

Chapter 121 - I Have Something To Tell You

At the hospital, Ji Xiehan was beside himself. He paced back and forth on the corridor as though his wife was in labor. It made one wonder what he would look like in the future when his future actually went into labor.

As soon as the door to Li Lanni's room opened, he rushed towards the doctor and asked, "How is she?"

"Are you Li Lanni's family?" The doctor asked him patiently.

"Yes. How is Lanni?" Ji Xiehan anxiously asked again.

"She is out of danger. She fainted because of shock. For the next few days, try not to exhaust her emotions."

"Can I see her now?"

"She is asleep, but certainly you can. But make sure that you don't disturb her sleep...."

Before the doctor could finish speaking, Ji Xiehan rushed into the room.

While the doctor who was left behind sighed. These people, how could he just ignore his instructions and rush off? Forget it; the patient's condition was not that serious anyway.

Inside the ward, Li Lanni was sleeping peacefully between the white sheets.

Ji Xiehan approached her slowly and gently caressed her face.

"You scared me." He mumbled in a whisper.

He was initially shocked that Li Lanni didn't react much when she was almost knocked dead, then just as he was about to ask, she simply fainted. She must have had a slow reaction.

"Lanni..." at this moment, Li Yuming rushed in.

Ji Xiehan clenched his fist. He had not informed Li Yuming. Well, he just didn't want Li Yuming to be worried and was determined to take care of her on his own.

"Aunty, how did you..." he couldn't bring himself to ask.

"It's all over the news." Li Yuming said, rushing over to hold her daughter's hand. "How is she? Is she hurt? What did the doctor say?"

Ji Xiehan's heart ached when he saw how worried Li Yuming was. "She is out of danger."

Then he recalled what she had just said and frowned. "Aunty, you said it's in the news?"

Li Yuming took out her phone and showed him the headlines.

A string of glaring titles read: [Prince charming to the rescue]

[Hero saving his belle]

[Ji Xiehan saved his damsel like a knight in shining armor]

Ji Xiehan's first reaction was what the heck?

Were these reporters crazy?!

Life was almost lost, and they were focusing on the romantic side of it? Shouldn't they be focusing on important facts? For example, they should have used that time and effort to track down the driver of that truck and punish him for driving carelessly. He had scared Lanni to the point she...

Seriously, no one ever took accidents seriously unless it happened to them.

He didn't know that he was focusing on the wrong point too, and that it was going to drive a wedge between him and Li Lanni in the near future.

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It was night already, and Li Lanni was yet to wake up. Because Ji Xiehan was sticking onto Li Lanni's side, Li Yuming went to buy food for him. If not, the poor man might starve to death.

Li Yuming couldn't help but feel touched. She had thought that she was the only person who loved Li Lanni. It turned out; there was someone who loved her even more than she did.

She knew Ji Xiehan's favorite foods, so it was easy for her to decide what to buy. She also bought congee since she knew that Li Lanni would wake up soon.

At the same time, in the hospital, Ji Xiehan's phone rang.

As he didn't want to disturb Li Lanni's rest, he went out to receive it.

"Hello?"

No one answered.

"Is this a prank of sorts?" He was going to hang up when he heard Li Lanni's voice. "Ji Xiehan?"

His first reaction was to turn sharply and look in the direction of Li Lanni's ward. Had she woken up?

Wait. The cell phone number was not hers.

Before he asked, the girl spoke again. "Brother-in-law, how is my sister?"

Ji Xiehan then realized that he must be speaking to Li Lanni's twin. There was such an insane level of similarity? Even their voices were the same?! Then wasn't he and Jiang Xingyu in trouble?

He was about to hang up on her, but thanks to what she had called him, he unconsciously spoke to her gently. "She is out of danger."

"Brother-in-law, I need to tell you something. Could you meet me behind the hospital building?" Xia Luna pleaded.

Ji Xiehan glanced at Li Lanni's ward. If he left, who would take care of her?

The girl had already hung up.

Ji Xiehan gripped his phone tightly as he contemplated. She must have something important to say if she was even willing to meet him in person.

He couldn't forget what a headache that girl had given him. She was so good at programming that even he, as a man, had to give it to her.

When he was studying abroad, he had dabbled with computer science and programming in his free time and was well versed in it. Even then, the girl was an expert at it.

It hurt his pride as a man. He only had the advantage of speed against her.

Aside from this, he was wary against this girl for some reason. Yet now she was asking to meet him...

But then again, this was a golden opportunity.

Thinking about it, he signaled for a nurse and had her take care of Li Lanni. Then he went to the back of the hospital building - after sending an SOS to Jiang Xingyu, of course.

Once there, he looked around but didn't see any girl. He frowned but was patient. Maybe she was not here yet. He would give her fifteen minutes at most.

At this time, in Li Lanni's ward.

The nurse brought one of her medical books to read while watching over Li Lanni.

Then the door opened. She looked up and was shocked out of her wits. "Aren't you...!"

She freaked out and looked at the hospital bed, then saw Li Lianni.

She was even more confused. There were two of the patient?

"Hush." Xia Luna said. "I'm her sister. But you cannot tell anyone I was here. Do you understand?"

The nurse subconsciously nodded under her piercing gaze. For Li Lanni's safety, she didn't dare to leave the two of them alone. Xia Luna knew this and was displeased, but she kept quiet. Whatever.

She went over to Li Lanni's side and took her hand. "Lanni, thank goodness you are alright. I was so worried."

"I thought, I thought I would lose you again..." she was almost on the verge of tears.

"Luna..." at that moment, Li Lanni's eyelids fluttered, and she opened her eyes.

"Lanni..." Xia Luna was excited when she saw her wake up and hugged her tightly.

Li Lanni was dazed for a moment and then revealed a smile when the hug broke. "I'm alright, Luna. Don't worry; I was just shocked."

"You bad sister. Don't you scare me like this again." Xia Luna reprimanded her emotionally.

"Yes, yes. I won't." Li Lanni quickly consoled her.

When the nurse saw that Li Lanni had woken up and seemed to have a close relationship with Xia Luna, she was relieved. To give them some space, she left the room and waited outside the room, in case of emergency.

When his fifteen minutes were over, Ji Xiehan called.

Xia Luna answered with a trembling voice. "Brother-in-law, please wait a moment. I'm almost there." Then she hung up without giving him time to reply.

Li Lanni had an interesting expression. What was that all about?

Now she had a clear view of Xia Luna. "You came out without a disguise?"

"I was in female clothes when I saw the news, so I just rushed out."

"Oh... and what's the deal with Ji Xiehan?" She laughed.

"I had to trick him. I don't want him to know I'm here."

Li Lanni burst into laughter. Her sister was too naughty.

They chatted for a while, exchanging recent information, then Xia Luna stood up to leave.

"Lanni, I have to go now. I cannot stay..." for too long.

Before she could finish her statement, the door was opened.

Xia Luna was shocked to see Ji Xiehan standing at the doorway.. But she was even more shocked when she saw Jiang Xingyu and Li Yuming standing behind him.

Chapter 122 - Unexpected Meeting

The air froze.

Xia Luna's face paled and she bit her lip.

What in the world...

She looked at Ji Xiehan, at her mother, then, reluctantly, she looked at Jiang Xingyu.

She could feel all the gazes on her.

Li Lanni saw the situation and shifted her gaze at the four of them. What in the world was going on here?!

Xia Luna gripped the hem of her dress so tightly that her knuckles turned pale. What kind of rendezvous was this?

Li Yuming's presence didn't shock her. Which mother wouldn't be there if her daughter was in the hospital?

But what was Jiang Xingyu doing here?

Seeing his expression, she didn't need to ask further. Ji Xiehan had called him here.

How could he?

After racking her brains awkwardly, she looked at Li Yuming. "Mother..."

She was yet to say anything else when she saw Li Yuming's expression darken further.

"Who are you calling your mother?! I didn't think you would be so scheming. What are you doing here?!" The hatred in Li Yuming's voice could not be any more obvious.

Xia Luna, who was usually strong, almost burst into tears. 'But I'm your daughter too! Why do you hate me so much?' She thought. But that wasn't what came out of her mouth. Her heart became numb with pain, but she controlled her voice and replied coldly "I came to see my sister. Is that a crime, Ms. Li?"

Li Yuming frowned even further. She was disgusted when Xia Luna called her 'mother', but when she switched to 'Ms. Li', Li Yuming an unfamiliar feeling swelled in her heart.

Before she could understand that unfamiliar feeling, she exploded. "Your sister? Don't spew nonsense. Didn't your Xia family disown my Lanni? What do you want now, huh? Since when did Lanni become your sister?!"

I know what you are up to. I know the kind of person you are. This is my final warning to you and your Xia family. Stay away from my daughter. If not, I cannot guarantee that I will be this lenient. Now, off you go!"

If Xia Luna were to say that she wasn't sad, it would be a big lie.

Everyone else kept quiet, too awkward to say anything.

Xia Luna silently breathed in and out to calm her raging emotions. When she managed to calm down, she looked at Li Yuming and couldn't help but ask, "What did I do wrong? Whatever happened between you and dad happened when I was a baby. Did I ever do anything to you? Did I ever hurt Lanni? Why do you hate me so much? Where is this prejudiced hate coming from?"

"You..." Li Yuming thought her lungs would explode from anger. How dare this girl act innocent?! Sure enough, the Xia family was a gathering of the most shameless people on earth! "Just leave!"

Xia Luna bit the inside of her lips, relaxed her hands, and started walking away.

"Luna," Li Lanni called out sadly, she couldn't bear to see her sister broken-hearted. Even though Xia Luna put replied casually with a blank face, she could tell her mother's words deeply hurt her sister.

Li Yuming was displeased. Very well. The scheming girl had even gotten on Lanni's good side.

Now, there was someone with a more interesting expression than everyone else. That was Jiang Xingyu.

'Luna'... so that was her real name.

Looking at her, he finally felt the difference between her and Li Lanni.

Li Lanni was gentle and calm, just like the moon. On the other hand, Xia Luna was a rebel right to the bones. How could they be the same person?

Now Cheng Yu's little poem made more sense.

[Eyes like the moon,

a soul like the stars

but a personality like the sun.]

That was the perfect description of Xia Luna.¹

And that wasn't even the main point. Why was she acting like she didn't know him?

He had rushed all the way here when Ji Xiehan informed him that she was in this hospital. As soon as he saw her, what he wanted was to grab her and strangle the hell out of her. He could only stop himself because he couldn't do that with his mother-in-law in the room, now could he?

But what was up with her and Li Yuming?

Was he in the between one of those so-called legendary family dramas?!

He felt as if his heart was pierced when he saw her dejected look after being reprimanded by her mother but still put on a strong front.

It reminded him of the first time they met. That sad and dejected look in the girl's eyes at that time.

For a moment, he itched to embrace her.

But then thinking of how she had abandoned him, his heart was filled with anger.

"Luna, wait!" Li Lanni called out when Xia Luna burst out of the room.

"Forget about her." Li Yuming said, placing the food she had bought on the table, dismissing the piercing pain in her heart when she saw Xia Luna run off.

Li Lanni wanted to ask many questions, but she couldn't with outsiders here, so she shut up.

At this moment, Ji Xiehan nudged his friend as if he was looking at an idiot.

His expression seemed to say, 'I got your Xia for you, and you let her run away? Idiot!.

Jiang Xingyu snapped back and ran out.

Li Yuming looked at Ji Xiehan curiously; he shrugged to indicate that he didn't know what was going on either.

Li Yuming paid no heed and proceeded to serve Ji Xiehan and Li Lanni the food.

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Outside the hospital,

Xia Luna ran all the way out of the hospital and onto the street.

Once she was away from everyone else, she could no longer hold back her tears. They just came gushing out like a broken dam.

Why?

She had never met Li Yuming before. She only knew her from photographs and interviews.

This was the first time they were meeting face to face.

It was also the first time she was letting the word "mother" out of her lips.

All her life, her stepmother had hated her and mistreated her. She had never brought herself to call that woman her mother. Ever since she knew that Li Yuming was alive, she had been longing to meet her.

If she said that she had never once been jealous of Li Lanni for being loved by Li Yuming so much, she would be blatantly lying. She had always looked forward to the day Li Yuming would dote on them both.

Yet she didn't expect that the first time she would meet her, the first time she would say the word 'mother', she would not receive a hug as she had always thought but a cold heartbreaking reply instead...

'Who are you calling your mother'?

Those words kept on ringing in her brain.

She clutched her chest and cried harder, paying no heed to the passerby's stares. Just what had she done to deserve such hatred? Just because she was a Xia? But wasn't Li Lanni a Xia too?

Wasn't she her daughter too?

Just when she was about to slump onto her knees, she felt a familiar scent waft into her nostrils as someone held her from behind.

The man was out of breath. He must have run all the way here.

"Jiang... Jiang Xingyu..." she stammered when she turned around.

Jiang Xingyu had thought about everything he could possibly do to Xia Luna if he caught up with her.

Yell at her? Scold her? Straight up, kill her?

He would never have imagined that the first thing he would want to do would be to comfort her.

The girl cried even harder when she felt that familiar embrace.

"There there... don't cry anymore." Jiang Xingyu coaxed her gently as if he were coaxing a little girl.

Xia Luna rested her head on his chest, absent-mindedly, allowing herself to be weak this once.. Just this once, she promised herself.

Chapter 123 - How Could You?

Snuggling in Jiang Xingyu's arms, Xia Luna completely let herself go.

Jiang Xingyu didn't mind her. He hugged her closely and let her cry her heart out.

When her tears ran out, she stabilized her emotions, pulled away, and looked at Jiang Xingyu awkwardly, finally realizing what she had just done. She was even more embarrassed when she saw a huge wet patch on his shirt. She guiltily evaded his eyes and apologized, "Er...Sorry!"

Jiang Xingyu ignored her apology and took her hand. "I'll take you home."

"Jiang Xingyu, I can..."go by myself. Xia Luna swallowed the other half of the sentence when she saw Jiang Xingyu ignore her and drag her into the parking lot, where he had parked his car.

Xia Luna didn't protest anymore and sat in the car when he very gentlemanly opened the door for her. It wouldn't hurt to hitch his ride anyway.

Jiang Xingyu still couldn't believe that the girl in his car was the same girl he had looked for in every corner of the earth.

That girl who had left without saying a word was finally sitting beside him.

The more surprising thing was that he neither admonished nor asked the reason for her disappearance. Instead of being angry, he felt as though the missing piece of his ribs had finally been slotted back. How could he even have the strength to get angry?

"Where do you live?" He asked as he started driving.

When he was met with silence, he turned to look at her in askance.

The girl had her eyes closed. She was deep in a peaceful sleep and even had a slight smile on her lips. He was dazed for a while by her appearance and couldn't bear to wake her up.

Thinking about it, he simply drove to his villa. If she woke up and wanted to leave, he would then drive her to wherever she lived.

Once they arrived, he gently carried her out of his car all the way to the master bedroom on the second floor. The servants would usually retreat to their rooms after finishing their work and only come out if they were needed, so there was no one in the vicinity.

Jiang Xingyu carefully put her on his bed and removed her shoes before going to the bathroom. He returned with a damp towel and wiped the dried tears off her face.

When he was done, he covered her and left the room.

Xia Luna heard the door close then she didn't hear any footsteps for a while. She knew Jiang Xingyu must have left the room, so she opened her eyes slowly.

Actually, she had been awake all along. She just didn't know how to face Jiang Xingyu, so she closed her eyes and pretended to be asleep.

But why did the man bring her to his house? He was not planning to lock her up, right?

Looking around, she found this place quite familiar.

This was the same house they used to spend time in a year ago. This was the room they slept in a couple of times, and if she hadn't claimed to be too young, this would have been the bed where they made love.

Her real reason, however, wasn't her age. She was already of legal age. It was just that she couldn't bring herself to do it with a man she wasn't emotionally attached to.

Although that was what she thought even now, she couldn't help feeling guilty.

Jiang Xingyu loved her so much. She could tell that he was mad at her, but even then, he didn't take it out on her. She would have preferred it if he yelled at her or even cursed her, she would be less guilty then.

Looking around, she decided to believe that he wasn't planning to lock her up. He knew her well enough to know that she would escape easily. If he wanted to lock her up, he would look for a place she wasn't familiar with.

While she thought of what to do, Jiang Xingyu came back with a bowl of noodles in his hands,

So he had gone to cook for her.

Seeing her awake, Jiang Xingyu smiled happily. "You're awake. I knew you would wake up soon, so I made you a bowl of egg noodles."

Xia Luna didn't utter a word.

"You don't want noodles? Then what do you want to eat? I will make it for you." Jiang Xingyu thought her silence meant she didn't want to eat noodles.

When Xia Luna heard him, she reached for the bowl silently. She didn't want to owe him, but rejecting it would make him sadder, so she just ate it.

When she was done, Jiang Xingyu took back the bowl to the kitchen and washed it, then came back.

"You should rest a little more. It's already late; you can just spend the night here."

Xia Luna still didn't say a word. She didn't know what to say.

"Don't worry, if you are uncomfortable with my presence, I'll sleep in the guest room tonight."

"Jiang Xingyu, we need to talk." She said before he could leave.

Jiang Xingyu's body froze. A few seconds later, he shook his head. "I had many meetings today, and I'm tired. We will talk later." He didn't wait for her to respond before leaving the room.

How could he not know what she was about to say? She was not going to talk about what happened a year ago. She was obviously going to ask to leave. If she said she wanted to break up with him, he would not know how to make her stay. He would rather not hear it.

In the master bedroom, Xia Luna sighed. She knew he was avoiding the topic.

Alas, they had to talk about it sooner or later. It was already heartless of her to have left the way she did. She didn't want to keep his hopes up.

He must be thinking that if they stayed close to each other, they might reignite the spark. But the problem was that spark didn't exist, to begin with.

Forget it, she would speak with him tomorrow.

She was so exhausted from crying earlier, so she quickly fell asleep. Strangely, being in Jiang Xingyu's bed didn't prevent her from falling into a deep sleep.

Meanwhile, in the guest room, Jiang Xingyu couldn't sleep a wink. He kept thinking that if he drifted into sleep, he would wake up to find his Xia gone.

In the end, he got out of bed and snuck back into his room. He had to laugh at himself. This was clearly his own house, but he was acting sneakily like a thief.

Seeing that she was asleep, he heaved a sigh of relief.

He went to her side and sat on the edge of the bed, taking her hand into his palms. He didn't forget to maintain a safe distance between them.

Although he had held her to sleep before, he knew that she would be uncomfortable if he simply slid next to her and slept.

So he held her hand tightly like an insecure kid scared that others would snatch his favorite toy. He rested his back against the headboard and closed his eyes while reminiscing about the past when they were still dating.

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He thought he had only closed his eyes for a minute, but it was already morning when he opened his eyes again. His first instinct was to look down. Xia Luna's hand was no longer in his, and she was not on the bed!

"Xia?" He called out then looked towards the bathroom. There was no one there. He stood up and was about to run out when a note fell from his lap.

He knew what this must mean but still picked it up with trembling hands and unfolded it anxiously.

[Jiang Xingyu, thank you for being there for me. I appreciate your love...]

He didn't read anymore and crumbled the note into a tiny ball, cracking his knuckles in the process.

"Xia, how could you do this to me?"

Late at night in Ji Mansion,

The familiar sound of glasses shattering filled the living room.

"How could he do this?! How could he?!" Ji Feifei screamed at the top of her lungs and pulled at her hair in frustration.

Madam Ji was startled. Was her daughter going crazy? "Feifei, calm down. Calm down, okay? Tell mother what happened."

Ji Feifei broke down in Madam Ji's arms. "It's all that b*tch's fault. It's all because of her!"

It took a while for Madam Ji to realize who she was talking about. There was only one 'b*tch' that Ji Feifei talked about lately. "Li Lanni? What did she do this time?"

"She and brother are engaged!" Ji Feifei didn't know what to say to her mother, who didn't even know what her son was doing.

"What did you say?" Madam Ji was flabbergasted.

Ji Feifei cried harder, then took out her phone to show Madam Ji the news.

Madam Ji hadn't been paying attention to online news lately.

Also, because Ji Xiehan orchestrated all this, no one approached people from the Ji family for interviews. Even the media outlets that reported the news just because others were reporting. So the Ji family had not caught wind of the matter until now.

"Aahhhh! How could he do this? He even risked his life for her!" Ji Feifei screamed. She had seen the news of Ji Xiehan saving Li Lanni from almost being run over by a truck.

What did Li Lanni do to bewitch Ji Xiehan? That was her brother! He was hers!!

Madam Ji wasn't any happier. She was boiling with anger when she saw all those headlines and videos of her son saving that girl.

It was still okay for Ji Xiehan to love a girl... she could have easily taken care of that, but what was the meaning of this? They were engaged already! How could her son not even say a word about this matter to her? Her son was getting out of hand.

"That's not possible." She mumbled. "Feifei, go to sleep. I will look into this matter tomorrow morning."

Tsk. She was very well aware of her son's temperament. Even if she called him and asked about it right now, she wouldn't get any answers from him. She would look into the matter the next morning; she believed that girl had something to hide. If not, there was no way his son would fall in love with that woman's daughter.

She was never going to let such a jinx into her family!

Ji Feifei still had a lot to vent, but when she saw her mother's expression, she knew it was not the time to act spoilt, so she obediently went into her room.

In the hospital ward, in the morning

"Luna!" Li Lanni half-screamed as she woke up startled.

Li Yuming worriedly held her hand. "Did you have a nightmare?"

Even though she had regained consciousness, Li Lanni still had to stay one more day for observation in the hospital. Li Yunming and Ji Xiehan were both worried about her, so they stayed back.

Ji Xiehan had only left a while ago to buy them breakfast.

Seeing her daughter wake up suddenly with a pale face Li Yuming was worried.

Li Lanni took a while to respond. She had a bad dream; Xia Luna had been shot dead by a middle aged woman. Even though she hadn't been with Xia Luna for very long, she had developed a deep bond with her. She didn't want to lose one more family member. It took her a while to accept that she was only dreaming. She then frowned and looked at her mother. "Mom, something's fishy."

"What happened?"

Li Lanni slowly and carefully asked, "Mom, why exactly do you hate Luna?"

Li Yuming's expression darkened. "Are we seriously going to talk about that girl again?"

"I know you don't like her, but she... she was so sad.

I couldn't help thinking of how I would feel if our father sent me away the same way you kicked her out. I would be so depressed..."

Li Yuming unconsciously tightened her grip on Li Lanni's hand. Indeed, that was her daughter too. She also felt pain in her heart when she saw Xia Luna run out so sadly.

But in the next second, she frowned. "Don't you play the guilt-trick with me. Did that girl teach you that?"

Li Lanni was saddened and almost lost her cool. "Mom, she's not a bad person."

"What do you even know about her, Lanni? Only her name? You are telling me that you think she is a good person just based on this?"

Before Li Lanni could answer, the door opened, and Ji Xiehan came back.

Li Lanni was unhappy. She wanted to know why her mother hated Xia Luna to the core. She wanted to know the reason for her mother's prejudiced anger towards Xia Luna!

"Lanni, are you feeling better? I brought you breakfast from your favorite restaurant." Ji Xiehan asked gently with a smile. He knew that atmosphere in the room was tense, so he tried to cheer her up.

Li Lanni stiffly smiled at him and took the box from his hands.

Ji Xiehan gave one to Li Yuming and placed another on the table. Then he sat beside her to start feeding her.

"I can eat myself." Li Lanni protested with flushed cheeks.

Ji Xiehan shamelessly took advantage of Li Yunming's presence and paid no heed to her words, "Honey, you are still tired. Let me feed you."

Although she was embarrassed, she could only agree, or else this bastard might start saying things he shouldn't say.

Ji Xiehan was very satisfied. How could he not make use of such a golden opportunity? It was not every day that he could feed his beloved. In the past, whenever he was having his meals, he dreamed about feeding her in a lovey-dovey manner. Finally, his dream was fulfilled!

Li Yuming coughed and smiled proudly. The kids were too cute. The little baby she had cradled and told bedtime stories to was now a grown-up woman in love. She was even engaged now. Which mother wouldn't be happy?

After finishing her meals, She left to handle the discharge procedure not to be a third wheel.

If she only knew... Li Lanni didn't want to be alone with the pervert. Li Lanni was tensed when she saw her mother leave her alone with this pevert.

"Are you scared I might 'eat' you up?" Ji Xiehan teased when he saw her 'mommy-don't-go' look.

"No! I'm scared I might kill you." Li Lanni saw the laughter in his eyes and gritted her teeth.

Ji Xiehan tittered. "You don't want the nation to accuse you of being a heartless girl who killed her husband, do you?"

Li Lanni was no longer listening to him. Her expression turned sad. "I wonder if my sister is doing alright."

Having watched the fight between Xia Luna and Li Yuming, Ji Xiehan felt he was in an awkward position. He couldn't take sides with the mother, and neither could he take sides with the daughter.

"Your friend is not going to kill her, right?" Li Lanni asked worriedly. She had heard a bit about relationship. She was worried that Jiang Xingyu might want to take revenge on her sister.

Ji Xiehan's hair stood on end. Was Jiang Xingyu alright? That girl didn't kill him, did she?

"Why do you look like you have seen a ghost?" His sudden change in expression amused Li Lanni.

"I'm just worried about my friend."

"You have a lot to be worried about. If he does anything to hurt my sister, I will skin him alive."

Ji Xiehan remained silent. What if she does something to hurt my friend? Should I skin her alive too?

"Ji Xiehan, I want to..." she was about to say that she wanted to give Xia Luna a call when Li Yuming came back after doing all the paperwork.

She looked furious.

"Mom, what happened?"

"I'm disappointed in you Li Lanni. How could you do this to me?" She turned to glare at Ji Xiehan. "And you. I can't believe you would do something like this. So much for thinking my daughter was in safe hands."

Ji Xiehan felt a chill down his spine. "Aunty, what happened?"

"You are asking me what happened? You tell me what happened. About the fake engagement... care to explain?"

Li Lanni felt her heart sink to the depth of her stomach. Her mother had found out....

Chapter 125 - Cat Got Your Tongue?

Li Yuming glared at the two of them. "Weren't you professing your love for each other? What now, cat got your tongue?"

"Aunty, it's not what you think." Ji Xiehan tried to salvage the situation.

"And what am I thinking, huh? Ji Xiehan, you have disappointed me. I want to speak to my daughter." Li Yuming hissed in anger.

Ji Xiehan understood that she was chasing him indirectly, so he stood up to leave. But before going, he looked into her eyes and sincerely said, "Aunty, the engagement is indeed fake. But my love for Lanni is not. I love Lanni with all my heart."

Li Yuming looked at his retreating back and almost called him back. He was right. He truly loved Lanni. She could see that clearly from the way he treated her.

But, since they loved each other so much, why would they fake an engagement? After thinking about it for a while, she still could not understand.

"Are you guys even dating?" She shifted her gaze to her daughter and asked her.

Li Lanni looked at her mother and knew that she couldn't hide it any longer, so she admitted truthfully, "No."

"You have the nerve to admit it? Why did you lie to me? I even happily waited for the two of you to approach me about wedding planning."

Li Lanni felt even guilty and evaded her mom's eyes. "Mom, I'm sorry." And she really was.

Li Yuming couldn't bear to make things difficult for her daughter. She simply held her hand. "Lanni, I know you are an adult now, and you have the right to make your own decisions. But I just want to continue being part of your life. I still want to share your joy, sadness, and everything else. Is that too selfish of me?"

Li Lanni's eyes stung when she heard her mother's words. Her mother was wrong; she was the selfish one. She had hidden so many important things from her mother. While some people couldn't even hold

a peaceful conversation with their mothers, hers doted on her so much. Yet she had been so self-centered. "Mom, I have something to tell you. Let's talk about it later at home."

"Okay." She had things to tell her daughter too. She passed her the clothes she had brought. "Change into these."

...

In the car, Li Lanni finally wondered how Li Yuming knew of their fake engagement. She had just left the ward for a while and come back with the knowledge.

Li Lanni also felt the weird gazes on her on their way out of the hospital. Could it be that someone had posted it on the news?

She checked online and indeed saw a bold headline. [So the whole engagement was just a charade? Unbelievable!]

Attached was a picture of a crumpled sheet of paper on a table.

In the next picture, the crumbled paper had been unfolded, and the content was revealed.

Li Lanni recognized this paper.... that was the script she had written for their love story!

Ji Xiehan had crumbled it into a ball because he was displeased by its content. How the hell did it end up in the news?

Heck!!

They had forgotten all about it when they left the restaurant. But then again, it wasn't shocking that they didn't pay attention to it.

That was a high-end restaurant, and there was such a thing of privacy. Did the workers often check through waste paper? Of course not! That would be absurd.

She saw the caption and had to laugh at it. [Look what we found at their table. Is this what every couple does when they get engaged? Ji Xiehan and Li Lanni are liars!]

She chuckled and looked at the script again. There was a loophole...

"Lanni, are you looking at the news? Forget about it. I will handle this matter for you." Li Yuming said when she saw that her daughter was looking at her phone and giggling. "Don't let it get to you."

"It's okay, mom. I can handle it."

She then started scrolling through the comments.

Angry netizens had started speaking up.

Soon To Be Mrs. Ji: [I knew my Xiehan wouldn't fall in love so easily! That sl*t better stay away from my hubby.]

Ji Xiehan is mine: [Isn't she the girl who caused trouble at B City University just a few months ago? Now she has resorted to seducing men who don't want her? What is wrong with her?]

Ji Xiehan's little doll: [Sl*ts like her will never be accepted into the Ji family. She must have blackmailed our Xiehan into this. How shameless!]

Li Lanni frowned. These three and many other Ji Xiehan's love-stricken fans were all lashing at her.

But even then, seriously, it took two hands to clap.

How could she have faked an engagement on her own? Wasn't Ji Xiehan in the wrong too?

Scrolling downwards, she saw that some stood up for her, saying that perhaps it was a misunderstanding, and if it was not, then Ji Xiehan was in the wrong too. However, they were soon drowned by the insults.

Li Lanni turned to look at her mother. "Mom, it's still early. I can still make it to class if I go now."

Li Yuming tousled her hair. "Be good and stay at home to rest. Don't run around. I already asked for a leave on your behalf."

"But, I feel better already." She pleaded.

Li Yuming couldn't resist her puppy dog eyes, so she asked the chauffeur to go to Star Art International.

Contrary to her expectations, no reporters were waiting for her.

She had expected to be swarmed as soon as she got off the car.

She looked around just in time to see a paparazzo being sent away by a security guard.

Ji Xiehan must be behind this, she smiled.

She thought, in the worst case, if she was bombarded by the reporters, she would use this chance to answer to the reporters, but since they gave her time to prepare a better strategy, she was even happier.

Li Lanni looked at the time and realized there were still a few minutes before her class begun. So, ignoring the curious looks around her, she went to a secluded spot and made a phone call.

"Luna, are you alright?"

"I'm fine. What about you? I saw the news." Xia Luna sounded calmer than Li Lanni had expected.

She was relieved that her sister was not too sad. "I didn't have the chance to call you until now."

"I understand Lanni, let's not talk about it anymore. You and Ji Xiehan are so careless. How could you leave such evidence behind?"

"We left that? How come I don't remember?"

"Lanni, can you be more clear?"

Li Lanni laughed and continued, "Did you see that so-called script? That's not my handwriting."

"It was printed." Xia Luna said, not understanding what her sister meant.

"It's exactly because it was printed. Who knows who wrote it? Pfft. Luna, help me check something, can you?" Li Lanni stopped playing with words and came straight to the point.

"Of course. What do you want me to check?"

Li Lanni explained her plan, rendering Xia Luna speechless.

Chapter 126 - Knock Some Sense Into Ji Xiehan

"What are you up to, exactly?" Li Yuming asked Li Lanni when she was back home. She could tell at one glance that her daughter didn't just go to Star Art International because she wanted to. She must have had some hidden agenda.

Li Lanni did in fact, have an agenda. It was just not hidden.

She flashed a smile and hugged her mother briefly. "Mom, I'm so tired today. Can I take a shower then tell you all about it?"

"Alright. I'll go cook something yummy for you."

"Thanks mom."

...

Li Yuming had just started cooking when a maid announced that Ji Xiehan was here.

She turned off the cooker, set the spatula aside and went to meet him. Why was he here?

The man even had a fruit basket with a colorful box on top of the fruits.

"Aunty, is Lanni doing better? I brought you two fruits."

As much as Li Yuming still wanted to be mad at Ji Xiehan, she couldn't reject his heartfelt gesture. So she reluctantly let him in.

The man looked like he was on pins and needles. He didn't know what exactly to tell his future mother-in-law.

After thinking for a while, he decided to come out with the truth. "If I didn't do this, my parents would force me to marry another woman." He said.

Li Yuming glanced at him and chided. "If you cannot stand up to your parents and tell them that you want to make your own decisions, how will you be able to make a good husband for my Lanni?"

Li Lanni came back at this time. What kind of topic was that? How awkward...

It was strange to talk about marriage in her mother's presence.

When Li Yuming saw her, she returned to the kitchen, leaving them with "The two of you think of how to handle this."

She had not seen the insults against Li Lanni. If she had, she would have killed all those commentators for insulting her daughter.

...

Li Lanni sat next to Ji Xiehan as soon as they were alone. She was in fact, so close that her sweet, soft scent wafted to him. He knew she had just taken a bath. He was a bit surprised, as she would always find excuses to be as far from him as possible. This move was unexpected.

Just as he was wondering whether he should wrap his arm around her, she leaned close to him and in a voice that only the two of them could hear, she said, "Don't do anything. Let me handle this matter on my own."

Ji Xiehan finally understood. So it was not because she wanted to be closer to him but because she wanted to whisper something out of Li Yuming's earshot?

He really wanted to be the one to dispel the news. He had already warned all the news agencies that no one should dare ask Li Lanni any questions. He had also come up with a way of explaining it to the media on his own. He was going to either stick to 'proving' that the engagement was real or say that he had forced Li Lanni to pretend to be his fiancée.

He had wanted to be the hero to save the damsel, but now the damsel wanted to be her own hero.

Never mind. He would get an opportunity in future.

Li Lanni leaned even closer to his ear, so close that the tiny hairs stood on end. He thought she was going to kiss his earlobe then he heard her saying, "I might... do something that will tarnish your reputation a little."

He turned and looked at her. Seeing her starry eyed expression, he knew that she was not going to literally tarnish reputation. Even if she did, it wasn't like he cared. "Go ahead."

She seemed surprised. "Really? You cannot regret later."

"Sure. Have fun."

Li Lanni giggled. Have fun?

Seeing his reddened ears, she felt quite proud of herself. Should she perhaps... tease the pervert a little more from now on?

Wait. Why did she have the urge to tease him?

...

By the next morning, Li Lanni had already gotten what she wanted. Xia Luna was quite efficient. In fact, she had got it the previous day. She was only waiting for the right time which was today.

Looking at the insults online, one could tell that it had gotten out of hand.

What was worse, Li Lanni's personal details had been dug out.

There was nothing wrong with a broken family, but the netizens were using this point to attack her. It made one cringe at their shallow minds.

There was even a video of Madam Ji making a scene about how much she loved her son, and how he wouldn't let him be blinded by such a woman.

Ji Feifei had cried in front of the cameras too, telling the media how messy Li Lanni's personal life was. Such a promiscuous woman would never deserve to be her sister-in-law.

The videos were filled with comments.

[How can a bastard like her deserve our Xiehan?]

[I cannot believe such a perfect man could be deceived by a girl like her. She must have some tricks up her sleeves!]

[More like up her skirt. I heard her mother had a horrible reputation in the past. She must have followed her footsteps.]

The commentator above was one of the three who had been attacking her the most.

Li Lanni's eyes darkened. Ji Feifei actually dared to publicly insult her mother again.

Of course, there were a few netizens who felt Li Lanni was being attacked for nothing.

One of them was Jiang Xingyu's mother. [You guys are going overboard. I have met that girl before and she is nothing like you describe her. You should get your facts right before accusing people. Most importantly, it's her personal life!]

Never mind that you are trying to poke into her personal space, you are even insulting her family? How shallow-minded.]

Because that was Mrs. Jiang and she was using her official account, no one dared to insult her. They simply ignored it but it was obvious that they really wanted to lash at her along with Li Lanni.

The Jiang Mansion.

"Youngsters these days!" Madam Jiang huffed. She had just gone online a little when she was greeted by such news. She was quite fond of Li Lanni from their first meeting. How could they scold her so much? They were even dragging her family into the mix.

"What is Xiehan doing when all this is happening? Xingyu, go knock some sense into your friend. If he doesn't handle this matter, it might drive a wedge between him and that child."

"Mmh." Jiang Xingyu hummed absent mindedly.

"What on earth is Mmh? Anyway, if Xiehan doesn't want to treat her right, you can snatch her away. She's such a good girl after all."

Jiang Xingyu stared silently.

Father Jiang coughed in a fit.

Madam Jiang crossed her arms and glared at the two of them. "What? You have something to say?"

"No." They shook their heads in unison.

Seriously, just because she liked a girl, she could advice her son to snatch her from his friend? What an adventurous mother.

"What's wrong with you?" Mrs. Jiang asked her son.. "You rarely ever come back home and now that you're here, you're all gloomy. Is it about that mysterious girl again?"

Chapter 127 - Playing The White Lotus

Jiang Xingyu felt even more depressed when his mother asked.

That girl had seriously abandoned him again.

Why did she keep doing this to him?

As a man, how could he take this lying down?

Yet he knew that no matter how angry he was, he could not bring himself to do anything that would hurt her.

Actually when he saw Xia Luna again, he had thought of locking her up so she wouldn't be able to escape. But what was the use locking her up if she didn't want to be with him?

She would only go further away if she ever had the chance.

He had thought that she wouldn't leave without clearing up matters with him, yet that was exactly what she did. Again. That selfish girl!

Seeing her son's expression, Madam Jiang knew she had hit the nail on the head. Jiang Xingyu must be thinking about that girl again.

She hated to see her son so heartbroken. "Xingyu, in this world, you cannot always have what you want. Some things are just beyond your reach. That mysterious girl you like... maybe she has a reason for not liking you back."

Jiang Xingyu gripped his coffee cup so tightly it could break. "I don't want anything else. I only want her."

Madam Jiang knew her son too well. Once he was set on something, he couldn't be convinced so easily.

She could only sit beside him with a worried expression. "What's so special about her anyway? It's just a girl, right? There are very many women who like you. While some are only after your status, there are those who truly love you too. If you get a girl who truly loves you, you shouldn't let her go just because of a girl who doesn't like you."

Jiang Xingyu frowned at his mother's words. "She loves me."

"Oh please don't be so naive. You are already in your late twenties. Do you still believe that a girl who loves you can bear to see you missing her so sadly?" Madam Jiang didn't know what happened between her son and that girl he kept fussing about. All she knew was that the girl seemed to have dumped him many months ago. Jiang Xingyu would sometimes think about her and become depressed all of a sudden. Today, it was much worse than ever before. As a mother, she couldn't bear to see her son like this.

"Is that really the only girl you will ever like?"

"Mother, I will never marry any girl unless it's her."

Although her heart broke, she couldn't say anything about it.

That was her son's choice.

Actually, she had always wanted a daughter. When she realized that she couldn't have any, she started hoping for a daughter-in-law and a granddaughter.

She had long decided that no matter what woman her son chose, as long as she was a nice girl, she would treat her like her own daughter.

So although she was displeased that the girl kept breaking her Xingyu's heart, she wasn't mad at her. Perhaps the girl had her reasons. "Xingyu, who exactly is that girl? Can you tell me about her?"

"Xia Luna." Jiang Xingyu said before his brain could process it. Then he froze. Why did his mother ask?

Madam Jiang was currently shocked. "Xia Luna? This name is familiar. Is she a celebrity or something?"

"No." As if Xia Luna would be a celebrity. With her character? Her fans would probably kick her out of the Entertainment industry. If she would even have any fans, that is.

"That's strange... I think I have heard some gossip about her before."

Madam Jiang remembered what she had heard and tensed up. "Right. Isn't that the daughter of Xia Hanchen, the tycoon from Westlake City who has invincible prowess in software development?"

I heard she has impeccable talent in programming, but she is a rebellious girl and does things girls her age should never be able to do. In fact, normal human beings cannot be like her. She might have even committed some crimes. Xingyu, are you sure.... that's really the girl you like?"

Jiang Xingyu was lost in thought and didn't notice the slight fear in her voice.

—

Meanwhile, the media was blowing up.

The reporters were no longer being restricted from hovering near Star Art International.

As long as they kept a safe distance so as to not distract other people, no one cared to send them away.

When the class finished, Li Lanni dragged Cheng Yu to the restroom and told her what to do.

While Cheng Yu was still getting the hang of it, she saw Li Lanni take out a make up kit and start applying make up.

Now the huge bag made sense. "But what's the make up for?"

Li Lanni smiled mischievously. "I want to apply makeup. Why can't I?"

Cheng Yu shook her head and watched silently. These sisters were too naughty. Were they really going to do this?

When she was done, she let out a smile to the mirror. She had practiced to do this since the previous day. Even her mother would be fooled if she saw her like this.

"Let's go." She led Cheng Yu out.

As soon as they exited the building, the reporters swarmed all around them.

Cheng Yu took a look at her changed expression and understood what the makeup was all about. She looked so depressed!

What was this girl trying to pull off?

"Miss Li, have you read the news online?"

"Miss Li, why would you have a fake engagement?"

"Miss Li, what do you have to say for lying to everyone?"

"Miss Li, did you really blackmail Ji Xiehan into pretending to be your fiancé?"

"Miss Li, are you really a promiscuous girl who likes to seduce rich men?"

The questions kept flooding in, while Li Lanni remained silent. She neither tried to get away nor said a word.

Soon, the reporters started exchanging gazes, wondering whether she was alright. Why was she not speaking?

Li Lanni took this chance to speak. "Are you done?"

Although her voice was stern, her expression was anything but.

One would think she was an abandoned wife. Her pale face and her saddened eyes made her look so pitiful... she had deliberately applied a slightly darker shade under her eyes, so paired with her pitiful expression, she looked like she had been crying.

"If you are done asking, I will answer you.

I don't know who came up with such news but really..." she looked down sadly.

Cheng Yu was shocked witless.

What was this? Was Li Lanni acting like a white lotus now? If there were no reporters, she would laugh.

Li Lanni looked at the reporters with pain hidden in the depth of her eyes. "I don't understand... is that person so proud to prove that our relationship is fake?"

And you, reporters, are you so proud to prove them right? You didn't even care to ask me whether the news was fake or not but went ahead to ask such insulting questions. Is this..."

She sighed speechlessly and clutched at the hem of her dress tightly.

"I don't care about what people say online. But I'm just sad that this news had cast discord between me and my beloved and his family. I have nothing to say."

The reporters were stunned for a while. So was the news true or false?

Her answer was nothing but a vague string of words.

"Miss Li, so is the news true or false?" One reporter asked.

Li Lanni poked Cheng Yu discreetly, and the latter knew the stage was now hers.

She looked through her phone then shrieked. "Ahhh.. Lanni, look what I just saw!"

Her expression was that of shock as she showed Li Lanni the news.

Li Lanni took a look then she was 'shocked' too.

In the next moment, she bit her lip. "Unbelievable... She's my friend. She cannot do this to me."

Cheng Yu frowned at her. "Lanni, don't be naive. She already tried to tarnish your reputation in B City University. How could you still speak up for her?"

The reporters were curious.

While Li Lanni's conversation with Cheng Yu was supposed to be discreet, they 'unintentionally' spoke loud enough for the reporters to hear.

"That's impossible. She would never do this to me." Li Lanni's walnut eyes even watered a bit.

The reporters started looking through their phones.

Then they saw something that shocked them.

In the thread insulting Li Lanni, the true identities of the commentators had been revealed.

All the other names had been masked but those were just a few.

The top ten commentators, whose user names were 'Soon to be Mrs. Ji, Ji Xiehan's little doll, Ji Xiehan's favorite toy' and other similar usernames were all Ji Feifei! What kind of insanity was this?

The reporters were shocked and started discussing among themselves.

"So the whole thread was started and commented on by the same person?"

No wonder all the comments looked similar! So they were from the same person!

"Aren't you all focusing on the wrong point?" One of the reporters pointed out.

"Right!" Another exclaimed. "All these usernames are Ji Feifei's! Isn't she Ji Xiehan's sister?"

The reporters broke into discussion.

"How disgusting. 'Soon to be Mrs. Ji'? 'Ji Xiehan's doll'? 'Ji Xiehan is mine'? 'Xiehan's little pet'? What the heck? Is she crazy?"

"She is mannerless. Those who didn't know might think she has a thing for her brother. Urgh... just when I thought I had seen it all."

At the side, Li Lanni smiled secretly. Ji Feifei, let's see how much your parents will pamper you from now on.

"You guys are overreacting. Maybe she just wanted the user names to look real? You know, like they are Ji Xiehan's fans?" Li Lanni thought out loud. While she sounded like she was defending Ji Feifei, she was just making the reporters angrier.

And they were indeed angrier. "That doesn't make it right. It might be a little negligible if it were another man but this is her own biological brother! Doesn't she feel disgusted?" An older female reporter retorted.

"And what's wrong with you? She framed you and now you are defending her?! Don't be silly!"

It soon became an argument among them.

Just as it was about to calm down, Cheng Yu exclaimed. "OH MY GOD!! I thought it was just a username. Check out the account 'Soon to be Mrs. Ji'. She has been posting pictures of her paintings. And all of them are of her brother... shirtless!"

Cheng Yu didn't have to pretend to be disgusted. She was truly disgusted.

There was even one with a catchy caption. [I have always tried to imagine him au-naturel. Is this how he would look like under those suits?]

"..."

Ew!

How could one even have such an imagination for their brother? Was Ji Feifei insane?

Li Lanni instinctively snuck a look at that painting.

Her eyebrows were creased. Why as it that the thought of another girl imagining Ji Xiehan shirtless made her so uncomfortable?

Whatever it was, she had fed candy to the reporters. She went her way, leaving them shocked beyond words.

—

As expected, it blew up in just a few minutes.

Ji Feifei had created several accounts to insult Li Lanni.

Not only that, they were all such mushy accounts with their usernames declaring love to Ji Xiehan!

And she even posted paintings of her brother?

That was such a huge scandal.

Li Lanni didn't want to imagine the turmoil going on in the Ji family.

...

When she got home, her mother was not yet there. So she used the opportunity to create a side account. Ji Feifei could create side accounts, so could she.

She logged into it and composed a very long post.

[I think something is really wrong with that girl.

Wasn't she expelled from B City University for being involved with a married professor?

Now she has resorted to seducing her engaged brother? She must have a weird fetish LMAO!!

Don't forget; she is also the one who started the thread and claimed that her brother's engagement is fake.

Now that I think about it, the so called evidence is questionable. So what if a sheet of paper was found with a drafted love story?

It doesn't have their names!

Moreover, she only claimed to have found it in the restaurant where they went.

Who knows who it actually belongs to?!

With just a few statements, she created doubt in everyone's mind.

Comments came flooding in.

Winter and Autumn: [Indeed. She only claimed that it was made by Li Lanni and Ji Xiehan.

But now that it has been revealed that she has feelings for her brother, I'm starting to think that she might be the one who created that so called script!]

Li Lanni smiled. The netizens were turning the right way. She didn't need to do anything further. All she could do now was watch.

People had almost forgotten about how Ji Feifei was expelled and how she was accused of doing appalling things using her family's name as a shield, including bullying people.

They dragged out all her past records and insulted her.

They didn't spare her for a second.

[I was saying, why does this girl seem to always target Li Lanni? I was at a certain banquet and witnessed her try to frame Li Lanni!]

[Forget about that. I was in B City University before. This girl always stuck to Li Lanni. What is she, a shadow?]

[Do you need to ask? She was obviously sticking to Li Lanni so she could find a Lee way to scheme. What a loser!]

[I was in B City University too. That Ji Feifei always bullied everyone she thought was prettier or smarter than her. We were too scared to speak out because, you know, she is from the Ji family. Li Lanni, on the other hand, had always been friendly. Too bad she was blinded by that snake's fake friendship. I'm sad that she has learnt it the hard way but I'm glad she has finally realized what kind of person she had as a friend.]

When Li Lanni saw this comment, she swallowed bitterly.

'I'm afraid the way in which I learnt was way harder than this.'

The insults kept going.

Perhaps because they felt safe with Ji Feifei's true colors being revealed, everyone she had bullied in school spoke up.

Some of them were even major crimes.

A girl with several digits for a user name posted, [I had a friend in B City University. Just because the school hunk looked at her twice, Ji Feifei hired ruffians to defile her. Poor thing...]

Soon after she posted it, she deleted it then deleted her account altogether.

But Li Lanni had seen it.

Initially, it was just small cases but were unnegligible only because they were too many.

However, such a crime wasn't to be trifled with.

Her guess was that, the girl had decided to speak up in the heat of the moment then after thinking about it properly, she had deleted it. Perhaps she was scared that the Ji family would find her?

She had taken a screenshot out of instinct. Who knew it would be helpful?

"This cannot be ignored." Li Lanni said with a frown.

Even if that girl's innocence couldn't be returned, it didn't mean the criminals should get away with it.

As for whether it was true or not, it had to be true. Who would joke around with such a serious matter?

And.. this just added to Ji Feifei's crimes. If she wasn't punished, there was no such thing as justice in this world.

After thinking about it, she gave Xia Luna a call. "Can I bother you again?"

Xia Luna sounded cheerful. "How can you say that? I'm just afraid that I would be useless to you."

"Oh come on. Don't start sounding that way." Li Lanni really didn't know what to do with her sister. "Help me retrieve the information of the girl who just deleted her account. I will send you the screenshot."

When she was done speaking to Xia Luna, Li Yuming was back.

Her first instinct was to look at Li Lanni carefully. "Are you okay? Don't be too sad. You still have me no matter what." She thought Li Lanni was sad after being betrayed by her best friend.

In fact, she was so angry with Ji Feifei that she wanted to storm into the Ji mansion and rip her apart. Only rationality kept her from doing that.

Surprisingly, Li Lanni simply smiled. "I'm not shocked. I knew she hated me for ages."

"What do you mean?"

Li Lanni sat next to her mother. "I said that I wanted to tell you something, right? But I couldn't say all of it with all this going on.

Now I should tell you."

When she said this, she took out that note she had received months ago when she left the hospital. It was now old even though it was still in good condition.

Li Yuming looked at it and frowned. "This is...?"

"That day, I received this anonymous letter."

Li Yuming frowned. Wasn't this Li Lanni's handwriting? "You didn't write it?"

"No." Li Lanni then gave her her own book.

Indeed, when Li Yuming looked at them together, they were slightly different. Who had such a similar handwriting?

"Anyway. I unconsciously half believed the note, so I kept an eye on Ji Feifei.

And indeed, she is a scheming girl."

Li Lanni sounded sad. "She tried every way to fool me so she could get her way. I don't understand why she did most of the things she did, but she is involved with almost all my misfortunes. In fact, she was the one who tried to frame me, hired those bodyguards to harm me... and it could be more than just this."

Li Yuming felt betrayed. "I have always treated that girl like my own daughter. I even let her take care of you a few times when you were in coma. Oh my God... she could have killed you."

Li Lanni felt spooked just thinking about it.

"She had the perfect chance to kill me. But it would be obvious that she was the culprit."

Li Yuming thought about it and nodded too. But still, she was terrified.. How could she have been so careless?! She had almost lost her daughter due to her own short-sightedness.

Chapter 129 - Retribution

[The following arc may contain a lot of information. Readers are advised to be prepared for it.]

Li Yuming hugged her daughter tightly. "I'm sorry, Lanni." Her heart trembled just at the thought of many things that could have happened.

Li Lanni snuggled comfortably and replied emotionally, "Mom, please don't apologize. I'm the one who should be sorry. I hid things from you."

Patting her head, Li Yuming looked at her daughter and said, "As long as you don't do it anymore."

"Actually, I didn't say anything before because you trusted her very much. And I had just lost my memory. Of course, you would believe her more and think that I'm just paranoid."

"What nonsense are you saying? Of course, I would believe my baby more than anyone. Li Lanni, you are more important to me.

Is that why you didn't tell me anything?"

"Yes." Li Lanni admitted.

Li Yuming had to admit that she had trusted Ji Feifei too much. If not, that girl would never have had the chance to scheme against Li Lanni right under her nose. She should have to be more careful too. She regretted till her intestines turned green. It was her carelessness that caused her daughter to suffer silently.

"But from now on, no more secrets, right?" Li Yunming looked into her daughter's eyes and asked.

"Yes." Li Lanni replied honestly and snuggled deeper into her mother's arms

After revealing the secrets and hurt buried deep in her heart to her mother, she felt as if a huge load had been lifted from her shoulders. Now that she doesn't have to feel guilty anymore, she felt refreshed.

...

Unlike the embracing mother and daughter, the Ji family was a mess.

Madam Ji was sulking on a sofa, too depressed to say anything.

"My daughter... my own daughter... How can that be?" she kept mumbling.

What was worse, after all that news blew up, Ji Feifei was not even in the least bit apologetic. On the contrary, she had even yelled with her hands on her hips, "So what if Xiehan is my brother? Is it wrong to like a handsome man? I would like him even if he were my father!"

And regarding the bullying incidences, she had dismissed it saying that they all deserved what she did to them.

"How could my baby do this?" Madam Ji broke down just thinking about it.

Old Master Ji didn't say much either. Ever since that expulsion incident, he had known that his daughter had strayed away from the right path.

He, in fact, has seen right through her manipulative side and knew that she might have done more unspeakable deeds.

And yet, his wife would never let him take her to a school for wayward children.

Ji Xiehan had been right. Indeed, Ji Feifei was going to be the Ji family's downfall.

What Old Master Ji didn't know was that dark clouds were looming over them, and more trouble was brewing their way.

...

The following evening, Li Yuming was exchanging some pieces of information with her daughter when Ji Xiehan dropped by.

For the sake of convenience, Li Lanni had told her mother about her plan with Ji Xiehan. She tactfully didn't mention Xia Luna.

She wanted to tell the matter about Xia Luna too, but she stopped when she realized it would be too much for her mother to take. After all she might have received a considerable shock when she knew that the girl she had pitied and treated so well had been scheming against her daughter.

When Ji Xiehan arrived, they all started discussing what he had found out.

"I have obtained evidence that she has indeed been involved with many crimes. Every one of the people she disliked has been harmed in a way or another." Ji Xiehan was practically embarrassed to have such a woman for a sister.

How was he supposed to face his in-laws now?

Was it too late to disown her?

He cleared his throat and went into detail. "The Ji family hasn't been giving her a lot of money. Since she started being a spendthrift, father basically froze her cards.

So she has been getting money from illegal business: drug trafficking."

Li Lanni was shocked. She had thought about such a thing, but she didn't expect it actually to be true. It came as a huge surprise.

Li Yuming was even more shocked. And here she thought that Xia Luna was a cunning girl. If Xia Luna was cunning, then what was Ji Feifei? Wasn't she practically the devil?

"What are you planning to do? Sue, her?" Ji Xiehan asked Li Yuming.

Li Yuming, in turn, looked at her daughter. She was the one who had been mostly affected by Ji Feifei's schemes. She would go by her opinion.

Li Lanni thought hard about it and just stared into space. She would have really loved to skin that girl alive, burn her to death, or just choke the guts out of her.

But then again, there was such a thing as law.

If she resorted to doing things the same way those unlawful people did, how would she be any different from them?

In the end, she looked at Ji Xiehan. "Let's sue her. I want to uncover all the crimes she has been involved in and let the court sentence her fairly.

Just... just don't do anything to make her sentence lighter, okay? You and your family, leave it entirely to the court."

Ji Xiehan was perplexed. He had expected Li Lanni to execute a huge punishment or personally torture Ji Feifei. But then how could his Lanni stoop to their level? She would surely punish them but lawfully.

She need not ask him not to intervene in this matter, he would always be her support even if she asked him for illegal stuff.

He only hoped that his parents had learned a lesson because if they had, they would never try to shield their daughter this time.

...

When Ji Xiehan left their villa, he called to let a bodyguard drive his car back. Meanwhile, he strolled on his own.

It was not that this whole matter did not sadden him.

That was his sister, after all.

He knew that the little brat had some stupid fantasies about him. But even then, he had been hoping that she would grow out of it.

After all, it was normal for young girls to adore their brothers.

Besides, he had not even been there when Ji Feifei was born. He had not been there in her childhood either. They would only meet a few times when he came back to the country to visit his parents.

Aside from that, their brother-sister relationship was too distant.

He was partially to blame for this. Ever since he knew that he had a sister, he hadn't been a good brother.

He and his little sister just didn't hit it off. It didn't help that the girl was somewhat clingy from the very beginning. Hence instead of trying to be closer to her, he spent almost all his time avoiding her. It was no shock that she didn't actually see him as a brother but as a man instead.

Ji Xiehan couldn't help blaming his past self. For her to be in this situation, he shared equal responsibilities as their parents.

Then again, that girl was weird in every way. It wasn't just about her crazy incestuous fantasy. All that bullying she had done couldn't be excused. And drug trafficking... that was a severe case.

Thinking of all these things, Ji Xiehan rubbed his forehead and sighed. What's done cannot be undone. So he could only hope that with this, his sister will realize her mistakes and change for good.

Aside from this, Ji Xiehan was also thinking about another result of his investigation.

Ji Feifei didn't have anything to do with Li Lanni's accident. Or at least there were no ties to her.

He had then tried to investigate the guy who was in the car with Li Lanni at the time. He had a feeling that guy must be connected somehow.

This was mainly because that Yang Su seemed to have been a little close to Ji Feifei. He knew he was paranoid, but nothing could be brushed off.

However, the guy had been in a prolonged coma before he died. He didn't even have the chance to question him.

As for Yang Su's personal life, it was spotless aside from that tiny connection he had with Ji Feifei.

But they were from the same school. It wasn't a surprise. Besides, that guy was Li Lanni's boyfriend. No one would plot to harm his own girlfriend, right?

Perhaps it was really an accident, after all?

Chapter 130 - Turning Point

Just like that, Ji Feifei was charged with multiple crimes. Most of the crimes, despite her not doing them personally, she hired the people to do it, so she was still held responsible for them. However, Ji Feifei refused to admit her crimes, and the pieces of evidence were not enough to prove her guilty. Thus the court decided to hold a hearing session again in the coming month. Meanwhile, she was detained in the jail

Ji Xiehan, Xia Luna, and Li Lanni were determined to use this time to find more evidence -- and they believed they could do it as long as they worked hard.

Ji Xiehan had discussed with his parents and, because they knew that their daughter was in the wrong too, they did not meddle.

~~ "It's for her own good." Ji Huifen embraced his sobbing wife and coaxed. "If we keep giving in to her, she will never learn a lesson. Eventually, she will suffer worse consequences if she does worse things."~~

Although Madam Ji was sad, she couldn't deny that her husband was right. Her son had been right too. She had just been too stubborn to listen to him.

Now she couldn't help feeling even more guilty. She loved her daughter very much - it was only reasonable for a mother to love her daughter - but because of her maternal love, she had become blinded and couldn't see her daughter's mistakes.

She had blindly believed that her daughter had been wronged and even blamed and cursed at Li Lanni for bullying her daughter, without knowing that she was blaming the victim.

Her eyes watered in guilt and embarrassment. Thinking of how the girl she had offended was the girl that her son loved so much, she felt even worse.

On Monday.

It had been two days ever since Ji Feifei's matter blew up. It was now all over the news.

Most of Madam Ji's 'closest friends' had been mocking her for having such a daughter.

She laughed bitterly when she thought she about her so-called true friends. Those were the people that would usually suck up to her in every way.

The minute she was down, everyone started throwing stones on her.

Only one of the people who she didn't even consider to be close to her all this while was her true friend. That was Madam Jiang. Even though their sons were best friends, she had always thought that Madam Jiang was a pretentious woman who acted too modest and never behaved like a woman of her class.

This incident was an eye-opener for her and she realized just how wrong she had been about her.

When all her friends were avoiding her, only she came to her house to meet her. That day both of them had a heart-to-heart conversation. When Madam Jiang heard how Madam Ji had opposed Li Lanni and cursed at her, she fumed at her friend, and she gave her almost a whole hour's worth of scolding.

"Are you kidding me? Your daughter wronged that girl so many times, and you have nothing to say?"

Madam Ji lamented. "What can I say? That girl must hate me. I was so rude to her."

"Then apologize." Madam Jiang berated. Wasn't that what anyone should do if they made a mistake?

"I cannot see her let alone speak to her. She will not give me even a minute." It wasn't that she had not tried to talk to Li Lanni the day before but failed even to get to see her.

Madam Jiang thought about it and smiled. "Don't worry. I know what to do. You just make sure you don't say something mean because if you do, you would rather not apologize at all."

"I'm not that shallow."

Hence they made their way to Star Art International.

Li Lanni was done with her class early, but she had a pending assignment to do, so she stayed back to complete it. Cheng Yu had nothing to do at home, so she stayed back to keep her company and, while doing so she started reviewing her classwork. At that time, the two of them were the only ones left in the studio.

While the girls went on with their comics, a middle-aged woman walked in.

Li Lanni looked up at her and smiled when she recognized this woman. "Madam Jiang." She stood out of politeness to greet her, and so did Cheng Yu.

Madam Jiang's smile deepened even more. These girls were so polite. "You don't need to be so formal. I'm just walking around."

"Oh..." Li Lanni wondered how one could be casual towards Madam Jiang.

This was the big boss's mother, after all.

She was still rambling mentally when Madam Jiang spoke up. "Lanni, do you have a minute?"

Li Lanni wondered why Madam Jiang would want to speak to her. Had she done something against the company policy? Was it about how she had told on one of her classmates? But that was long ago. If they wanted to punish her or terminate her classes, they should have done so long ago, right?

Despite her nervousness, she kept a neutral expression and followed Madam Jiang.

But Madam Jiang could still perceive her anxiousness and smiled "You don't need to be so uneasy. I just called you for a casual chat."

Li Lanni smiled in response and eased a bit.

Madam Jiang brought her to the employee's cafeteria, where Madam Ji was waiting.

Outside the door, she took Li Lanni's hand and pleaded. "My friend may not be one of the people you want to see. But could you please hear her out?"

Li Lanni was embarrassed that such a prominent woman was so gentle with her, so she nodded.

But as soon as they walked in, her face froze. Madam Ji, out of all people?

"Go on." Madam Jiang urged.

Li Lanni wanted nothing more than to turn back and walk right out. But thinking about it again, she decided that running away wouldn't do her any good. It was better to hear what she had to say. If this were about Ji Xiehan again, she would drag him here by the ear and let his mother tell him to stay away from her.

"Nice to meet you again, Madam Ji." Li Lanni politely greeted, but her eyes were cold.

Madam Ji also sensed her mood, but she didn't get upset. It was her fault, to begin with.

"Nice to see you again too. Please sit."

Afraid that the girl would get angry and simply walk away, she went straight to the point. "I came here to apologize on behalf of Feifei."

"Oh." Was all Li Lanni uttered. Apology? Li Lanni didn't feel the need for that. What would it change? Besides, "I suggest you apologize to all those girls whose lives were ruined by her. But then again, they don't need it. An apology will not make them happier, nor will compensation return what they lost. One of those girls even lost her ability to walk. Can an apology cover that? If you are here to convince me to cancel the suit against your daughter, you better try the others. But I bet they don't even want to see you."

At the side, Madam Jiang was impressed. This girl was so sharp-tongued, but it was not overboard. Everything she said made sense. For some things, it was too late to apologize.

Madam Ji knew this too. That was why she didn't insist on it. "I know Feifei cannot be pardoned so easily.

Aside from this, I also came to apologize for myself."

This surprised Li Lanni.

"I was too shallow-minded and said mean things to you. I didn't know what Feifei had done to you, and I thought you were a bad girl." She tore off all her pride and continued. "Henceforth, I will no longer judge people until I know them well enough. Can you please forgive me?"

Li Lanni looked at the woman before her in shock. Was Madam Ji seriously asking for her forgiveness?

She had long known that Madam Ji was a proud woman. Besides, she was a senior. She hadn't expected that she would swallow her pride and apologize to a little girl like her.

But looking at her now, she looked like just any other remorseful person.

If she dwelt on the matter for too long, it would be unreasonable on her part. So Li Lanni blankly said, "I forgive you."

However, I do have a question that I wanted to ask you since we met the first time."

Madam Ji was elated that Li Lanni was willing to forgive her, so she urged her, "Go on."

"I wanted to know why you hate my mother and me so much; may I know where your prejudice was coming from? "

She had thought that she had pushed her luck too far, and Madam Ji would definitely scold her and walk off, considering the amount of hatred she had for them. But to her shock, she answered. "I don't actually hate you.. I was just upset."

