

Trapped In Paradise

Volume 2 Chapter 161 / Chapter 442: Wen Yang

Because it was his birthday, Wen Yang finished his part-time job early today.

Getting off through the rear door of the bus, he rubbed his slightly sore shoulders, then rubbed his hands over his cheeks, replacing the heavy fatigue on his face with a gentle smile.

He didn't want to bring the negativity from outside back to Ning Chu.

Although his coworkers at the part-time job were fairly considerate, work was still work. On top of that, he had to deal with girls who kept throwing themselves at him, which left him both mentally and physically exhausted.

Fortunately, he'd made quite a bit of money today.

And when he thought of the little succubus waiting for him back at the rental apartment, his spirits lifted noticeably.

Let's guess, what kind of birthday gift would Ning Chu give him today?

Surely something very succubus-like... Perhaps the moment he opened the door, he'd see a freshly washed little succubus wearing that shame-inducing erotic maid outfit from before, swaying her heart-shaped tail and hips as she invited him in.

Passing by a snack stall at the village entrance, Wen Yang casually bought some grilled squid. Recently, Ning Chu had been obsessed with tentacle monsters and wanted to eat squid or octopus with every meal.

He also picked up a 200-milliliter mini bottle of cola for her, and the mop she'd asked him to buy earlier.

Carrying all sorts of things, Wen Yang hurried eagerly into the apartment building, his mind full of fantasies of the little succubus shyly striking a pose at home.

A gentle, warm smile was already on his face, and his steps unconsciously quickened.

He felt that perhaps the happiest thing in the world was, after a day of work, remembering that there was a little sweetheart at home waiting for him.

Too bad it was a rental apartment, not a real home.

But that would come sooner or later...

Stopping in front of the apartment door, Wen Yang paused and tilted his head to listen to the sounds inside.

Clang, bang—like a battle was going on.

Momentarily stunned, Wen Yang raised his hand and knocked.

“Coming, coming!”

Hearing that energetic voice, his smile grew even gentler. As the door opened, however, he found that Ning Chu wasn't wearing the skimpy erotic outfit he'd imagined. Instead, she had an apron tied around her waist and was holding a large kitchen knife high in her hand—the scene was a bit terrifying.

“You’re back so early?”

Ning Chu casually set the cleaver aside and stepped forward, taking the things from Wen Yang’s hands. She even reached out on her own to help him take off his heavy coat, chattering nonstop as she did.

“I’m trying to cook. I set up a folding table by the window and even put wallpaper on the wall so oil wouldn’t splatter everywhere.”

“Good thing Lily and Xinya helped me, or I wouldn’t have finished in one afternoon~”

“They even went grocery shopping with me and taught me how to pick ingredients.”

“I’m just trying it out today. From now on, whenever I have time on weekends, I can cook for you—”

Wen Yang listened in a daze as Ning Chu pulled him by the hand and led him inside.

A strange emotion began to grow in his chest...

She led him to the coffee table. He looked down and saw three dishes laid out on it—each one lacking in both color and presentation.

Ning Chu looked a little embarrassed, lowering her head and fiddling with her fingers. “I followed the recipes exactly, but they still didn’t turn out very pretty. And since it’s your birthday, I wanted to make a whole table of dishes that looked impressive... But the taste should be fine! Want to try?”

She shoved a pair of chopsticks into Wen Yang's hand, her eyes sparkling with anticipation.

"This fried fish—"

"Sweet-and-sour carp! What fried fish!" she corrected him seriously. "This is a major Shandong dish! A must-have at wedding banquets!"

"....."

To be honest, it really didn't look like sweet-and-sour carp, at best, it was sweet-and-sour fish chunks.

Wen Yang reached out with his chopsticks, picked up a piece of fish, dipped it in the sauce, and put it in his mouth. His eyes immediately lit up, and he gave a thumbs-up.

"Surprisingly delicious!"

"Really? That good? You're exaggerating, aren't you?"

"Seriously!"

Given how it looked, he'd expected it to be decent as long as it was cooked through. But actually eating it, it had the taste of a proper home-style dish—wasn't that already a pleasant surprise? It was even comparable to cafeteria food.

"Then you're not allowed to eat anymore! There are still two more dishes I haven't finished!"

Overjoyed, Ning Chu darted back to the induction cooker by the window, then scurried back again in quick little steps, clutching a kitchen knife as she returned.

“Be careful—how about I—”

“You just sit there! Today you’re the birthday boy! I made you longevity noodles!”

“Longevity noodles?”

“It’s a custom where I’m from. On your birthday, you cook dragon-whisker noodles with an egg, it symbolizes a long life. Don’t you have that where you’re from?” On the folding table sat an induction cooker, and beneath it a small rice cooker. Ning Chu sat there, animated as she spoke. “I even simmered a pork bone broth. Pour the bone soup over the longevity noodles later—it’ll definitely taste good!”

She dropped the noodles into the pot, then stared intently at the timer on her phone, strictly following the online tutorial. She carefully adjusted the seasoning of the bone broth, adding a little and tasting a little each time, afraid it would end up too bland or too strong.

No wonder it didn’t taste bad.

The only concern he had was that she might get full before she even finished cooking.

Watching Ning Chu’s clumsy yet earnest movements, the strange emotion in Wen Yang’s chest continued to build, softening his gaze even more.

There was a knock at the door.

“Wen Yang, go get it! That should be the cake I ordered.”

“Cake?”

“Yeah, there are several cake shops near the school! I picked it out myself!”

Wen Yang stood up and opened the door. Sure enough, a cake delivery employee was standing outside.

Taking the cake, he politely said, “Thank you.”

The female employee covered her face, blushing, and hurried away.

Wen Yang found it amusing and closed the door with the cake box in hand.

Ning Chu poked her head over. “I bought a small cake. You’re probably a Goat, right? So I asked the owner to add a pair of horns on the cake~ Just like mine.”

“Want to open it?”

She asked with a bright smile.

Wen Yang nodded, untied the ribbon on the cake box, and solemnly opened it.

But the mess inside made both of them fall silent.

Only the round cake base remained intact. The outer layer of cream and fruit had been smeared all over the inside of the box, barely retaining any recognizable shape.

“How did it get completely ruined?!” Ning Chu’s voice shot up sharply. Panicked and flustered, she started looking around for her phone. “I’ll call the owner! Where’s my phone?!”

“Maybe it got jolted around on the way? It’s been rainy lately.”

She huffed angrily, determined to demand an explanation. “At least he should refund it! How are we supposed to eat it when it’s like this!? Where’s my phone?!”

Wen Yang looked at the phone clenched tightly in her hand while she ran around the room like a headless fly, searching for her phone, and couldn’t help but lower his head and laugh.

Had the little succubus’s brain overloaded?

“What are you laughing at?! Where’s my phone?!”

“Check the time, aren’t the noodles about to overcook?”

“The noodles!”

Ning Chu jolted, quickly glanced at the timer on her phone, then dashed to the induction cooker. She carefully lifted the noodles out with chopsticks and rinsed them, still grumbling indignantly, “Seriously, where did my phone go...”

She casually set the phone down on the table. Then, as she was serving the noodles, she paused, belatedly lowering her head to look at the phone.

She’d been holding it the whole time!

Looking at Wen Yang, who was finally unable to hold back his laughter, her cheeks flushed bright red in an instant. Flustered and embarrassed, she shot him an angry glare. Which only made Wen Yang laugh even harder.

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Link for character illustration:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1IxOucqi87ss3bmqfO9zl2gYiM1Gy8Hz2>