares and properties under his name to this adoptive granddaughter of hers.

"And another thing; Shi Yunsheng will forever be my paternal grandfather. That is a fact which you must accept."

"Of course." As long as he could reunite with Shi Nuan, Su Huaibei was fine with any condition proposed by her.

Seeing how Su Huaibei agreed to her conditions so readily, Shi Nuan simply nodded in resolution. "Alright, it's decided then. Once you've recovered, Yan and I will come and pick you up. We will drop by the Shi residence and inform them of my decision to return to the Su family. No matter how bad they were to me, they are still my family that has raised me for many years."

"Sure."

Su Huaibei nodded tiredly. His lips moved, but no words came out of it. Shi Nuan paused at his reaction. "Anything else you want to say?"

Su Huaibei finally moved his lips. "There's something I think you have the right to know."

"Please, do tell."

"It's about Shen Qianan." Su Huaibei took a deep breath and uttered while observing Shi Nuan's expression. As expected, Shi Nuan's expression changed into a frown upon hearing Shen Qianan's name.

Still, Shi Nuan managed to suppress her displeasure and asked, "What about Shen Qianan?"

"Nuan, Shen Qianan is your sister. She's your elder sister by blood."

Shi Nuan frowned further at his words. Su Huaibei added, "She's also my daughter with Shu Qing."