

## AFTER MARRIAGE 111

### Chapter 111: I Had Faith In the Past, But It Collapsed

Although Xu Youyou was a distance away from them, and their voices were deliberately lowered, occasionally, a few words would enter her ears as the cold wind blew.

“Abnormal.”

“Sick.”

“Suicide.”

Xu Youyou’s hand holding the brush paused, and her thick and curly eyelashes fluttered as she lowered her gaze to hide the darkness in her eyes. After a moment, she set the paintbrush down before she pulled her hat down to cover her ears and pulled up her scarf to cover her mouth, only exposing her eyes and nose. Then, she continued to draw and paint again.

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At noon.

Everyone returned to the town to eat. After the meal, they took a short break before they returned to the bridge to continue drawing and painting, taking advantage of the sunshine and warmth.

The temperature had risen in the afternoon, and it was a little warm. Xu Youyou removed her hat, scarf, and coat.

At this moment, Teacher Kang walked over and squatted next to Xu Youyou before he examined Xu Youyou’s painting. He said, “You’re doing very well. You’re really one of the most talented students I’ve ever met.”

Xu Youyou smiled. “Thank you, Teacher. You’re overpraising me.”

Teacher Kang sat down on the grassy ground and looked at the rippling surface of the lake before he said slowly, “Do you know there’s a fine line between a genius and a madman? I’ve seen many artists. They tend to descend into madness when they create, creating fantasies and immersing themselves in them. Sometimes, they’re unable to distinguish between reality and fantasy...”

Xu Youyou looked at Teacher Kang, puzzled. She did not understand what Teacher Kang meant by those words. Was Teacher Kang comforting her, or did Teacher Kang also think she was crazy?

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Teacher Kang turned to look at Xu Youyou and chuckled before he said, “However, I see warmth, colors, and... hope in your works...” After a pause, she added, “And this feeling has become more and more obvious recently in your works...”

Xu Youyou was stunned. Her expression was blank as she lowered her gaze to look at her painting.

‘Is that so? Why didn’t I notice it?’

“Do you have faith in your heart? Or did you find a spiritual compass that leads you to a place of light?” Teacher Kang asked. He remembered Xu Youyou’s paintings when she first joined the class were not like what they were now.

Xu Youyou remained silent. After thinking for a while, she said, “I had faith in the past, but it collapsed. Now... I’m not very sure.”

Xu Youyou was not sure if she had anything sustaining her spiritually and mentally.

Teacher Kang shook his head and said firmly, “No. Your faith didn’t collapse. I’ve seen your recent paintings. I don’t see pain or confusion in them. Instead, they feel determined and confident to me.”

Xu Youyou furrowed her brows as her deer-like eyes shone with confusion. ‘Is that so?’

Teacher Kang was amused by the silly expression on Xu Youyou’s face. He said, “Maybe you don’t understand your heart yet. It doesn’t matter. Just continue to paint and draw. Perhaps, it’ll help you discover your faith and a place of light.”

Xu Youyou did not completely understand Teacher Kang’s words, but she still nodded.

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When the sun set in the west, Teacher Kang and the others returned to the hotel one after another. Xu Youyou was so engrossed in her drawing that she only responded with an ‘Mmm’ no matter what the people around her said. She was completely immersed until...

Achoo!

Xu Youyou sneezed and rubbed her nose. Only at this time did she realize that it was already dusk.

The cold wind blew against her, and her body felt like it had no warmth at all. Even her fingers were frozen stiff.

Xu Youyou put on her hat, scarf, and coat before she went to the riverside to wash her brushes. After packing her things, she returned to the hotel, sneezing all the way.

However, when she returned to the hotel, she discovered that everyone had already eaten. A few boys were playing cards in the lounge while the girls gathered, watching a new drama starring a young male idol and chatting about cosmetics.

Xu Youyou returned to her room and placed her canvas bag down before pouring herself a cup of hot water. She held it in her hands and took a small sip. However, she did not even manage to drink two sips when she heard a knock on the door.