

Chapter 191 - Let's Continue What We Started (2)

With the situation they had been in a while ago, Ji Xiehan was not surprised by her words. Even so, her boldness surprised him. He was learning a different side to her each day and he loved every single one of them. He embraced her warm, naked body and flipped her under him.

Just then, his phone rang.

Ji Xiehan frowned in annoyance. Who would call at such bad timing? He ignored it and held the hem of his t-shirt, pulling it over his head. Then he leaned down to kiss her.

She held a hand over his shoulder to stop him. "It might be important."

Ji Xiehan wanted to ignore it when the call ended but the phone started ringing incessantly again. He cursed under his breath, shoved the t-shirt onto the bed and stretched a hand to the nightstand to pick it.

"What are you talking about?" he asked with a frown as soon as the caller spoke. "I'll take a look."

Once he hung up, he wanted to shove the phone aside and check later.

"What happened? You look shocked." Lanni asked curiously.

Ji Xiehan ran a hand through his silver hair, ruffling it. "My father said I'm all over gossip forums again. I wonder what that means."

"Then have a look." Lanni responded. Wasn't it obvious that he should? She took his t-shirt and held it over her chest as she sat up to satisfy her curiosity. She wondered what Ji Xiehan would be doing in the gossip forums and she had a bad feeling about it.

Under her curious and uneasy gaze, he checked the news on his phone. His eyebrows scrunched up as soon as he saw the headlines. "When father said 'you are on the gossip forums again', he didn't mean me. He meant us and it's not good news."

"How bad could it be?" Lanni moved closer to him.

"This bad." He sat down, holding the phone closer so she could see.

[Trouble in paradise: Lanni given the cold treatment as Xiehan rekindles old flame with his childhood friend.] Read the headline in bold font.

The couple exchanged looks. Lanni held a hand over her forehead. "Ji Feifei is in jail. Who came up with this nonsense then?"

Ji Xiehan read the article and pointed at it. Following his gaze, Lanni saw the exaggerated gossip about how Ji Xiehan went to Berlin for a vacation on the surface while in real sense, he secretly told Feng Ci his whereabouts so they would meet up. While in Berlin, the two met up in Lanni's presence and cheated on her right under her nose and in the room next to her.

The article even went so far as to state that Ji Xiehan would sneak to Feng Ci's room at night so they would have fun while Lanni slept on her own. There was a picture attached — the one of Feng Ci on the bathroom with Ji Xiehan on top of her.

"Shit." A curse escaped Lanni's lips. She wasn't sure what disgusted her more. The fact that that shameless woman tricked her boyfriend or that she had even taken a photo and was using him now?

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Four hours ago.

Soon after An Zichen helped Lanni get Ji Feifei's signature on the fake share transfer document, Old Master Feng went to give her the contract they had prepared beforehand.

Alas, he was shocked when Ji Feifei claimed to have signed it already.

"What do you mean you signed it? I didn't bring the contract to you so how could you have signed it?" Old Master Feng thought Ji Feifei was messing with him.

"I don't understand either. I signed it this morning." Ji Feifei frowned.

Old Master Feng sunk into thought. Perhaps his wife sent her the contract and forgot to tell him about it? He flipped it to the last page and didn't see the signature he was expecting. He showed it to her. "If you signed it, where's your signature?"

"Right... what?" Ji Feifei rubbed her eyes and looked at the paper again. "Where did the signature disappear to? I swear I signed it."

After calming down from the fit of her shock, she looked at the document again. "This looks different from what was brought earlier."

Old Master Feng held his chin in thought. "But were the terms the same? If they were identical to what we had discussed then there shouldn't be any problem." He was getting more convinced that his wife might have brought it to Ji Feifei to save him the trouble.

"I..." Ji Feifei stuttered. "I didn't really read it. Since we already discussed..."

"Forget about it." Old Master Feng calmed down after convincing himself. His wife wouldn't mess up the terms anyway. He took out his phone to call his wife for confirmation. However, her response shocked him. She knew nothing about it!

Visiting time was almost over and he was running out of time so he was impatient and almost shouted when he asked her, "Who brought the contract you signed?"

"Your chauffeur." She almost snarled too, in irritation.

Old Master Feng looked at her like she was an idiot and left.

"An Zichen. No wonder..."

Now it all made sense. As soon as he arrived home, An Zichen had suddenly told him that he had transferred the money he owed the Feng family to Old Master Feng's bank account. After showing him the bank receipts, he asked to quit his job.

At the time, Old Master Feng was only displeased about giving up on one of the employees that were easiest to exploit but since the lad had paid off his debt and the old man was in a good mood, he let him leave. It was only later that he wondered where he had suddenly got so much money.

Now it all made sense. Someone must have given that money to him. He must have tricked Ji Feifei. "And that foolish girl! No wonder her family doesn't want her. How is she so stupid? Who signs a contract without checking through it?"

He went back home, almost fainting from anger.

"That's not the face I expected from a triumphant return, father." Feng Ci went to receive him, firing off questions and receiving a slap as a reward.

"You slapped me..." She stared at her father in disbelief.

"You useless woman. You are just as useless as Ji Feifei. None of this would have happened if you had managed to seduce Ji Xiehan. If you cannot even seduce a man, Of what good are you as a woman?"

"How dare you say that to our daughter?" Madam Feng huffed as she left her room, wondering what was going on. She glared at her husband when she saw the palm print on Feng Ci's cheek.

Old Master Feng calmed down slightly, flopping onto a couch. He explained what had happened with Ji Feifei and An Zichen. "Whatever it is, it is done already. We need a new plan."

"Who tricked Ji Feifei anyway? They must have needed perfect knowledge of her to guess that she wouldn't read the contract properly." Feng Ci said.

"So you do have a brain." Her father glared at her. She had been so useless lately. "It must be her family. They know her best."

Madam Feng sat next to her husband. "It cannot be Wen Lin." She had been close to Wen Lin for years and she knew the woman better than anyone. The woman treasured her daughter more than her life. In fact, Madam Feng was shocked that Wen Lin had let Ji Feifei be imprisoned. But no matter why she let that happen, Wen Lin would never do that to Ji Feifei. And neither would Ji Huifen. "So it can only be one person. The person who has never been that close to Ji Feifei to begin with."

"Ji Xiehan." Old Master Feng was surprised too. He had thought that their sibling rivalry was too deep for Ji Xiehan to even know his sister's middle name. It turned out he knew such deep-rooted facts as well. "As expected, that man isn't to be underestimated."

"I don't think this seems like Xiehan. He doesn't look like the type of man to play tricks." Feng Ci frowned. She had always tried to understand Ji Xiehan as much as possible. Although she didn't know every single thing about him, she had a gut feeling that there was more to this.

"Enough with that. Whether it is Ji Xiehan or not, We need a serious plan. We cannot fail."

"We should get the other shareholders and higher ups on our side before the Jis get them on theirs." Madam Feng said.

"What makes you so sure that Ji Huifen and his son won't think of this?" Old Master Feng banged the envelope on the table in frustration.

A moment of silence later, Feng Ci humphed. "I don't know how to make sure Ji Huifen doesn't do anything, but I have a way to distract Xiehan."

"What?" They both looked at her.

"Something I'm glad I didn't delete.." She winked and excitedly left the room.

## Chapter 192 - I'm Going To Disown Her

"What is she up to?" Madam Feng glanced in the direction where Feng Ci had just run off.

"If it's anything that will bring us more trouble, I'm going to disown her." Old Master Feng threatened, and he meant it.

"How dare you say such words? She's our baby!"

"Yeah, right. A twenty-six-year-old baby." Old Master Feng harrumphed and left the room, leaving her with "your daughter better not mess anything up."

While the oldies almost fought, Feng Ci was currently contacting her friends from the media.

What she had in hand was a video she had taken in Berlin.

That night before she called Ji Xiehan for help, she had set up a camera in the bathroom. In case he tried to dump her, she was going to use the video of them having sex to blackmail him into breaking up with Lanni and getting married to her instead.

However, the plan almost backfired because he didn't even spare her a second glance. She was still angry until she checked the camera. From the angle in which he had fallen on top of her, they looked like a passionate couple. He couldn't wriggle his way out no matter how glib his tongue was.

After replaying the video several times so he would find the perfect short video, she found that she would have to use a bit of photoshop to make it more real.

But thinking about it, some overly nosy people might check the authenticity of the video and any traces of photoshop might make the whole video seem untrustworthy. She couldn't risk that.

Hence, she decided to use pictures instead. In fact, the picture was more real-looking and Ji Xiehan would never deny being her room. If he still did, she would get a hacker to retrieve the hotel's surveillance footage—there must be surveillance cameras in the corridors and they must have captured him entering her room.

Feng Ci happily gave the pictures to her friend. Ji Xiehan was done in this time. "Serves him right for thinking he can get away with rejecting and humiliating me."

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Ji Xiehan's Highbridge Mansion.

"Honey..." Ji Xiehan was inarticulate. How was he supposed to explain such a picture? He was innocent. What happened in that picture was really a result of Feng Ci tripping him. The woman must have hidden a camera beforehand. But who would believe him?

However, Lanni did. She placed a hand on his. "Just one look and I can guess what happened. It's so obvious. Sigh, what a shameless woman."

"So you believe me?" Ji Xiehan was surprised and happy at the same time.

"Of course. If I'm not wrong, this is from the day she tricked you into her room, right?"

Ji Xiehan nodded. Now he was glad he had chosen to tell her the truth that night. If he hid it from her, how would he have explained himself now? No matter what he said, it would have seemed like a lie.

"She must have several loose screws in her head." Lanni didn't want to even think about her.

She checked the time on her phone. She should probably go back home soon. "It's already 11 pm?"

When did it get so late?

Ji Xiehan was surprised when he saw the time too. It had gotten so late without their knowledge.

Lanni looked at the t-shirt that she was unknowingly still holding against her chest. Was there any mall that could make a delivery so late if she wanted to order a change of clothes?

Ji Xiehan knew what she was thinking. He held her warm body in his arms. "Honey, I know your mood just got ruined but could you stay tonight and go tomorrow? It's already so late."

Lanni thought about it and indeed, it would be unreasonable to go home now. She wordlessly pulled the t-shirt over her head and wore it then lay in bed.

Although she couldn't possibly be mad at him for Feng Ci's attempt to drive a wedge between them, she was not willing to continue talking about it and her dismissive mood proved just that. Ji Xiehan could only lie down next to her and hug her.

Of course, a certain part of his body was quick to acknowledge her presence. Sigh, why was it so hard to spend time with his girlfriend? Every time they were about to take things to the final step, something just had to come up and interrupt them. It was getting on his nerves. Thinking about something, he froze.

How could he have been so forgetful? Li Yuming had long warned him that she didn't want any shady business. She didn't want Lanni to be pregnant before they were married. Besides, Lanni was still studying. She was probably not ready to have children yet. How then, could he have been so stupid and forget to use protection a while ago when they were about to do it?

"Damn, so foolish!"

Lanni turned to look at him curiously. "Who are you scolding?"

"Did I say that aloud?" He felt silly.

"Yes." Lanni laughed at him. "Honey, let's go to sleep. I'm tired and you must be too. Besides, you must have a lot to deal with tomorrow."

"Okay." Ji Xiehan nuzzled his nose against her neck and tried to fall asleep too.

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The next day.

After waking up, Ji Xiehan finally brought Lanni to his walk-in closet so she would choose a dress to wear.

"Wow... all these beautiful dresses in one closet?" Lanni marveled. Although she already had innumerable clothes that were of the best material and designs, Ji Xiehan's choices amazed her. They were different from what she would choose but they were beautiful as well.

"Hey, isn't that the gown I wanted to buy two weeks ago but found it gone the next time I went to the store?" Lanni pointed at a magenta strapless gown with a glittery waistline. She had seen it while just passing by a store but was in a hurry so she didn't stop to buy it. The next time she went to buy it, the manager said that a handsome man had bought it for his girlfriend. She had been happy for the woman but disappointed that she couldn't have it.

Not to mention, there was no other dress of the same design since it was a limited edition piece and the others had already been sold. Who would have thought that the handsome buyer was Ji Xiehan and the girlfriend was her? They were not dating two weeks ago so she wouldn't have thought of it no matter what.

She smiled and looked through the others. There were even a few in European style; he probably bought them when they were in Berlin. She wondered when he sneakily bought them.

"Do you like them?" he asked from behind her.

"I love them. Thank you." Lanni smiled and hugged him. It was a pleasant surprise.

"Since they have been here for so long, why didn't you show them to me last night?" Lanni wondered.

Ji Xiehan looked into her eyes. "Because I wanted to see you wearing my clothes."

"You're an actual pervert, not that I'm complaining." She was kinda used to his shameless... or perhaps she even liked it a little.

Ji Xiehan leaned in to kiss her but she placed a hand on his mouth to stop him. "Not now Xiehan, I need to go and so do you."

Ji Xiehan nodded and gave her space, not before briefly kissing her lips.

Once she was done dressing up, she went downstairs.

"I'll drop you off." He said, reaching for his car keys.

"You don't need to, honey. You should go home. You will probably have a lot to deal with." Lanni speculated. "I'm guessing Feng Ci sent those photos online to keep you busy cleaning the mess as her family does something more significant in Feng Ji International."

"Besides, my car is still here." She pointed outside at her white car.

Ji Xiehan couldn't refute her. Indeed, Feng Ci must only be distracting him. Since she had her car, he could only see her off. Lanni took the key from her purse and pressed it. Her car beeped and flashed as she threw her arms around Ji Xiehan's neck to hug him. "I know it must be hard on you." She breathed onto his neck. "But you can do it, my love."

"Mmh." Ji Xiehan hugged her waist before letting her enter her car and drive off. It was hard. But after receiving such encouragement from his girlfriend, he felt invigorated. Taking out his phone, he returned his father a call.

As soon as he was done, the blabbermouth Lin Jian called.

"Did you really play your little beauty? I know you wouldn't, but I still hope you didn't because if you did then..."

"Says the man who doesn't even remember the name of his twentieth girlfriend." Ji Xiehan interrupted his ramble.

"Who says I don't remember? Of course, I remember. My girlfriend number twenty was called Talia. Wait, crap... I dated Talia only last year so she cannot be girlfriend number any digit below 200. Uhm... Fanfan? No, not Fanfan..."

Ji Xiehan sighed in defeat. "I would never betray Lanni.." After answering the question he had been asked.

## Chapter 193 - Such A Good Morning

When Lanni got home, it was just as expected. Li Yuming was upset or worried. Whatever it was, she was not happy. She paced the living room in distress, looking like she would detonate at the slightest provocation. Lanni proceeded with caution. "Good morning mom."

"What's so good about Xiehan being all over the news over a scandal with another woman? If that is happy news, then this morning is very good."

Lanni let out a small sigh and pulled her mother to sit on the couch, sitting beside her. "Mom, you know Xiehan better than anyone. He would never betray me."

Li Yuming took a deep breath so she wouldn't scare her daughter. "I know, Lanni. I know him both from his childhood and in his adulthood. Xiehan has never been one to play around with women. He would never do anything to hurt you." She paused, knowing that what she was saying might not make sense. "Even if... even if there are photos of him with another woman, I still want to believe that there is more to it."

Lanni held her mother's hand. "You know, one thing I like about our relationship is that you like and trust Xiehan so much. It's not easy for a misunderstanding to creep in between our two families."

After saying this, she went ahead to explain what had happened in Berlin.

"I knew Xiehan wouldn't do anything to betray your relationship. Just as I expected, that girl was the one playing tricks." Li Yuming rubbed Lanni's hand. "But that is just as bad. Does it always have to end like this?"

'End like how?' Lanni thought but swallowed the question before she asked it because Li Yuming continued with a tone filled with pain. "What I'm worried about is not Xiehan betraying you. That would never happen. I'm just worried that your relationship will be destroyed by a third party just like..."

"Just like what?" Lanni probed when Li Yuming didn't say anything.

As a response, Li Yuming stood up, mumbled something about not meaning to have spoken too much, and left for her room. Lanni watched her leave with confusion written all over her face. Why did it feel like, in the last statement, Li Yuming was no longer talking about her relationship with Ji Xiehan but about something else instead?

She checked the gossip news once again. As expected, the news was exploding. There were even more versions erupting. There was even one that claimed that Feng Ci was Ji Xiehan's true love and that they had been separated by Lanni who seduced Ji Xiehan and sowed discord between him and his true love.

Lanni merely rolled her eyes to it and went on with her life. When she was swarmed by gossip-seekers on social media and confronted about it, she ignored all the questions. Most of them were Feng Ci's skills and would only find loopholes in her answers and use them against her and Ji Xiehan anyway.

Days passed. The following week, Lanni went to Star Art International.

As expected, she was the topic of gossip once again. She cared about none of it, so she simply brushed it off when a few of the other students would gather and speak while looking in her direction then look away as soon as she looked at them.

Unlike the others who kept blaming her for seducing another woman's boyfriend, Cheng Yu approached her with a disgusted face. "I knew that bastard was up to no good. How dare he go after you when he knows that he is still involved with another woman? How dare he mess around with her right under your nose? Urgh... I'm so angry. Someone kill him already."

Lanni smiled even though her boyfriend was being scolded. That was because she knew that Cheng Yu meant no harm. She held the latter's hand with a small smile. "Xiao Yu, I'm so glad you care about me, but I trust Xiehan."

To that, Cheng Yu shoved her painting tools aside and stuck out a hand to touch Lanni's forehead. "Are you okay? Did you hit your head against the door or something?"

Lanni laughed at her antics. "I'm perfectly fine. Why wouldn't I be?"

"Then why do you explain the fact that you are defending a man who cheated on you? There is evidence right before you, Lanni. Look at that picture, did you? You don't know how angry I am. I want to pull his hair off right now."

Lanni chuckled lightly. Having such a friend, Ji Xiehan would never bully her, not that she thought he could.

After explaining to Cheng Yu what had happened in Berlin, the latter no longer had doubts although it sounded far-fetched. "Fine, I will only believe this because I trust you. Even so, I can't say the same about Luna. She has been so angry these few days that I would have sworn she went to cause trouble in Feng Ji International."

"She didn't really, right?" Lanni was dazed. "How is she anyway?"

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At the same time.

Xia Luna glared at Jiang Xingyu. "Let me go!"

"No can do, Luna. Xiehan needs to concentrate on his work right now and you going to the company will only distract him." Jiang Xingyu had pulled her away from Feng Ji International building and dragged her all the way to his home. Xia Luna may be strong, but she definitely couldn't beat a man who had trained all his life. They had been tangled in what almost looked like a fight until he cuffed her down to a chair.

"You have no idea what you're doing." Xia Luna hissed. "I need to go to Feng Ji International right this instant."

"I just said no can do. Deal with it."

Xia Luna took deep breaths to prevent herself from exploding. Jiang Xingyu was driving her to the limit of insanity. "And I said it for the last seven hundred and thirty times that I am not going to cause any trouble. Do I look like a troublemaker to you?"

"You haven't spoken that many times and yes, you look like a troublemaker." Jiang Xingyu shrugged.

"Xia Luna tried to find something to pick the handcuffs but found none. If only she wore pins in her hair... "Why do you walk around with such stuff anyway? Were you on your way to get a girl and play bondage with her?"

"What nonsense are you saying?" Jiang Xingyu frowned at her. "I knew that you would try to go to Feng Ji International. I was waiting for you to show up so I could stop you."

"You're crazy." Xia Luna huffed and remained silent. Talking with this idiot would only exhaust her strength.

Jiang Xingyu circled her and stopped behind her, leaning over to cover the height difference that was a result of her sitting. "Listen, why don't I take the day off work and spend time with you? It will keep you busy at the same time."

Xia Luna tilted her head to meet his gaze. Surprisingly, she said, "Sure."

Jiang Xingyu was taken aback and stopped to stare at her. He even circled her so he was facing her and looking at her lips clearly. "It's alright?"

"It's not? But you asked..."

"Yes, yes it is. Of course, it's alright. It's just that I was surprised. You have always found excuses to stay away from me. It's surprising that you would agree for me to take the day off and spend it with you.." He realized he was not making any sense and her smile seemed to be mocking him so he shut up.

"Right, right. I should have done so already. Hold on, I'll just give my secretary a call." Which he did right away, and let his secretary handle most of the matters and only call him if there was anything that specifically needed his attention. When he was done, he sent Ji Xiehan a message to inform him that he had taken care of Xia Luna. He was just about to call Lin Jian when he felt a tug on the sleeve of his shirt.

He looked down at her, slid his phone into his pocket, and went to sit next to her. "What happened?"

Xia Luna pulled the collar of his shirt and flirtatiously looked into his eyes. Her gaze sent him into confusion and her words were just enough to make him believe he was dreaming. "You are such a handsome man, Xingyu. Why wouldn't I want to spend time with you?"

He gulped and stuck out a hand to feel her forehead. She didn't react to it and he felt it again, then again. The fifth time he did the same thing, she held his hand with a hearty laugh. "I don't have a fever, Xingyu. I'm not crazy either. I...Well, I was crazy before. I mean, how can any sane person reject a man like you?"

Jiang Xingyu paled in surprise. He had always wanted to hear even one of such words from his Xia. But why was it so spooky now that she was saying them?

"Xingyu..." Her voice brought him back to the real world, but she suddenly pressed her lips on his.

## Chapter 194 - One Problem Left

Jiang Xingyu froze, not knowing where to place his hands. Was he supposed to hug her, or would she be mad at him? She had always avoided and ignored him and now she was kissing him. How should he react?

She bit his lip slightly to remind him to not let his thoughts wander while kissing her. When she hugged his neck and deepened the kiss, he finally reacted by pulling her by her waist into his embrace and returned the kiss.

Her hand went around his waist, then circled his lower body. Just when he thought she was going for his crotch and was surprised about it, her hand dipped into his pockets and before he could react, she had taken out a small key.

"How could you..." How did she even know where the key was? Did she have a pair of super eyes or something? His brain cleared just as she pushed him away and unlocked the cuff on her ankle.

She left off the chair before he could catch her. "Sorry, I have to go!" She said and sprinted off.

Jiang Xingyu cursed. How dare she lure him using seduction and trick him?

Now that he thought about it, that must be how she had survived in the past year. She must have used deception.

He wondered whether to call his assistant and go back to work or just stay home since he had already taken the day off. With a sigh, he decided to go back to work. He didn't have anything to do on his own anyway.

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That evening.

In the Feng family home.

"How did they even do it? Are the Jis gods?" Gu Tianxi expressed her shock.

"Yeah, and you Gus did nothing to stop them." Feng Ci exploded. So much for having to pretend to be in love with Gu Tianchan.

After the news about her and Ji Xiehan blew up, Gu Tianchan had jealously called and asked her all about it. She had to pretend that it was Ji Xiehan who had come onto her and that she felt nothing for him. After all that trouble, all she got was this?

"What do you mean we did nothing? It is you Fengs who are too stupid!" Gu Tianxi would never let anyone insult her family.

"Can you both stop fighting already?" Gu Tianchan stepped in before the two women murdered each other. He went over to Feng Ci and hugged her from behind. "My dear, you..."

He stopped when he suddenly got punched in the face. If he didn't react in time, he would have ended up with a broken jaw.

"What was that for?"

Feng Ci stood up and looked him up and down. "Take a good look at yourself. Which part of you do you think is good enough for me?"

Gu Tianchan was shocked.

Since the Gu family was no longer helping, Feng Ci didn't think she needed to pretend anymore. She let out everything she had always wanted to say. "You are disgusting! Just the thought of you makes me want to retch. You know what, if I really had to marry you, I would have..."

A slap across her face interrupted her.

Feng Ci looked at the incomer in shock. "Mother..."

Mrs. Feng was so angry she could explode. She and her husband had only stepped aside to talk with Old Master Gu and Mrs. Gu. They had left the kids together so they would interact and so that Feng Ci would get to know Gu Tianchan better. Who would have thought that just a few minutes later, she would come back to her daughter hurling insults at him?

She smiled at Gu Tianchan modestly. "Please don't mind Cici. She loses her mind whenever she is anxious."

"I understand." Gu Tianchan brushed it off generously.

At the side, Gu Tianxi harrumphed. Even though she had wanted Feng Ci to marry her brother, she didn't think she could let that happen anymore.

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While the Feng family and Gu family were almost getting into a fight, the situation was different in the Ji family.

Wen Lin had prepared a table full of meals and had called Ji Xiehan and Li Lanni home for dinner.

The atmosphere was merry.

Ji Huifen even brought out his oldest bottle of wine and opened it, poured everyone some and raised his glass for a toast.

"Xiehan, you have worked hard this time." He said, proud of his son. Within just a few days, he had put all the Feng family's efforts to waste. Not only had he let all the higher ups and partners know how irresponsible and untrustworthy the Fengs were, he had also made them remain on the Ji family's side.

"Our Xiehan has always been hardworking." Wen Lin patted her son's shoulders.

"Lanni helped me a great deal." He raised his glass to Lanni and smiled at her.

Lanni smiled back. "I only did the little work that's not troublesome." She didn't take all the credit to herself.

"I wouldn't have done it without those sweet calls of encouragement from you, my love."

Since Wen Lin no longer had anything against Lanni, she was happy to see the interaction between her son and Lanni. These two were so cute. They should get married already. "Lanni, why don't you invite your mother to dine with us this weekend? We have never had a meal together since you and Xiehan got engaged." Wen Lin said.

"Sure. I will let her know." Lanni replied. Thinking about something, she squeezed her eyes shut for half a second and then smiled, brushing her thought off.

Ji Xiehan only had to take one look at her to know what she was thinking. In instances like this, his parents would have invited her close family over for a meal. But for her, they could only invite her mother. They didn't know about her sister and her father was a topic they avoided.

He reached under the table and placed a hand on her thigh for comfort, silently letting her know that he was there for her. Although he couldn't possibly replace the position of a father in her heart, he still cared about her more than anyone else could.

"Xiehan, are you still not willing to take over the company?" Ji Huifen asked, pulling him out of his thoughts.

Before Ji Xiehan could answer, Wen Lin jabbed her husband and glared daggers at him. "Don't bore my son with that kind of questions. Xiehan can take over the company when he feels like and if he doesn't want to, so be it."

"Sheesh... I was just asking." Ji Huifen recoiled. Why was his wife so mean?

"Now that we're at this... I've been wondering how this could happen..." Wen Lin clutched at her chest as though in inexplicable hurt.

Everyone looked at her curiously.

She continued in a mixture of doubt and hurt. "Feifei was going to be on the Feng family's side? How could that be?"

Ji Huifen let out a sigh. "I can't believe it either."

Lanni and Ji Xiehan exchanged looks. Ji Xiehan placed down his cutlery before saying, "Mother, it is true. There is no misunderstanding. She was really going to sell us out."

"But how can that be? We are her family." Wen Lin was still in disbelief.

"Yes, but that doesn't stop her from having evil thoughts." Ji Xiehan said.

"I can't believe my own daughter can be so..." she didn't even know what to say of Ji Feifei.

"It's our fault too. We let her become spoilt." Ji Huifen regretted doting on her.

"There's no point regretting anything now." Ji Xiehan sighed. It was too late to regret. That wouldn't make Ji Feifei become a better person than the venomous snake she was.

Lanni remained silent while the Jis talked about Ji Feifei.

She looked at Wen Lin, then looked at Ji Xiehan. Averting her gaze, she glanced at Ji Huifen briefly.

"What's wrong?" Ji Xiehan asked when he saw her frown.

"It's nothing." She shoved her thoughts at the back of her head. Why was she finding everything so strange?

Just now, she had suddenly found the Ji family familiar. A sudden snippet of memory had surfaced in her mind but just before she grasped it, Ji Xiehan had spoken and the snippet had faded away in a flash.

...

At the same time, in a certain mansion in B City.

"Have you found Ji Feifei yet?" An elderly man asked his henchman.

"Sir, Ji Feifei is in prison. Her family didn't do anything to help her out."

"Just in our favor." The elderly man burst into a round of hearty laughter. "Everything is going on perfectly. We just have to find her now and everything will fall into place. But there is one problem."

"What problem?" The assistant asked.

The elderly man's expression turned fierce as he enunciated every syllable with what sounded like bitterness.. "Li Lanni."

Chapter 195 - Bottleneck

"Li Lanni is really alive?" The assistant asked in shock.

"In the flesh. Cormorant saw her."

"Do you really believe that lad's nonsense?" A young man who had just walked in interrupted before the assistant could say anything. The young man walked over to the elderly man and threw files on his table. "Li Lanni is dead. No one can survive such a crash. Is she a ghost then?"

"Then, the person that Cormorant saw..." The elderly man started.

"Must be her sister." The young man interrupted. "Didn't Li Xiyan already say that they are twins?"

"Then I really hope she is. Because if she is Lanni, then..."

"She is not and that's that." The young man walked out.

"Sir, please don't mind Flynn. He can be quite..."

"Don't I know my own son best?" The elderly man interrupted his assistant with a huff. "Go and find out whether that girl is Li Lanni. If she is, report it to me immediately."

—

B City.

Ji Xiehan and Li Lanni left his parents' home after the meal. The ride back to Li Yuming's villa was mostly silent.

When they arrived, it was a little late so Ji Xiehan did not want to bother Li Yuming, promising to pay her a visit the next day instead. He pulled Lanni into a hug and kissed her cheek. "You should sleep before it's very late. Goodnight."

"Goodnight. " Lanni returned his kiss.

However, he looked a little hesitant to part so she asked, "You have something to say?"

Ji Xiehan took her small, fair hand to play with her fingers. "yeah. Honey, I already settled the matter at the company."

"Pfft." Lanni found him too cute. Was he waiting for a reward or something?

She pulled on his collar and kissed his lips slightly, soothing him like a kid. "You did well."

"Mmh." Ji Xiehan was more overjoyed from her reward than he would be if he received a million other rewards. Even so, he acted like a spoiled kid asking for more candy. "Honey, that's not enough."

Lanni wanted to laugh at his childishness. Even so, she pulled his collar again and kissed him, this time deepening the kiss slightly. It was only when she was done that he was satisfied. "Honey, since the problem at the company has been solved and our vacation was interrupted last time, do you think we should go on another vacation?"

Lanni couldn't help but sigh. She wanted to, but, "I already took a whole week off the last time. It's too soon for me to take more time off."

Ji Xiehan hugged her in understanding. Although he wanted to spend time with her alone, he didn't want to inconvenience her studies.

"Besides, you cannot be so sure of anything. Who is to say that the Feng family will not retaliate soon? You might need to be there for the company for longer than you think." She continued.

"You're right." Ji Xiehan rubbed her back, still unwilling to break the hug.

"What about Feng Ci?" She wondered. People had stopped talking about his affair with Feng Ci already, but she didn't like it that most people thought her boyfriend was a cheating jerk.

"Don't worry about her. She will be forced to tell the truth soon."

"You have a plan?"

"I don't need one. Honey, I don't want to talk about that woman right now." In fact, he didn't want to talk about her ever. She was a jinx. After hugging for a while longer, they finally let go and Lanni went back to the house.

Although it was already late, she was not sleepy. So she went to make a cup of coffee for herself, drank it and decided to go to her art studio. She still had work to do.

While she passed by her mother's studio, she saw that the light was on. Her mother was still awake? She was about to go and say hello but just before she knocked, she changed her mind. Her mother was probably painting. She decided not to distract her.

Thirty minutes later.

Lanni crumbled the sheet of paper into a ball and massaged her temples. In the last thirty minutes, she just couldn't draw anything. She couldn't put her mind into it.

It was not just in the last thirty minutes. In the past few weeks, she had been having trouble focusing. Everyone else in her class was drawing the sixth volume of the comic they had been working on. On the other hand, she was stuck on the fifth volume. At first, she would just do worse with each chapter.

After having a chat with the tutor, she did slightly better, but after exhausting her mental strength. Now she couldn't do anything no matter how hard she tried. She shoved her stationery aside and stood up, rubbing her forehead. Her eyes darted through her paintings. They were beautiful and all, then they started getting worse. Some of them even looked like she was being forced to paint them.

"If you are being forced to do something, you cannot do it well no matter how hard you work." Her tutor's words rang in her ears. "Your performance is deteriorating each day. If I didn't know, I wouldn't believe you came to Star Art international by winning an art contest."

"No way..." she muttered in horror. Could it be... no...

She couldn't have reached a bottleneck, right?

"But how's that possible?" her breathing hitched as her hands covered her paled face. "If I reached a bottleneck now, how would I become a comic artist?"

Just then, her vision started getting blurry.

"What's happening?" She asked as her heart raced. Everything was suddenly spinning around her. She was just about to scream when an image started forming in her mind.

...

A bar.

A young woman stood from the barstool and took her glass of wine, going out from the backdoor. It was less noisy outside and the bustling music could only be heard from a distance. The woman looked nothing more than eighteen, but her long curly hair and the dress she was wearing made her seem a little older at first glance.

The dazed Lanni knew that the woman was her.

She took a small sip of her wine and soon, a man also came out through the backdoor.

"It's much better being outside." He said.

"Are you speaking to me?" Lanni turned to ask him.

"Yes." He answered, his eyes lingering on her as though he was checking her out. "What's a beautiful girl doing in the bar all alone anyway?"

Lanni seemed a little confused, probably after taking wine. She observed the man before her for a while before answering. "The usual. You know, getting away from normal life and seeking a thrill?"

The man burst into laughter. "Right. Young girls are always seeking thrills. Do you want to go with me? You really should."

"Okay." Lanni said and followed him. He dragged her outside and gave her a round of scolding and instructions.

However, they didn't actually go anywhere together. At some point, he made some hand signs and disappeared into an alley. A few seconds later, Lanni circled the bar, found another entrance and snuck back into the bar. This time, she went straight for a VIP room.

She nervously pushed the door open and a group of five men came into view. Sneakily, she slipped into the room and hid behind the closest chair. They were discussing something that she couldn't fully understand. She could only make out a few words and at some point, she took out her phone to record whatever they were saying.

Unfortunately, her phone rang, startling the men.

"There's an intruder!" one of them shouted when he looked behind his chair and found a girl hiding.

Lanni sprinted out of the room.

"Don't let her get away!" She heard one of the men shout after her.

She kicked off her shoes, running out of the bar and blazing through the streets. It wasn't sure how long she ran but just when she was about to give up and let them catch her, a force pulled her and hid her behind a huge trash bin.

Lanni looked beside her and saw that it was the man she was speaking to earlier. "What are you doing? They will see us!"

"They are drunk." The man said firmly.

Lanni peeked at them. "They surely can run fast even when drunk."

"What nonsense, P. What are you, a pig? You cannot even run fast when sober. I'll train you harder from now on. Did you get anything?"

...

Lanni's thoughts came back to the present. Her head hurt so much she thought it would explode.. What was all that about? Who was that man, and who were the drunk men? Why would that man act like he didn't know her at the bar and then later act so familiar with her? Why was she at the bar to start with? Lanni's mind was filled with confusion.

## Chapter 196 - Tragic

Lanni was still shocked about her memory fragment when another appeared. She was wearing the same clothes as before and it was late at night; it must be a continuation to the previous memory fragment. She crept into the house as though being cautious of being found out.

But Just as she passed by the living room, she heard a rustle and the lights went on.

"Where are you from, young lady?" An upset Li Yuming asked. She must have been sitting on the couch all this while, waiting for Lanni's arrival.

"I..." Lanni stuttered. "I went out with my friends."

Li Yuming stood up and walked towards her, closing in the distance between them. "I know where you went, young woman. You don't need to lie to me."

"Mother..." Lanni was nervous.

Li Yuming placed a finger on Lanni's red lips, shutting her up. "Lanni, I don't have anything against what you are doing but... why do you insist on ruining your life over things that might not even matter?"

"What do you mean things that don't matter mother? This is..."

"Shush." Li Yuming interrupted her defense. "You are only eighteen. What do you know? You have been brainwashed and..."

Lanni didn't wait for her mother to finish her statement before interrupting. "And nothing. Mother, my age doesn't equal to my level of knowledge and understanding. I know what I want with my life, mother." She walked off as soon as she was done.

...

Lanni stared into space as the memory fragment faded off. "I had a fight with mom? I can't believe it..."

Not just that, why did the Lanni from both memory fragments seem so strange? It was as though she was a different person altogether! Instead of answering the questions she had always asked herself, those memory fragments only made the puzzle more complex.

With a mind full of questions, Lanni went to sleep.

---

The next morning, Lanni woke up quite late. Her head hurt.

Last night, she had a strange dream. She actually dreamt that she was at a bar with a young man and that when she came back home, she argued with her mother before she walked off.

Stretching her limbs, she walked out of her room. As though her legs were being controlled by a different force from her brain, she walked mindlessly and was in her art studio before she realized it.

Her gaze landed on the balls of paper on the floor. She frowned, remembering what she was doing last night and why she had crumbled so much paper.

"Hopeless." She mumbled in her croaky voice. Realizing that her throat was sore, she coughed a little and decided to get herself a glass of water or breakfast.

She was about to leave when something caught her eye. She turned back to look at it.

On the canvas was the sketch of a young woman holding onto the railing of a balcony. Although it wasn't complete, she could tell that the woman was herself. Now she remembered it. What she thought was a dream wasn't actually a dream. It was something that happened in the past and she had remembered it the previous night. She must have absent-mindedly sketched out what she saw in her memory.

So it really happened. She was really at a bar at that time. But why? And why was Li Yuming so mad at her later?

"Lanni, are you alright?" Li Yuming's worried voice brought her back to her senses.

"Mom, morning." She said and hugged her mother. Only after feeling her mother's warm hug did she realize that she had been scared.

"I called you several times but you didn't hear me. What are you thinking about?" Li Yuming asked as she patted her daughter's back fondly.

"Mom..." Lanni was about to ask about what she had remembered from her past. However, she thought about how her mother had seemed to be hiding something the last time she asked about her past. She was probably just going to brush her off with a mild lie again. So she shook her head and said, "It's nothing. I just... I miss Xiehan."

Li Yuming laughed heartily. "Look at you missing him already when you were together just last night. Who was it that said that they didn't want anything to do with that pervert! just a few months ago?"

"Mom, don't tease me now. I'm hungry." Lanni was embarrassed thinking about how fiercely she had rejected Ji Xiehan in the past.

Li Yuming tousled her hair. "Okay, okay. I will not tease you anymore."

"Mom, what are you looking at?" Lanni asked when she saw that her mother had stopped and was staring at something. She followed her gaze and found that Li Yuming was actually staring at the sketch on the canvas. "Erm... that was just me doodling last night. I was bored so I wanted to paint myself."

Li Yuming looked at lanni as though trying to confirm her words and when she saw nothing but a blank expression, she nodded. "Let's go downstairs now. Breakfast is ready."

Lanni was relieved and went downstairs for breakfast with her mother. She didn't know that she could be such a good liar. When she actually hated liars and every word that came out of their mouths-how ironical. But she didn't mean to lie either. It was only because she knew that the truth wouldn't give her answers. Urgh... that sounded like forced logic too.

"Are you okay?" Li Yuming asked again. Why was Lanni so absent-minded?

"I'm alright mom. I'm still alright." She insisted and continued to eat her breakfast.

What she didn't know was that Li Yuming was studying her expressions. Her mind went back to the sketch she had just seen in Lanni's room. Although it was just a blank sketch, the image Li Yuming got was the same one from Lanni when she was eighteen and rebellious. Was it a coincidence that Lanni's so-called mindless sketch could bring that out, or had Lanni started to recover her memory?

If it was the latter then... it was tragic.

---

Later.

As expected, Lanni got a scolding from her tutor once again. It wasn't exactly a scolding per se, but he still expressed his disappointment.

"Lanni, you know fully well why Star Art International recruits young artists. It is because we want to groom them. In your case, we want to groom you and your classmates into comic artists. In the end, Star Art International is aiming for profit. If you cannot do a simple sketch, then, how will you be of use?"

Lanni was slightly taken aback by the sudden sharp words. However, he was right. Which company wasn't aiming for profit? Jiang International was no different and that was the reason why they would start a subsidiary in the field of art. She only looked back at her tutor and said nothing.

"Think about it Lanni," The man continued. "You can take lessons from someone else. I heard you are Li Yuming's daughter. Why don't you ask your mother to teach you a few tips when she is not too busy? If you cannot then you can also..."

"I quit." Lanni said.

"...you can ask some of the best students in the class to help you out. You might understand them better since you are of the same age bracket... what did you say?" Lanni's two words sunk in only a moment later and he was shocked.

"I said I quit." Lanni repeated the words. "Sir, I have done all I can but I just can't get anything right. I hate to lag everyone behind so..." Lanni sighed before saying the two words again. "I quit."

"Wait." The man shot from his seat and stopped her from leaving his office. "You cannot just quit. You have come a long way. If it's because I was too harsh just now then pardon me. Just don't be so hasty."

Lanni could tell from his tone that he really didn't want her to give up. He must have said all he did because he was under pressure from his superiors. After all, everyone else in the class was now way ahead of her, the so-called champion. Even Cheng Yu had improved tremendously after becoming Li Yuming's student. She was the black sheep now. Which was why she thought she should save everyone the trouble and leave the class.

"Why don't you think about it?"

Lanni nodded and left, even though she had no intention to think about it. She had already made a decision and she was not going to change her mind.

Everyone else had already left the institute so after grabbing her things, she entered her car but didn't know where to go. She let the chauffeur go back home and drove around aimlessly for hours. She was tired and she knew that the car would run out of gas soon. She was hungry as well, so she chose to go and eat and rest.. But before she realized it, she was at the entrance of Feng Ji International.

## Chapter 197 - Silhouette

Lanni looked at Feng Ji International's building through the windscreen of her car and realized that she had absent-mindedly driven here. She wondered whether she should go back home or say hi to Xiehan now that she was already here. Xiehan wouldn't mind that she was going to his office during working hours, right?

Checking the time, she was surprised. She had driven around for so long? Now that she looked around, employees had started swarming out of the building looking relieved. Xiehan should be out soon. Thinking about it, she bought food for both of them in the restaurant close by and went into the building.

Just like the last time, no one asked Lanni any questions. In fact, the receptionist politely asked whether she wanted to wait for Xiehan in the lobby or go to his office, and even offered snacks and drinks which Lanni politely rejected.

Qiao Luna led her towards the elevator as she said, "Mr. Ji is still in a meeting but it is sure to end soon. Please wait for him for a while."

"No problem." Lanni said and suddenly stopped, glancing in the direction of the employees' elevator.

"Miss Lanni, is something the matter?" Qiao Luna asked as she followed her gaze.

Lanni averted her gaze. "It's nothing."

It was just that she had thought that she had seen a familiar silhouette disappear into the employees' elevator. Shrugging it off her mind, she entered the elevator with Qiao Luna.

Once in his office, Lanni sat on the couch and placed the bags of food on the marble table in front of the couch. She reclined to let her nerves rest. It sounded impossible but as soon as she was in Xiehan's office, all those negative thoughts flew off her mind. She was now calm and at ease as she made small talk with Qiao Luna.

"You are saying that Feng Ci was here earlier?" Lanni exclaimed to what Qiao Luna had just said.

"Yes, and she made a scene. Can you believe it? Mr. Ji doesn't even like her, but she throws her temper around and expects to control everyone like this is her home. How annoying."

Lanni giggled and finally understood why everyone respected her. It was all because she respected them too, unlike Feng Ci who knew nothing but shout at people when they didn't do what she wanted them to do.

She studied Qiao Luna up close and remembered something. "Right. Which company did you work for before coming to Feng Ji International?"

"Miss Lanni, why do you ask?" Qiao Luna recoiled.

"I don't mean to pry into the personal lives of Xiehan's employees, I'm just curious. If you mind then you don't have to answer."

"I don't mind. I worked for..." Qiao Luna was yet to answer when the door opened and she stood up. "Oh, Mr. Ji is here."

"Lanni?" Xiehan was pleasantly surprised to see Lanni waiting in his office. He walked over to her, all the fatigue from hours of meetings vanishing.

Lanni stood up and hugged him at the same time that Qiao Luna slipped out of the office.

"I'm glad to see you. Did you wait for too long" He asked after breaking the hug.

"No, I only just arrived a moment ago." Lanni touched his collar and scrutinized him. "You look tired."

"Yeah, I had so much to do today. But now that I saw you as soon as I finished all those meetings, I think it was all worth it." He sat on the couch and pulled her onto his lap.

"You and your flirting." She chuckled and eased into his embrace. She was happy to see him too. After coming to his office, she was just calm. But now that she was with him and in his arms, she couldn't be any happier.

"You came to pick me up? Then I shouldn't waste your effort. Let's go." He made to make her get off him and stand.

However, she pinned him down by his shoulders. "I don't want to go anywhere."

Ji Xiehan didn't mind that. He had thought that she wanted to go somewhere together but his office was good too. Lanni sat beside him and took out the boxes of food from the plastic bag.

"You cooked for me?" Xiehan smiled in surprise as the sweet aroma of food filled the air when she opened the boxes.

"No, I just bought it from the restaurant across the road." Lanni placed a set of disposable cutlery in front of him along with his food and looked at him. "Are you disappointed?"

"Of course not. How could that be?" Xiehan grabbed her into a cuddle. "I'm happy that you thought about it." He was famished. Since morning, he had not had the chance to swallow a sip of water let alone eat. Hence as soon as Lanni was done laying the table, they wolfed down the dishes, almost forgetting their manners.

"When I came in, you were interrogating my assistant?" Xiehan asked when they were both full.

"I hope you don't mind. I just found her a little strange. " She answered as she disposed of the empty food boxes in the trash can.

"I see." Of course, Xiehan wouldn't mind it. "I find her strange too, sometimes. I mean, she is hardworking. The most hardworking assistant I have ever had. However, sometimes she just becomes weird."

"Why would you still keep her if she is being weird?" Lanni cocked her head towards him to ask.

"She is not doing anything wrong and neither is she betraying Feng Ji International. Why would I mind her personal strangeness?"

"Eer..." His logic was weird. But that was so much like Xiehan. She was not doing anything that would affect him in any way so it shouldn't matter. Of course, Lanni knew nothing about how Qiao Luna had once seduced Xiehan under Ji Huifen's instructions and he thought it better to not mention anything about it.

Once she had cleared the table, Lanni sat beside him and hugged his arm. Xiehan tousled her hair, petting her like a kitten. "You have something on your mind?"

Lanni looked up at him in surprised. "How do you know? Can you read minds?"

Xiehan chuckled as he brought her into his embrace. "I don't need to be a mind reader to know that. If I cannot even tell when my girlfriend is unhappy, am I not a failure as a man?"

Lanni couldn't agree more. Indeed, she could also tell at a glance when he was unwell, tired or had a lot on his mind. It was just instinctive.

"You mentioned that you have a friend who is well versed in psychology and is also a hypnotist. Could you help me arrange a meeting with them?" Lanni came out with it after a moment of contemplation.

"You have decided to go for hypnosis? Why so suddenly?" Xiehan was confused. The last time they talked about it, Lanni had adamantly refused to be hypnotized. Why would she want to meet a hypnotist now?

"I didn't want to recover my memory previously but now I do." Lanni stated, and then explained how she had remembered a confusing part of her past the previous night.

"Xiehan, I am just so confused. I want to solve this puzzle once and for all."

Xiehan hugged her, rubbing her back. "Okay, I will contact the hypnotist. But are you ready to face the truth about your past?"

Lanni pushed his hand away and looked at him in shock. "You know about my past?"

"No." Xiehan said monotonously.

"Then what do you mean 'face the truth about my past'? You sounded like you are so sure that it is something shocking."

"I don't know much about your past but I discovered a few things from my observation and from a few facts."

"What facts?" Lanni frowned.

"First off, Aunty Li hates to talk about your past. She may have told me a few things but she looked like she was hiding something. Then a few months ago, I did a check on you because I hadn't ever heard of you before..." Xiehan paused, expecting her to be mad at him for investigating her. When he saw that she wasn't, he continued. "It looked like some things had been deliberately deleted."

"But you can recover them, right? Why didn't you?" She wondered.

"I had already violated your privacy, honey. Besides, wouldn't it be strange if I as the first to find out some hidden secrets about you? But if you want me to, then I will."

Lanni stared blankly for a while then came to a decision. "I don't want to know about it from anything aside from my brain."

"Then I will contact the hypnotist right away." Ji Xiehan took out his phone immediately, making an appointment after confirming what day she was comfortable with.

"Thank you." She said when the call was disconnected.

"Are you going to thank me verbally?" Xiehan teased, his fingers intertwining with hers.

"You profiteer. You would even extort your girlfriend.." Lanni was helpless against his grin of satisfaction.

He grinned in response to her words, his eyes screaming 'you still have to thank me though'. Resigning to her fate, she wrapped an arm around his neck and raised her head. Her lips skimmed against his lightly, and before he could savor it, she was done.

"Just that?" Obviously, he would complain.

Lanni looked at him like he was a cold-blooded vampire but even then, she hugged him and pressed her lips against his. She had meant it to be a brief kiss. But every time their lips met, she would crave for more and would want nothing but to kiss the breath out of him.

And she did. She deepened the kiss with a sense of urgency, and he returned it with the same need. She pulled the tie off his neck and threw it aside, undoing the first two buttons of his white shirt. His hand went around her body, laying her down on the sofa at the same time that his body came on top of her.

His fingers traced her body and reached for the hem of her top. She lifted her body slightly to help him take it off. The top half of her bare body was fair and alluring, sending his brain into a craze.

When she reached to undo the other buttons of his shirt, he only grew hotter and more impatient. He took her small hands off his clothes, his breathing hitched as he exhaled hot air against her exposed skin. Although he was on the verge of exploding from his need, he was more focused on making her happy.

Since it was her first time, he wanted to make it unforgettable for her. He slid down the straps of her bra, reaching behind her back to unhook it and take it off. His breathing hitched when he saw her erect nipples and he couldn't help gazing at them for a while.

She grabbed his hands and placed his palms on her breasts, her eyes filled with eagerness. He didn't need to ask. She was ready to take things further. He cupped the pair of soft mounds in his hands, squeezing them lightly. He rubbed the hard nipples between his thumbs and forefingers, making her writhe and moan in a mixture of pleasure and anticipation.

Kissing her body, her hand traced down her curves and unzipped her jeans. She was not shy at all, reaching to unbuckle his belt and he paused to help her take it off. Swiftly, he took off her jeans and his own shirt and pants.

He pressed down on her, his throbbing member pressing onto her through the fabric of his boxer briefs and her thong. She hugged his back tightly as he grinded against her. The need for him grew wilder by the second under her skin.

She was embarrassed when she felt him tug on her legs and part them. She knew that the center of her thong must be wet and he must have seen it. But seeing how happy he looked and how it seemed to turn him on all the more, she was no longer so embarrassed.

He traced down her lower body, directly touching her wet folds through her soaking thong

She threw her head back and moaned as his fingers touched her folds through her thong. He rubbed on it in circles, teasing and stroking as he felt her get wetter.

He pulled off her thong, looking down at her. Lanni instinctively wanted to press her thighs together but he held them apart, lowering his head.

"Xiehan..." what was he doing?

Her words were swallowed back by her moan as his tongue made contact with her folds. He flicked on her clit with his tongue. Her hands uncontrollably grabbed his hair as she moaned his name to the waves of pleasure.

Just as she was about to hit her climax, he raised his head.

"Xiehan..." she pushed on his head, urging him not to stop.

"Honey,..." he groaned, positioning himself between her legs. Remembering something, he left the couch and went over to his desk, swiftly unlocked a drawer and took out a little box. He opened it on his

way back to the couch and took out a condom. He quickly tore off the wrapper and slid it over his manhood and resumed his position between her legs.

She closed her eyes, knowing what was about to happen. She couldn't help feeling a little scared.

"Relax, just trust me, okay?" He croaked, to which she nodded.

Pushing the tip of his manhood at her center, he thrust his hips forward slowly.

Her nails dug into his shoulders as she yelped in pain. He paused and looked at her, kissing her cheeks and forehead to soothe her. Gradually, the pain faded. Each of his thrusts sent her into ecstasy.

Her skin felt like it was on fire and she clung onto him as she wrapped her legs around his waist to respond to the flames of pleasure that coursed through every inch of her body. He kissed her lips deeply, his pace quickening as he felt his orgasm building up.

With a final hard thrust, they both reached their climax, screaming each other's name.

Xiehan collapsed onto her body and didn't pull out of her immediately. Instead, he kissed her face and hair, hugging her and savoring the moment.

When he finally pulled out, they continued hugging on the couch. She traced his chest, wrapping her arm around his body. Her face was flushed and her eyes slightly dazed from their passionate lovemaking.

"I love you Xiehan." She slurred against his chest.

Xiehan chuckled slightly. No need to ask. From her expression, she had enjoyed what had just happened between them. He kissed her forehead.. "I love you Lanni."

## Chapter 199 - Heartless Girl

After a long spell of silence, Xiehan realized that it was getting late. So he asked, "Should we go home now?"

It was only after he asked that he felt her rhythmic warm breaths against his chest. He looked down at her and indeed, she had fallen asleep. She looked so cute and happy that he couldn't help stroking her body. He had already long decided that since he had chosen her, he would only ever love her.

And after what happened just now, the decision was even more etched in his heart. Some time later, she stirred in her sleep and rubbed her hands against her skin. Understanding that she was cold, he got off the couch, careful not to wake her up.

He went to the chamber in his office where he usually decided to spend the night whenever he spent most of the night working. It was a fully equipped bedroom so he wouldn't have to buy anything every time he stayed over. Opening the closet, he took out a blanket and went back to the office to cover her with it.

He looked down at her curled up body. Thinking about it, he carried her from the couch and brought her to the chamber instead.

It was already late, and she would probably be hungry when she woke up. He took a shower and decided to order something for them to eat. After ordering the delivery, he decided to look through the internet for movies to watch later so she wouldn't be bored. Just as he sat down, her phone that was on the coffee table rang.

Seeing that the caller was Li Yuming, he thought that she might be worried about Lanni, having not heard from her all afternoon. So he picked up the phone and answered the call.

"Lanni, where are you? Why are you not home yet?" Li Yuming rattled worriedly as soon as the call connected.

"Aunty, it's me." Ji Xiehan said.

"Oh, it's Xiehan." Li Yuming sounded relieved that her daughter was in safe hands. "Where is Lanni? Is she coming back home later?"

Ji Xiehan glanced in the direction of the chamber. It would probably be late when she woke up. "She is asleep right now. I will bring her back home tomorrow."

"Okay, okay. I will not bother you guys anymore. Just..." Li Yuming initially sounded overjoyed then she suddenly paused in her speech.

"Just what aunty?" Ji Xiehan asked. She sounded worried. Was something wrong?

"Lanni didn't look alright when she left the house this morning. She didn't come home after her class too. I'm worried something might be wrong."

Xiehan understood her concern. Lanni wasn't feeling alright earlier. She had a lot on her mind and she had even quit her art class. Xiehan pondered for a moment but then deciding that it was not his tale to tell, he didn't mention it. He only promised to look after Lanni.

Of course, Li Yuming didn't forget to tease him a little now that her mind was at ease. All that was left was her suggesting the names of her future grandchild.

Xiehan looked at the phone with a chuckle after hanging up. Why were all the parents always so eager for grandchildren?

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Speaking of parents being eager for grandchildren, Xiehan was not the only one getting teased by his future mother-in-law.

Xia Luna was undergoing the same kind of fate in Jiang Xingyu's villa.

Earlier this morning.

After Xia Luna ran away from Jiang Xingyu the last time, he had used up all his might to ask Ji Xiehan for her exact address. The last time he had dropped her off, he hadn't gotten to know what unit she lived in. Since Ji Xiehan didn't know either, he could only resort to waiting for her.

So this morning, Jiang Xingyu woke up earlier than usual. Knowing that Xia Luna was an early riser, he had set the alarm two hours earlier. He would rather doze off at work today than miss the chance to see her.

When he arrived close enough to Goldenwing Apartments, he parked his car at the side. He had chosen an inconspicuous car today so she wouldn't notice him at first glance. From where he was, he could see everyone that came and went into Goldenwing Apartments. Satisfied, he reclined in the driver's seat to lurk.

Before he realized it, he was nodding off. He turned on the music in the car and danced to it. Seconds later, he realized that he could miss her if he wasn't looking at the entrance. So he stopped dancing and sat up straight. Even so, he nodded off and hit his head onto the steering wheel.

"Ouch." He groaned as he rubbed the bump that was starting to form on his forehead. That hurt.

But on the bright side, he was no longer sleepy. So he sat there and continued staring at the entrance. However, it wasn't long before he started feeling sleepy again.

That wasn't a problem. He had already thought of a solution to that. There must be a shop nearby.

Taking a bill from his wallet, he got out of his car with his eyes still glued on the entrance.

"Ow!" He hit his head against the car door while closing it and in the process, his fingers were pressed too. He blew on them severally and gripped them in his left hand, trying to soothe them. They were already red and sore, so he decided to forget about them. He would get them treated later.

He looked ahead and saw a shop not too far away. He sprinted towards it, glancing back at the entrance after every step. Just five steps later, he bumped into a trash bin. Luckily, it didn't topple over. He hurried to the shop. "Can I have a bottle of iced water?"

"Sorry sir, we have run out of iced water." The lady shook her head apologetically.

"Could you please... what? No iced water?" Jiang Xingyu's heart sank. He looked up ahead to find another shop. There was none on the left and on the right, he had seen a convenience store on his way here but it was at least five kilometers away. He would have to take his car if he wanted to go fast.

So he hurried back. This time, he didn't have to look back every step. But because he was too sleepy, he bumped into the same trash bin from earlier. It toppled over and he came crashing over it like a sack of radishes.

"Ew!" He stood up quickly, but because he was too fast, he tripped and fell, the trash bin rolling over him. He pushed it aside and stood up. He had sprained a leg, but at least the trash bin was empty. He limped his way back to his car and was just about to get in when he froze.

What was Xia Luna doing in front of his car? She was in disguise but he knew that it was her.

Not only that, she burst into laughter when she saw him.

"What are you laughing at?" He was annoyed.

"Hahahahaha." She threw back her head, reeling in laughter as she pointed at him.

This heartless girl!

## Chapter 200 - Fighting Like Kids

"What happened to you?" She teased with a laugh. "You look like you have been attacked and beaten up."

Jiang Xingyu looked at her like she was a heartless scoundrel. "If I was beaten up, you would laugh at me?"

"If something is funny, of course I would laugh." She held a hand over her mouth and laughed even harder.

Jiang Xingyu harrumphed and grabbed her hand, opening the car door and stuffing her inside.

"What are you doing here anyway?" She didn't seem to mind that he had dragged her into the car without her permission.

"I came to see you. I didn't think I would find you so soon. I expected you to slip away." He said as he reclined in the driver's seat. He had chosen a car she wouldn't recognize on purpose. It was even more surprising that after seeing him, she didn't avoid him but went down to meet him instead.

"I saw you through my window." She said with a shrug. Actually, it was Cheng Yu who had seen him leave his car while she was leisurely looking out through her window, and shown Xia Luna. They had watched most of his predicaments together and laughed their hearts out. Only after a while did Luna decide to go and meet him.

Hearing her explanation, he really wanted to disappear. Why did she witness all of his embarrassing moments? First, she saw his mother beating him up like he was a child. Then she showed Xia Luna his most embarrassing photo from when he was nine. And now she watched him trip and fall? She had even seen him topple over the trash bin!

"Why are you here anyway?" She interrupted his train of thought, looking at him in defeat. "Xingyu, we agreed not to meet anymore. Why did you look for me?"

Jiang Xingyu averted his gaze in guilt. It was because of her safety that they had agreed not to meet. "Xia, I missed you. I just couldn't stop myself from coming to see you."

"Then you better stop yourself. You know fully well why we can no longer keep meeting up."

"Yes. I understand." He sighed. He turned to look at her side profile. She was looking out through the windscreen. Only now did he get to look at her clearly. She had applied make up on her face and even had fake feckles below her eyes. Her fake eyelashes were longer than her natural ones, and the lipstick she had on was so unlike her.

Even Li Yuming couldn't recognise her like this. It was only because he was expecting her to be disguised that he knew it was her. It pained his heart. He wanted to be with her as her real self. It hurt his feelings that his woman had to hide away and pretend to be someone else just to keep her life. As a man, wasn't he a failure?

"Why are you scanning me like that? Is my makeup skill so perfect?" She turned and asked him.

"Why don't we go to my villa and talk? You tricked me the last time so..."

"Fine." He didn't need to come up with an excuse before she agreed to go.

He started the car, not forgetting to steal a glance and tease her. "You are so willing to be close to me these days. Is it because you like me too and can't wait to be by my side?"

Xia Luna rolled her eyes and ignored him. This guy must have hit his head too hard on the trash bin. Thinking about his fall earlier, she burst into laughter again.

"What are you..." realizing what she was laughing at, Jiang Xingyu huffed and continued driving. The car ride was mostly silent, only punctuated by her peals of laughter once in a while. Although he was infuriated, there was nothing he could do about it. Besides, this was one of those few times that his Xia was laughing so happily. How could he say anything against it?

Once in his villa, he made hot cocoa for both of them.

"What do you want to talk about?" She asked as she took the hot cocoa from the table.

"Do you have to be in such a hurry? Let me drink my cocoa first." Jiang Xingyu took his cup and took a sip. After seeing her, he was no longer so sleepy. He could actually hold a sane conversation.

When they had finished their drinks, she threw a glance at him. He didn't need to ask. She was probing what he wanted to talk about.

"Xia, I know you like doing everything on your own..."

"If you are going to talk me into accepting help from you and your mother, you better give up." She interrupted before he could even say it.

Jiang Xingyu adjusted his body on the sofa so he was facing her directly. "Xia, listen to me. You cannot do this on your own."

"Are you saying that I'm too useless to handle my own problems?" She threw a glare at him.

"N-no Xia, that's not what I meant." His eyes bulged. How could she get the wrong meaning of his words? "What I mean is, it is hard. I totally understand your side of it but... you can't always manage everything on your own."

"It's none of your freaking business Jiang Xingyu." At first, she had deliberately made him think she had misunderstood him so they would drop the topic but now, she was truly annoyed.

"How is it not my business? Can you stop saying that already? I'm your man and it's my business to look out for you." He was annoyed too. Why did she keep pushing him out of her life when she knew fully well that he was part of it?

"I am not your woman, Jiang Xingyu. I never was." She insisted.

His eyes narrowed dangerously. "Whatever. Xia Luna, the last person I want to fight with is you. Why are we arguing like kids anyway?"

"Who is fighting with you? You are the one starting a fight." Luna harrumphed.

"You started it." Jiang Xingyu realized that she had cocked her head and was raising an eyebrow as though mocking him. "Fine. I started it."

As expected, she looked happier now, and he didn't know what to do with her.

"I should..." she was yet to say that she should go when the man beside her dropped onto the sofa, his head resting on her lap. Just like that, he fell asleep.

She wanted to push him away but he was holding onto the hem of her blouse. It was not sure whether it was because his grip was too tight or she just didn't want to wake him up, she let him be.

Seeing how peaceful he looked on her lap, she couldn't resist the urge to tousle his hair. She even smiled before scolding herself. What was she doing?

Even so, she didn't push him away, reclining against the backrest to sleep too.

She didn't know when it happened but she fell into a deep sleep. When she woke up, she was no longer on the living room couch but on Jiang Xingyu's cozy bed instead. She stretched her limbs and went to wash her face to clear her mind.

That was the most peaceful sleep she had had in a while. She had been so restless lately that her dreams would be full of nothing but nightmares. Who would have thought that she would have slept like a child when it was already morning?

Her stomach grumbled. When she checked the time, she was surprised that it was already noon. Just how long had she slept? After checking that her makeup was not ruined, she left Jiang Xingyu's room.

She could hear noises from downstairs and peeked curiously.

"Ah! Never underestimate a woman's instinct." Madam Jiang was excited when she saw Xia Luna. "I kept having the urge to pay this useless punk a visit and when I did, it turns out my Luna is here."

Xia Luna brightened up when she saw Madam Jiang too. She ran right into her arms like an excited kid. "Aunty!"

"Oh I'm so happy to see you." Madam Jiang embraced her tightly, her heart flooding with maternal love.

Xia Luna hugged her, almost tearing up. Her mind almost wandered towards Li Yuming but she stopped it in time, breaking the hug. "Aunty, are you hungry? I will go to the kitchen to cook for you."

"You can cook?" Madam Jiang was pleasantly surprised. Xia Luna didn't look like the type to like being in the kitchen.

"I'm pretty good at it." She responded, then went ahead to talk about what Madam Jiang wanted to eat.

"Are you guys going to ignore me?" Jiang Xingyu, who had no choice but to stop in the middle of speaking complained.

Xia Luna looked at him then back at Madam Jiang. "He's not used to it yet?"