

Trapped In Paradise

Volume 3 Chapter 28 / Chapter 533: The Everyday Life of Rice, Oil, Salt, and Necessities

"You're back so late? The food's gone cold."

"I told you not to wait for me."

Wearing a lightweight sun-protective jacket, Ning Chu pushed the door open wearily. As soon as she saw Wen Yang walking toward her, her legs gave out, and she collapsed straight into his arms.

"Wen Yang~"

She called his name pitifully, making Wen Yang gently stroke her head and the little curved horns atop it.

"What happened?"

Resting against his sturdy chest, her delicate, spoiled expression vanished in an instant. She blurted out,

"Damn it! I went to three interviews this afternoon, and one of them even stood me up! In this scorching heat! I'm exhausted!"

"I told you not to rush. Take your time."

"But I had nothing to do at home anyway, so I might as well go to interviews."

Ning Chu stepped out of his embrace, took off her sun jacket, casually tossed her shoulder bag onto the bed, and sat down against the

headboard. She spread her legs without a care, completely unconcerned about exposing herself.

The tail wrapped around her thigh relaxed and slipped out from beneath her skirt. It hooked onto a pair of slippers by the door and laboriously dragged them over to her feet.

She pulled the elastic band from her ponytail, letting her hair cascade down like a waterfall. Kicking off her sandals, she flopped backward onto the bed in a starfish position and complained,

"Ahhh! I'm going crazy! You know what? At one of the interviews I ran into a master's graduate from a 985 university! That's just ridiculous! Anyone with half a brain would choose them over me! Why are people like that competing with me for these jobs?"

"But when I passed by a gym, I saw they were hiring yoga instructors. I've practiced yoga for years, so maybe I should give that a shot? Plus I'd get to look at pretty girls every day~"

"My yoga instructor used to praise me all the time back in school! She even said I was super hardworking, that anyone could tell I stretched every single day."

Wen Yang thought about it for a moment. He'd never actually seen Ning Chu doing much stretching.

Then it dawned on him.

More likely, *he* had been the one helping her "stretch" every day.

Sometimes two or three times a day, at the very least once.

No wonder her instructor thought she was diligent.

After patiently listening to Ning Chu grumble for several minutes, he finally smiled.

"I have tomorrow off."

The irritation on her pretty face froze for a moment before instantly turning into delight. Ning Chu practically sprang off the bed.

"Then let's go out and have fun! HR probably isn't working on the weekend anyway, right?"

"Ever since I got here, it's been nothing but job hunting or staying home. I haven't actually gone out and enjoyed the city!"

Warm affection filled Wen Yang's eyes as he beckoned to the little succubus.

"Come eat first. We can talk while we eat."

"Coming, coming!"

Beaming with excitement, Ning Chu pulled over a chair and squeezed in beside him until their shoulders were pressed together. She eagerly opened the takeout container, even though the food had long since gone cold.

The small desk was only meant for one person, making the two of them feel especially cramped, but she didn't mind in the slightest. Happily leaning against Wen Yang's shoulder, she swayed her tail contentedly.

As they ate, she continued planning their day.

"How about we go watch a tournament tomorrow? An esports tournament! I've only ever watched livestreams before. Seeing it in person must be so exciting~"

Wen Yang didn't really care where they went. As long as he was with Ning Chu, he nodded repeatedly.

"Sure. Pick a time, and I'll buy the tickets online."

"Mhm! After the tournament in the afternoon, let's go stroll along the Bund in the evening. I heard the scenery by the Huangpu River is amazing! It's supposed to be a must-see for tourists!"

"The restaurants over there are pretty expensive, aren't they?"

"Yeah! We'll just buy some snacks somewhere else before we go."

"How about I treat you there once we have more money?"

Ning Chu shook her head vigorously.

"No way. People who eat at places like that are suckers. I feel bad just watching those food vloggers spend that much."

After taking a few more bites, she suddenly remembered something.

"By the way, how much was dinner today?"

"Forty-three yuan."

"So expensive... You bought too much meat. Next time, buy more vegetables—they'll make it cheaper."

She reached over to the bed, grabbed her shoulder bag, took out her phone, and recorded the day's expenses in her notes. Then, frowning slightly, she opened the calculator.

Wen Yang smiled helplessly and stopped her.

"Quit calculating for now. Just eat your dinner first."

"No way. Just on food alone we've already spent almost a hundred yuan today. At this rate, that's nearly three thousand a month just on meals. Then there's the rent—another twenty-five hundred."

Ning Chu muttered to herself, her brows knitting even tighter.

"And that's not even counting utilities, phone bills, transportation, toiletries, and everything else. We're probably looking at seven or eight thousand yuan a month."

"Your salary isn't even that high yet. You'll only start having money left over after you become a full-time employee."

In just a few short days, she'd gone from a carefree college student spending her boyfriend money to spoil herself to someone carefully calculating every household expense.

Wen Yang smiled wryly.

"Even a casual meal outside costs over twenty yuan these days, and you barely get any meat."

"Your company's pretty big, isn't it? How come they don't have a cafeteria...?" She hesitated before adding, "Maybe we shouldn't go watch the tournament tomorrow after all. It's not like it's that important."

Unable to help himself, Wen Yang rolled his eyes.

"We're not *that* broke, are we? I've still got several tens of thousands in savings, and you should have quite a bit saved too."

"We have to prepare for the future~ We can't keep spending more than we earn. And I don't have the nerve to ask my family for money anymore." Ning Chu sighed. "I don't even like calculating all this. It's such a hassle."

Wen Yang had clearly grown up in a poor family, yet he spent money surprisingly freely. If she didn't help rein him in, she was afraid they'd end up going home for the New Year still in debt.

Today he was talking about taking her to a fancy restaurant.

Yesterday he'd asked if she wanted a new handbag.

The day before, he'd brought her a milk tea that cost more than twenty yuan...

Though... I did really enjoy that milk tea.

"I'm full. I'm going to write now so I can at least earn my attendance bonus."

Patting her stomach, which was only about seventy percent full, Ning Chu stood up and stretched.

"So... are we still going to the tournament tomorrow?"

"Well..."

She picked up her laptop, looking conflicted.

Wen Yang knew it was up to him to make the final decision.

"Then I'll buy the tickets," he said decisively. "We'll just get the cheapest seats and soak in the atmosphere."

"How much are they?"

"One hundred and fifty."

"That's still kind of expensive..."

"We're only going this once. Don't worry about whether it's worth it or not. My treat."

The last of her resolve quickly crumbled.

She mumbled quietly,

"Your money is my money anyway..."

"Alright, go write."

He gave her a light smack on the hip.

Blushing with embarrassment, she shot him an annoyed glare before quickly climbing onto the bed with her laptop. Leaning against the headboard, she settled the computer onto her thighs.

The rental apartment was tiny, with only a single desk, so writing in bed was her only option.

After getting used to it, though, she'd discovered it was actually much more comfortable than sitting at the desk. At least without a keyboard and mouse in front of her, she wasn't constantly tempted to play a game instead of writing.

"Wen Yang..."

She had barely typed two lines before getting distracted again. Setting the laptop aside, she sat cross-legged on the bed and looked toward him, who was still eating.

"Do you like boys or girls?"

Without hesitation, Wen Yang replied, "I only like you. Whether you're a man or a woman doesn't matter."

For some reason, this little succubus always seemed unusually concerned about her former gender.

"I meant... if we had children."

He froze awkwardly before turning to look at her.

The alluring sparkle had faded from her peach blossom eyes, replaced instead with longing and a gentle, maternal warmth.

"I thought you didn't want children," he said. "You said childbirth hurts, and you don't even like kids."

"I was just asking."

"Boys, I guess. If we had a girl, she'd probably be a succubus too, and just thinking about that gives me a headache."

"Mm! That's what I think too! But boys are so noisy and mischievous—they're a pain!" Ning Chu complained indignantly. "My brother and I were absolute little terrors growing up. We caused trouble every single day. If my own kid acted like that, I'd probably break their legs!"

Seeing her genuinely troubled expression, Wen Yang teased, "How about we make one tonight?"

Ning Chu's face immediately turned bright red, and she shook her head so hard it was almost a blur.

"Absolutely not! Besides, it's my safe period right now!"

"Doesn't that make it even better?"

<+>

Link for character illustration:

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