

Trapped In Paradise

Volume 3 Chapter 25 / Chapter 630: Cousin

Ning Chu stood beside the car in a daze, watching as Mom and Uncle gradually walked farther away, each holding one of Black Bean's hands.

Black Bean swung both of their arms enthusiastically, her tail standing high with excitement.

Every now and then she would let go, laughing as she ran circles around the two of them like a fluttering butterfly. Whenever she wandered too far, Mom would call out loudly for her to come back.

Even though the little cat was endlessly energetic and mischievous, both Mom and Uncle wore affectionate, happy smiles the entire time.

Watching their backs as they walked away, Ning Chu suddenly thought...

Maybe having a child wouldn't be so bad.

A child like Black Bean—lively and full of energy.

Sure, she'd sometimes make you angry, but there would probably be far more happy moments than frustrating ones.

Without meaning to, she replaced the figures of Mom and Uncle in her imagination with herself and Wen Yang.

Black Bean became the child they might someday have...

Imagining herself in that scene, a gentle smile naturally appeared on her face.

...It really does seem nice.

"Get in."

Ning Yuan knocked on the car window, snapping her out of her thoughts.

"Oh."

"I'll take you home first."

"Okay."

Opening the passenger door, Ning Chu climbed in, but her gaze remained fixed on the distant figures, reluctant to look away.

"Uncle will take good care of Mom, won't he?" she suddenly asked.

"Of course he will. They've been together for years already."

Ning Yuan glanced at her.

"Seat belt."

"I've been thinking about working somewhere farther away too. Maybe Beijing, Shanghai, or Guangzhou. I want to earn more money."

Ning Chu blinked.

"Then won't you be away from home almost the whole year too?"

"Mom has Uncle to look after her now. Coming back once during the New Year is enough. If something urgent happens, I can always fly home."

He started the car as he continued,

"Ever since I got together with your sister-in-law, I've wanted to make more money. If I hadn't been worried about Mom, I'd have gone to a big city long ago."

"Why is everyone so obsessed with making money..."

Her brother was like that.

Wen Yang was too.

"That's what being a man is about."

"I got responsibilities."

"I can't let your sister-in-law suffer because of me."

Ning Chu nodded thoughtfully.

Back when she'd still been a man, she'd had nothing.

No responsibilities.

No one she truly cared about.

She'd never really understood what that sense of responsibility meant.

"Just thinking about it sounds exhausting."

Ning Yuan smiled.

"Really? It just motivates me."

After driving for only a few minutes, he started lecturing again.

"So you're really going to Wen Yang tomorrow?"

"When you're living away from home, take good care of yourself. If anyone treats you badly, just come home. Don't put up with it."

"If Wen Yang ever hits you or yells at you, break up with him immediately. Don't listen to any excuses. A violent man never really changes."

"Big Brother, how would he ever dare hit me?"

Ning Chu snorted.

"It'd be more likely for me to hit him."

"And if he cheats, same thing."

"Someone who cheats once will cheat again."

"He wouldn't dare."

"And I'm keeping an eye on him."

She proudly straightened her back.

"Besides, there aren't many girls prettier than me!"

When it came to looks and figure, she was absolutely confident.

Even when it came to being seductive, very few women could compete with a succubus.

Besides...

She had once been a man herself.

She knew all too well what made men excited.

Ning Yuan glanced sideways at his little sister.

"No matter how pretty you are, wildflowers always seem more tempting."

"Can you say *one* nice thing about Wen Yang?"

The walk from the Civil Affairs Bureau had taken about half an hour.

By car, it was barely ten minutes.

After chatting for a bit, they arrived at the entrance to the apartment complex.

Ning Chu got out of the car, puffing up her cheeks as she glared at her brother through the window.

"So you're really not coming to dinner?"

"No!"

She lightly kicked the car door to vent her annoyance before hurriedly asking,

"Are you coming home tonight?"

"I..."

Ning Yuan stopped mid-sentence.

Seeing the hopeful look in her eyes, he changed what he was about to say.

"...Yeah."

"I'll sleep on the sofa tonight."

"I'll take you to the train station tomorrow morning. Happy?"

"That's perfect!"

"I was counting on you to drive me there!"

"So all you really need is a chauffeur, huh?"

Ning Yuan grumbled as he drove out of the alley and disappeared.

Watching the old sedan leave, Ning Chu stretched lazily before turning toward the apartment complex.

The house would be completely empty now.

Wen Yang was still at work.

She wasn't even sure what she'd do after getting home.

Deep down, she actually wanted to attend Mom and Uncle's small wedding banquet.

But there were certain relatives she simply couldn't stand seeing.

The thought of forcing herself to smile politely at them made her uncomfortable.

Then again...

Not all of her relatives were bad.

She couldn't condemn every single one of them.

I'll have the whole house to myself...

Doesn't that mean I can do whatever I want without worrying about anyone catching me?!

Maybe I could even take a few sexy photos of myself and send them to Wen Yang...

That'd drive him crazy.

The moment the thought crossed her mind, her imagination immediately began running wild.

She even felt herself becoming a little excited.

Her pace quickened considerably as she hurried happily into the apartment building.

But when she reached the elevator, she saw someone she had never expected to run into.

He was about 1.8 meters tall, with a lean build and short dyed hair. A gentle smile was always on his face, giving him a warm, approachable air.

My cousin!

The cousin she had been quite close to as a child, but with whom she'd had almost no contact after entering middle school.

Ning Chu froze for a moment before casually stopping beside him as though nothing were wrong.

There were only two apartments per floor sharing the elevator. There was nowhere to hide.

Turning around and running away now would be far too suspicious...

She silently prayed:

Don't notice me. Don't notice me.

Unfortunately, her looks and figure were simply too eye-catching.

The moment she stopped, her cousin's gaze fell to her legs.

She wasn't wearing stockings today, but even without them, her long, straight, fair legs looked flawless. Her calves were slender, her thighs soft and shapely, and her skin was smooth and pale like white satin.

So my cousin's a leg guy?

One of my people, huh~

Since becoming a woman, she had never met him again.

All she could do was suppress the nervousness welling up inside her, keep a straight face, and imitate Lily by putting on an icy, emotionless expression.

The elevator arrived.

Ning Chu stepped inside behind her cousin and glanced at the floor he selected.

Sure enough... he's here looking for me.

She casually pressed a different floor button, then leaned against the mirrored wall with her arms folded over her stomach, continuing to project an aloof, unapproachable aura.

It seemed her cousin hadn't recognized her.

That made sense.

She had gone from being his male cousin to his female cousin overnight.

No matter how familiar someone had been, they probably wouldn't recognize her now—especially after they hadn't seen each other for years.

The few minutes inside the elevator felt unbearably long.

Her cousin's gaze drifted toward her every now and then.

Although it was only the appreciative glance of a man admiring a beautiful woman, it still made her increasingly anxious.

Only after stepping out of the elevator did she finally breathe a sigh of relief.

Ning Chu had changed her phone number long ago.

If her cousin wanted to find her now, the only option would be to wait outside her apartment.

She had been thinking about going home and indulging in some private fun, but now she couldn't even go back.

Maybe I should just tell him the truth?

But there was no real reason to gamble on how he'd react after learning everything.

I'd rather just wait a few minutes...

She was leaving tomorrow.

The last thing she wanted was to create more trouble for herself now.

Before long, she heard a cellphone ringing upstairs.

A moment later came the sound of the elevator carrying her cousin back downstairs.

Great.

Now I can finally go home and continue with my original plan.

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Link for character illustration:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1IxOucqi87ss3bmqfO9zI2gYiM1Gy8Hz2>