

Chapter 51 - This Was Obviously Seduction

Later, Li Lanni sent a text message to her mother and informed that she would be home a little late.

Then she bid Cheng Yu before leaving the classroom.

She found it rather coincidental that she was in the same classes with Cheng Yu for her major as well as her minors. If she hadn't realized that Cheng Yu was not clingy, she would think someone had done it deliberately.

Leaving the art building, she headed to the restaurant where she would meet Ji Xiehan.

That pervert had already sent an address beforehand. Heaven knew where he got her contact number.

When she arrived, Ji Xiehan was already there and was currently talking to someone on phone.

He said something about talking later then hung up and put his phone on the table.

Like a gentleman, he stood up and pulled a chair for her opposite him "You came."

Li Lanni pretended she didn't realise the meaning of his actions and sat on it, ignoring his scent that wafted into her nostrils because of their close proximity. "Oh well..."

She said nothing after that, and it made Ji Xiehan's heart clench. Was it that agonizing to have a meal with him? Why did she look like she was being forced to eat balls of fire in the company of a demon king?

Anyhow, he would ask about it later. It was about time he knew why she hated him so much.

"You wanted to talk about..." she didn't want to waste time on anything and was about to ask but Ji Xiehan interrupted her. "Let's eat first. I'm too hungry to talk."

Ji Xiehan was already back in his seat, and he pushed a menu to her with a gentle tug. "What do you want to eat?"

She looked through the menu for a while. "Grilled salmon, lemon green beans..."

The more Li Lanni spoke, the more Ji Xiehan's eyebrows twisted.

Why were the dishes she ordered... so similar to someone else's preferences? She also wanted maple pecan tart for dessert, just like the other person did! Was this a coincidence?

He just couldn't remember who the other person was.

Wait, she was clearly the one with amnesia. Why was he forgetting things too?

Before the meals arrived, Ji Xiehan went to the restroom.

Li Lanni was playing with her own phone from time to time but she couldn't help but notice that Ji Xiehan had left his phone right on the table. She glanced at it in passing with a tsk. His level of trust was too high. Wasn't he afraid that she might secretly know a few coding tricks? That she would put a bug in his phone to hack it or use it to send some not-so-respectful content to his parents or superiors for revenge?

Of course, that was just a fleeting thought. Ji Xiehan hadn't caused her any real harm so she didn't have a reason to do such a thing. Besides, she knew nothing about coding. That was one of those few things she found too complicated and consequently boring.

The black screen suddenly lit up.

It must have been a setting in his phone because the display directly changed to reveal the new message.

Li Lanni had not intended to look at it. It just happened to appear in her view. Her first reaction was to find Ji Xiehan too open. He didn't even have a passcode to lock his phone!

"Sh*t!" She cursed when she saw the content. Her hand trembled slightly, her eyes almost exploding from how huge they had grown.

She had to bite her tongue to swallow back the sudden wave of disgust.

The sender had tossed a picture over, attached with a message [Do I look sexy?]

That was a fairly normal text if you forced it to be normal...

The picture was that of a woman in an extremely thin and provocative red bikini that could barely cover anything at all. This could be normal too if you used forced logic to make it so...

But what was up with the over the top pose? This was obviously seduction!

And the most shocking part was that the sender was actually Ji Feifei.

Did people usually send such suggestive pictures to their brothers?!

No way, right?

She didn't have to have a brother to know that it was too lewd.

Then Ji Xiehan and his sister....!

She didn't know about his reaction because he had not seen the picture just yet; but she couldn't help but wonder if this was something habitual between the two of them.

Then wasn't this too scary?

A thought suddenly filled Li Lanni's mind.

Ji Feifei would tolerate anything but the thought of her brother being close to a girl.

She had flared up each time Li Lanni mentioned anything related to Ji Xiehan.

So... it really was as she thought...

Ji Feifei really did have an incest complex...

Li Lanni was still in a daze when Ji Xiehan came back. The screen of his phone had already blackened out and Li Lanni acted like nothing out of the norm was going on.

She even professionally played with her phone.

"Lanni, do you really..."

His phone lit up and interrupted his speech. Li Lanni couldn't help sneaking a peek. The sender was Ji Feifei again.

This time, she didn't see the content because she withdrew her gaze too fast, but she clearly saw his expression.

He looked like he had forced ten carats of sh*t down his throat as he frantically tapped his keyboard and tossed his phone aside after angrily sending a reply.

Li Lanni didn't know why, but that expression that showed his disgust towards whatever Ji Feifei had sent him slightly relieved her.

Why was she relieved? Because Ji Feifei's shameless feelings were probably one-sided?

Chapter 52 - Didn't Want To Owe Him

Their meals arrived soon. Ji Xiehan had also ordered a bottle of wine which he drank on his own because Li Lanni was not in the mood to drink.

To be more strict, she just did not want to. She knew nothing about her alcohol tolerance. It wouldn't be necessarily safe for a girl to get drunk in the company of a man, especially if that man was clearly interested in her. Wouldn't she be offering herself like a chunk of meat on the chopping board?

Halfway through the meal, Ji Xiehan couldn't hold it anymore. The urge to ask about their first meeting was burning him up.

Borrowing courage from the wine he had just drank, he put down his cutlery and looked at her, "Lanni, have we really not met before?"

Li Lanni raised her head and contemplated for a few seconds. "We have."

She counted using her fingers: "We met when you kidnapped me, those two times you sucked up to my mom and two whole times today. Right, I have caught you acting sneaky outside my home too."

Ji Xiehan was caught between laughter and tears. "Before all those times, we have met before. In The Emerald Grand Hotel, I found out later that it was the day of your welcome party. Do you really not remember?" His hands were already tightly clenched and his back couldn't get any more straight. He silently awaited his death sentence after poking the beehive.

Surprisingly, the 'beehive' didn't react as he had expected. She didn't call him out for using worn out pick up lines on her or for trying to forcefully claim familiarity with her. Instead, she gripped her fork so hard that her knuckles were a faint shade of pink. But the problem was that her silence was much worse than her sarcastic remarks! She was practically making him sit on needles, alright!

After what felt like several evers, she finally let out a puff of air. "I do remember that my former classmates arranged a welcome party for me."

"And?" Ji Xiehan probed when she didn't look like she had any intention of completing her narrative.

"And that's it. I don't remember anything else about it."

Ji Xiehan had expected such an answer but he was still stunned silly. She actually forgot everything about it? Even dreams weren't forgotten that much! Worst of all, he could see through the shock in her eyes that she wasn't lying. She must be puzzled about it herself. She must be feeling awful as well.

He didn't want to make her feel worse about it – he had thought she was lying about not remembering their meeting that night and had not intended to poke her wound.

"It's not that important," he said in a half mumble. He had also wanted to know why on earth she would appear in his room when they were strangers before that but since she obviously didn't know, it was better to leave it be.

On a side note, it had proven his second hypothesis true. Her amnesia must be recurring. She was not getting any better.

Mustering up new levels of confidence, he spoke up. "I have a friend in the Medical Research Institute. He is a renowned genius and coincidentally specializes in psychology and the brain. Not only that, he is also the best hypnotist in the country. If... if you don't mind, I can have him check your condition."

Li Lanni's expression fell with every statement he spoke and by the time he was done, her face looked like it had popped out of a freezer. "No, thank you."

This was actually very polite compared to the kind of response he had expected when he saw how terrible her expression looked. He didn't force it. If she needed his help, which she would probably never do, he would be willing to do anything for her.

In truth, it wasn't that Li Lanni wasn't moved by his offer.

The best hypnotist in the country would be the biggest aid for her to recover her memory. Of course, the doctor Li Yuming had found for her was just one of the best doctors. He couldn't compare to the best hypnotist. One had to know that although Li Yuming was fairly rich in comparison to many people, that was it. She still couldn't match up to the Ji family which owned immense power; and especially not to Ji Xiehan who was well acquainted with a majority of the powerful figures from all over the world.

Despite this, she couldn't accept that offer. For starters, she had come here to find out the latest updates about Ji Feifei and to hear what he had to say about Star Art International. She and Ji Xiehan were not even nodding acquaintances. How could she agree to owe him favors?

Forget about owing him favors. Her mother had gone out of her way to find her the best doctor she could. Of course she appreciated her effort. How then could she casually change doctors simply because a certain someone suggested it?

Although he had been rejected, Ji Xiehan wasn't upset. It was already lucky enough that she was not scolding him and walking out fearfully.

When she had had her fill, Li Lanni couldn't contain her curiosity anymore. "You're not going to come up with some other excuse to keep me waiting, are you?"

Chapter 53 - Zero Chances Of Winning

Ji Xiehan was yet to answer her question when his phone rang yet again.

"Sorry, I have to get this."

'Just great.' Li Lanni thought. Had this pervert planned this all out? To call her out for a meal in the name of having something to talk about only to keep postponing it? He even did it each time she thought he was finally going to speak.

That was so mean! Worst of all, her curiosity had been piqued to the max. She couldn't simply leave.

Li Lanni lamented a hundred times in her heart. How was this different from scratching one's itchy skin through a thick leather jacket?

Ji Xiehan hung up in less than half a minute.

"That was my assistant just now. There are documents that require my signature urgently."

"Do you need to go back to work, then?"

Ji Xiehan clearly detected the displeasure in her voice though she had tried to conceal it. He was suddenly tempted to act like he was really in a rush to go and use it as an opportunity to ask her out again.

However, he turned down this golden opportunity after thinking it through... and Qiao Luna was nearby anyway.

"I don't have to. My assistant is coincidentally nearby. She will bring the documents over in a while."

"Oh."

Qiao Luna didn't waste any time. She arrived within a few minutes.

As soon as she walked in, Li Lanni cast a glance over and her eyebrow involuntarily arched. This woman was Ji Xiehan's assistant?

She looked young, probably not many years over twenty, and she was quite beautiful too. Not extremely pretty but beautiful enough to make men want to be with her and women jealous of her.

Most important was her disposition, okay?

As soon as she arrived, she simply greeted Li Lanni politely and didn't waste a second more before turning to her boss. Her explanation was brief and precise and she had obtained the signature in a minute. From an outsider's point of view, this assistant was quite professional. She knew what to say so the outsider (Li Lanni) wouldn't feel like she had been left out deliberately, but at the same time she didn't reveal anything that was overly secretive.

That wasn't the main point.

Li Lanni felt, for a second, that it was lucky that Ji Xiehan was not married. Otherwise with this type of elegant beauty as a man's assistant, which wife wouldn't feel a tinge of insecurity?

Urgh, wait. She should have been focusing on the main point all this while. Why did she feel like she knew this assistant, like they had met before?

As soon as Qiao Luna was done, she packed up the documents and walked out, secretly stealing a glance at Li Lanni on her way out.

The boss had finally managed to ask miss Lanni out? A-mazing! " As expected of my boss." she mumbled.

Of course she knew who Li Lanni was. After all she had been assigned the task of reporting Li Lanni's moves as well as helping her out if she needed it.

No one knew it but Ji Xiehan had an interesting expression on his face. He knew quite a bit about women and there was something wrong with the way Li Lanni and Qiao Luna glanced at each other.

They wouldn't turn out to have some weird feud, right?

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"About Star Art International..."

'Phew! Finally!' Li Lanni thought.

"All I wanted to point out is that Star Art International is the major sponsor for that competition."

"I would be a fool if I didn't know that."

Ji Xiehan was used to her venomous tongue and felt nothing of her remark. "While they are agreeing to take in the winner of the art competition as a trainee in their company, the truth is far much different from what it appears."

Li Lanni finally had a normal reaction. She was curious as she asked, "Why would you say that?"

"Feng Ji International is one of the major allies of Star Art International, and I have a few friends in their company too... so it's not surprising that I'm familiar with their strategies."

Li Lanni did not interrupt him though she wondered whether he was trying to help her out or flaunting his ability to make friends in every reputable company and institute.

"For this kind of thing, the whole competition is basically a pawn. They are only using it to gain immense fame when in real sense, all they want is to recruit the best artist from Hun He Art School. Not many people know this but Hun He Art School is a subsidiary of Star Art International.

This is just like a game of the emperor holding a contest to decide on his successor when the prince is secretly hidden among the contestants. No matter how good you are, the chances of winning against the prince are equal to the chances of becoming a princess in a fairy tale."

Li Lanni finally understood his implication. "So you are saying that the winner is already decided?"

"You catch up quickly. This is not the first time they are doing this and probably not the last and it has been profitable for them for many years. Lanni, my point is that you shouldn't hold your hopes too high. I'm afraid if you put your mind into it too much, you will end up in tears. It might even drive you to give up on your dreams."

He was not exaggerating. Although he didn't have anything to say about other companies' popularity strategies, he didn't like their way of doing things either.

Star Art International was a haven for artists. Drag any artist off the street and they will tell you that their dream is to be in Star Art International.

It was such a pity that the number of artists who had been forced to their bottleneck because they gave their all into similar competitions and still lost it was immense.

It was even easier for them to give up since most of those times, it was obvious that their pieces of art were much better than the winning paintings.

Chapter 54 - That Was All?

Li Lanni couldn't deny it. His words had created a turmoil in her heart. Was this what really happened behind the scenes in Star Art International?

Of course, this matter had nothing to do with her since she wasn't that keen on the competition, but Cheng Yu was.

That girl wanted nothing more than to win and she had even spent a large sum of money recently to buy new paint and brushes.

Not only that, she had also been busying herself looking at the paintings of the most famous artists and trying to learn all she could from them.

One had to know that Cheng Yu was a natural talent in art. One simply had to look at the few drawings she did, those she had casually done to pass time, to know that she didn't need to use any effort to win if she wanted to. However, her recent actions were no different from those of an inexperienced rookie.

It showed just how highly she regarded this competition. If there was nothing in it for her: if she was not going to win the prize despite her endless efforts, wasn't this too unfair?

Ji Xiehan looked at the girl whose thoughts were obviously dismantled by what he had just told her. He chose his words carefully, saying, "But if you really want to get into Star Art International, there is another way."

She didn't, but Cheng Yu did, and it was just as important. She looked up at him with newly found hope. "There is?"

"Yes. I just mentioned that Feng Ji International has a great business relationship with Star Art International, right? Well, those guys are usually too difficult to talk to but I can recommend your work to them. If they are pleased by your abilities, they will surely want to poach you. You don't have to worry about getting rejected because you are from B City University - a great rival of Hun He. I will initially show them the paintings and only reveal their artist when they are too dazzled to change their minds. There is no one who would turn down a great talent, is there?"

His words surprised Li Lanni, and she couldn't help revealing a tiny smile for a second.

She had expected him to say that he would use his connections to get her into Star Art International.

While that was a good option too, it would be an insult to Cheng Yu's breathtaking talent.

But he had worded it very nicely, only offering to expose the paintings to them and leaving the rest to the abilities of the artist.

Seeing her sweet smile, his breath was stolen, his heart beat faster and he remained in a daze for a few seconds.

She had done nothing but smile. How was she able to captivate his heart even without intending to? Why was his heart so useless?!

The girl knew that this might be a perfect fall back plan in case Cheng Yu really lost but she didn't clarify the real situation, letting him continue thinking that she was the one who needed this opportunity.

She raised an eyebrow at the man's silly look and thought in her heart, 'there is no such thing as a free lunch, though.' This was Ji Xiehan they were talking about. Rumor had it that he wouldn't do anything that would make him lose out. Perhaps he wanted profit?

Instead of blindly guessing, she asked, "What do you want in return?"

"What?" Ji Xiehan was lost in thought and didn't understand her question when he heard her.

"I don't believe you would help me without wanting something in return. We are not close enough for that. So you can be frank with me. What is it you want in return?"

Ji Xiehan's gaze grew cold and he almost couldn't stop himself from losing control. This girl! In her mind, was he only out to take advantage of her?

Taking a sip of the wine beside him to calm his nerves, he looked at her with the same gentle gaze from before. "I want nothing in return. Do you believe me?"

'I will not believe that for a second' was written all over her face and he sighed. "I'm only looking out for you because of Aunt Li. I don't have any other intention."

Li Lanni only believed a tenth of that statement but she didn't dwell on it. She let out an 'oh well' and said, "Speaking of which, your relationship with my mom seems quite good. Do you guys know each other so well?"

Ji Xiehan coughed from the way she sounded. Girl, don't look at me so accusingly. It's not like I'm trying to steal anything from her...

Though he had to admit that he was trying to steal her daughter...

"Ahem... we do know each other from the past. When I was young, Aunt Li and my mother were... uhm... they knew each other. And she took care of me quite a number of times when my parents were too busy. "

Li Lanni didn't ask any more. "I see. I should get going now. My mom will be worried sick if I stay out for too long," she said.

"I'll drop you home."

"You don't need to. I'll have my chauffeur pick me up."

"Aunty Li will definitely ask about where you were and who you met."

"Fine."

Li Lanni couldn't say he was wrong. Her mother probably thought of her as some newly hatched chick that couldn't protect itself. If the Ji Xiehan that he trusted so much brought her daughter home, she would be more at ease and Li Lanni would manage to skip the earful of interrogation.

On their way out, Li Lanni had a sudden thought and glared at the man beside her. This was all?!!

Chapter 55 - Were You Bullied?

She had expected to get actual news out of their meeting!

But nevermind. It was good enough that she had found out that there was a huge problem between the siblings.

Although she didn't get her hands on any evidence and it was such a private matter, she could at least use it to threaten Ji Feifei if that crazy girl came looking for her again.

As soon as Qiao Luna left the restaurant, she went back to Feng Ji International.

Alas, she couldn't keep her mind off Li Lanni.

Such a nice beautiful girl, she felt guilty for probing into her private life.

Never mind. It was not all up to her. She had been put up to this. Nothing to be guilty about, really.

She knocked on the door to the CEO's office and went in. "CEO Ji, Master Ji signed the files."

The middle aged man signalled for her to place them on the desk.

Qiao Luna retreated immediately after delivering them. "CEO Ji, I'll make my move then."

"Wait." The man suddenly said.

"Are there any other orders, CEO Ji?"

"You got what I told you earlier, didn't you?"

Qiao Luna maintained her calm. "Yes."

"I want results as soon as possible. I will give you one month."

Qiao Luna felt the task was impossible and wanted to protest but she sighed in the end. "Understood."

When she finally left the office, her brain felt like it had been fried.

Qiao Luna, you idiot... what did you agree to?

The CEO had actually tasked her to seduce Master Ji.

Crazy, right?

It wasn't sure what the old man was trying to achieve by sending a woman to his own son. How she wished she had the guts to tell him that his son, Ji Xiehan, already had a girl he was into. If he was worried about not having a daughter-in-law in future, his worries were unfounded.

She just didn't dare to.

Besides, she had been given such a task as seducing Ji Xiehan. Why not use this opportunity nicely?

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The time flew by very fast and in the blink of an eye, it was the first day of examinations.

Li Yuming personally drove Li Lanni to school, repeatedly reminding her that the exam was just a formality and she didn't have to do it if she found the questions too difficult.

She was afraid her daughter would be disheartened.

Only after speaking her mouth dry did she finally let her out of the car.

The first thing Li Lanni saw when she arrived in school was a small group of students talking and giggling. In the middle of the circle, a girl hung her head low. It was obvious that she was being bullied.

That student was quite eye catching. It was not her face that attracted attention but her hair. It looked quite odd...

Upon closer inspection, the student was Cheng Yu!

Li Lanni was as surprised as the other students.

The girl's long hair had been styled in waves today, with insanely long bangs that covered more than half her face. The bangs at the front were shorter, while the ones at her sides covered her cheeks fully. While there might be people who would look nice with such a hairstyle, Cheng Yu's face was small so she looked strange.

Although Cheng Yu was not the type to be extravagant in her style and always chose to wear the university uniform, she was always neat and beautiful. Such a fail in style was not expected.

As she approached, a girl with glasses sneered. "What kind of style is that? Is she trying to make us fail the exam by scaring us so early in the morning? Such an eyesore, I'm almost blinded by her!"

Li Lanni scowled. "That's mean."

She would be unhappy even if the person being ridiculed was someone else, but the fact that it was Cheng Yu made her angrier. Although she couldn't figure out much about Cheng Yu, she had observed that the girl actually had a kind personality and wouldn't wrong anyone brainlessly.

"Why are you speaking up for her? Isn't she just an ugly little b*tch?" The girl with glasses was unhappy about being berated.

Li Lanni didn't want to be on bad terms with anyone but this was too much. She spoke in a rather arrogant tone, "You see... Cheng Yu has always been beautiful. It's only today that her hairstyle is a bit

off... but what about you? No matter how good your hairstyle is, you will not be beautiful. Jealousy is a disease."

Li Lanni ignored the small crowd that had riled up by her words to the point of starting to curse and shout at her. She went to Cheng Yu and gave her a hug. "Are you ready to ace those exams?"

Cheng Yu looked up at Li Lanni, her hair almost covering her eyes. While Li Lanni didn't find it a particular eyesore, she didn't find it pretty either.

"Lanni, do I look too awful?"

Li Lanni knew that lying to her would only make her feel worse so she sighed. "What happened?"

Cheng Yu remained silent.

"Did someone hit you?"

Cheng Yu didn't say a word and Li Lanni knew she had guessed right. Many people would want to hide the fact that they had been hit and covering one's face with hair was one of the most common methods. From her hairstyle, it was likely a slap.

But wasn't she uncomfortable?

Fine. This was the only way to cover up completely. She would have used a scarf if it was winter but it was the scorching summer.

Li Lanni did not probe further and went to the art building, dragging Cheng Yu with her.

"I will definitely win the art competition!" Cheng Yu suddenly declared.

Li Lanni turned to look at her, taking in the hurt in her eyes. It was a mixture of determination and feeling wronged. "Were you bullied... did you have a disagreement with your parents?"

As soon as her words fell, the tears that Cheng Yu had been holding back suddenly came bursting out.

Chapter 56 - Why Is She Here?

Li Lanni was taken aback and suddenly didn't know what to do. She had made her cry...

Luckily Cheng Yu only cried for a short while before she used the back of her fists to wipe her tears. She sniffled and said, "It's nothing worth worrying about, actually."

Li Lanni knew it was more than 'nothing worth worrying about'. "If you don't let it out, it might affect your performance later."

Cheng Yu frowned, gently biting her own lip before saying, "My parents don't want me to take part in anything related to art. It's even worse that I want to join the art competition this time... my mom is especially against it so we had an argument."

Li Lanni watched the girl's face, thinking that it was probably much worse than Cheng Yu made it sound. "Your relationship with your mother is not that good?"

Cheng Yu widened her eyes, 'how did you know' written all over her dumbfounded face. Did this Lanni possess some magical abilities to read minds?

Li Lanni laughed at her expression. "It wasn't that hard to figure."

Actually, it was pretty obvious.

According to the rumors circulating the school, Cheng Yu's family was quite wealthy. However, you couldn't say the same about her.

The girl would always be careful when to spend money and she would always buy things that were less costly even if what she truly wanted was the more luxurious option.

Not only that, while trying to investigate Cheng Yu for the sake of knowing if she had any ill intentions, Li Lanni had accidentally found out that Cheng Yu had a part time job.

At first she thought it was because the girl felt too idle and wanted to spend her time doing something productive but then she later found out that the girl indeed needed money for her own upkeep. She would stay in the university hostels most of the time too, although her home was quite nearby. Li Lanni couldn't help feeling curious about it but she didn't investigate further.

However, putting that together with the extremely expensive bracelet she had wanted to buy her mother for her birthday, it didn't feel right.

Did a rich woman's daughter need to work so hard to get a birthday present? Even if she wanted to get it using her own abilities, logically she would consider how befitting the present was, not how expensive it was!

Putting all that aside, Cheng Yu would sometimes talk about her younger brother and she would look happy to do so. As for her parents, this was the second time she was mentioning them and she didn't look happy the first time either.

Of course, Li Lanni couldn't say something that would make her feel worse. she coughed and answered, "You said so just now."

Cheng Yu frowned then realized that she had indeed mentioned their argument. Was she so slow-brained today?

"Let's get into class. Any more chatting and we will be late." Cheng Yu nudged.

The first exam they had today was for art. The girls walked into their classroom.

Actually, there was still some minutes before the exam begun. Cheng Yu simply wanted to stop talking about her parents.

The girls took seats close to each other.

The first exam was art so Li Lanni was not in the least nervous. She had drawn very few times since she woke up but she knew that she was fairly good at it. Even if she wasn't the best, she was confident that she wouldn't completely fail.

In fact, she was not nervous about her minors either. She had been reading a lot. She seemed to remember that she had made a wager about topping the exams this time in the heat of the moment a few weeks ago.

However, the students had long forgotten about it. It didn't matter anymore.

"I suddenly remember something!" A girl screeched.

The other students shot her looks of displeasure. What was she being so noisy for?

At this moment, the commotion grew rather intense in just a few seconds. Everyone turned to look towards the back entrance to the classroom.

Li Lanni turned to see a pair of girls boldly walk in tittering in their skyscraper heels.

The girl on the left was Ji Feifei and on the right, a beauty with long, red hair that waved its way to her waist. She was wearing a very short tight skirt and a silk top, looking very eye catching.

It was not compulsory to wear the university uniform in B City University. However, it was designed to be very unique and beautiful so most students preferred to wear it.

However, there were some who probably didn't have such items in their closets. One of them was the girl beside Ji Feifei.

"Ruby.... Ruby Chan..." Li Lanni was just about to ask who that was when she heard a mumble beside her.

She turned to look at Cheng Yu, whose face had turned pale. "Who is she?"

She didn't need Cheng Yu to answer that.

The students had all fallen into discussion.

"The exam this time is very important. Even Ruby came..."

"What's so strange? Although Ruby doesn't ever come to class, she still has to do her exams, alright? If not, her family might get angry."

"Get angry? Please... This is Ruby Chan we are talking about. Her father dotes on her like a treasure. Even if she were to officially leave school, he probably wouldn't even raise his voice at her."

Li Lanni understood. So it was just some pampered princess who finally knew her way to school. But what was up with Cheng Yu's expression?

"You know each other personally?"

Cheng Yu looked even worse as she spat out. "It's a long story."

"What is Ji Feifei doing here anyway? Wasn't she expelled?" A girl finally realized that Ji Feifei was here too.

Ji Feifei narrowed her eyes in anger. She had come together with Ruby. Ruby had gained all their attention the instant she walked in but they are only noticing her now?

She ignored them and walked towards the lockers installed at the side wall. After taking all she had to take from her locker, she locked gazes with Ruby Chan and left.

"Oh... so she was only here to take her things. Makes sense." The curious students finally understood.

Li Lanni was relieved. She didn't want to imagine having to breathe the same air as that pretentious girl anymore. She was scared she might do something that wouldn't look good on her....

Chapter 57 - Fond Of Digging Her Own Graves

"I suddenly remembered what Li Lanni said before. Something about acing the exam... I can't wait to see the results!" The girl who had screeched earlier was at it again.

Li Lanni cringed when she heard that statement. Really now, who says such a thing right before an exam?

She was too naive to have thought that they had forgotten all about it.

As expected, it drew all the attention right back to her. She really wanted to drop dead. Was she so fond of digging her own graves?

The exam started soon. It was painting and they were all done in a short while. Because it was a test of speed and creativity, they were only given 100 minutes.

At the end of it, some of them had to hand in incomplete paintings.

Luckily, Li Lanni had managed to complete hers although it was not as perfect as she wanted.

Cheng Yu, on the other hand, didn't feel the pressure at all. Painting was her forte and she could do it even if she was given 50 minutes, much more 100.

"Do you want to grab a snack and keep your mind off the exam?" Cheng Yu offered as she tugged at Li Lanni's arm.

"Sure. Let's..."

The piercing sound of high heels against the floor interrupted, followed by a waft of sweet perfume scent as a figure slotted itself beside Li Lanni and perfectly sandwiched her between herself and Cheng Yu.

Cheng Yu was instantly displeased while Li Lanni was curious, taking a glance at the red-haired girl.

"Hello, it's been long." The girl said in a sweet voice that Li Lanni somehow found familiar.

She didn't remember the girl, though, so she simply nodded politely.

The red haired girl rested her chin in her hand, sneaking a glance at the riled up Cheng Yu and said to Li Lanni, "I heard a dessert shop opened near the school. Care to grab a bite?"

Li Lanni felt strange. This girl obviously walked in with Ji Feifei earlier. Why was she trying to get close to her now? Was she using the same old and extremely worn out trick of pretending to be a friend to hide malice? Decisively, she rejected, "My friend and I are going out together."

Ruby didn't look fazed. "We can all go together. Right, Xiao Yu?"

Cheng Yu's face darkened. For a reason, Li Lanni felt that these two were like fire and ice. Hence she politely rejected Ruby once again, "We may have some... um, private matters to talk about."

This time, the girl didn't insist. She mumbled something about it being Li Lanni's loss before flipping a wave of her hair to her back and walking off.

"Oh, Ruby, you look so gorgeous today!"

"Ruby is always beautiful, every other day. It's as expected of the beauty queen." Some girls started fawning over Ruby as soon as she stood to leave. Even the guys wanted to speak to her. They just didn't dare to.

Their attitude made Li Lanni wonder why exactly she had gone over to her. Was she really seeking trouble on Ji Feifei's behalf?

"Who exactly is she?" The curiosity was killing Li Lanni.

"The campus belle." Cheng Yu said expressionlessly. "In reality, I think you are way more beautiful than her but she is more popular so she became the campus belle."

"What's up with the two of you?" She asked Cheng Yu, ignoring the 'beauty queen' rant.

Cheng Yu didn't want to hide anything from Li Lanni even though she was unhappy so she said, "We were friends in middle school and high school. Actually, we were all friends: You, Ruby, Ji Feifei and I."

Li Lanni raised her eyebrow. She was friends with Ruby? No wonder she found her familiar.

Cheng Yu continued, "In high school, you and Ji Feifei became roommates and your friendship grew stronger. For the same reason, Ruby and I became best friends.

But I don't know how or why it happened... it wasn't long before the three of you started shutting me out."

Li Lanni: "... did she need to ask? It had to be thanks to Ji Feifei's manipulation. Her expression was hard to read. Just how long exactly had that girl been a schemer? Since she was in her mother's womb?

"Ruby and I remained lukewarm for a while since we were roommates. But then... I unexpectedly stumbled upon something shocking about Ruby.... It's a secret she doesn't know herself. But when I told her about it, well, you can imagine what happened."

From her tone, Ruby must have thought she was lying. It seemed like they also fought because of this reason....

Since she had mentioned that it was a secret, Li Lanni didn't want to probe further. She was actually more interested in something else...

"I think Ji Feifei let Ruby take over her role in bullying you. They are each other's shadow nowadays after all." Cheng Yu said, reading Li Lanni's mind.

At this moment, Cheng Yu received a new text message.

She was so shocked that she almost broke her phone by dropping it!

Li Lanni noticed her change in expression. "Hey, do you still want to grab a snack or what? Also, what's with that face? You look like you have seen a ghost!"

Cheng Yu trembled, expressing that she would rather see a ghost.

On the screen on her phone lay the following content.

[V: Something's wrong with Lanni's car! Don't let her take it home.]

Tch. She knew it! Ji Feifei wouldn't give up so easily. She couldn't use Li Lanni anymore... it was not surprising that she was trying to kill her.

They would have a music exam in less than an hour. After that, they wouldn't have any more exams today.

The sticky part was that Li Lanni didn't like lingering in school unless she really had something to do but since she had started having home-schooling lessons after school, she would definitely rush home. There was not enough time to stop her...

Wait, how would she even stop her? Tell her that she had received a warning message from a stalker?!

Chapter 58 - Are You Alright?

Li Lanni was still talking when she noticed Cheng Yu's changed expression. She was glaring daggers at a certain direction. When she followed her line of sight, Cheng Yu was in fact glaring at Ruby Chan...

"Do you really hate her that much?" Li Lanni laughed.

"I don't just hate her. I want to kill her." Cheng Yu fumed. Ji Feifei was gone already. The only person who could mess up with Li Lanni's car had to be Ruby or her minions. She wasn't lacking in deadset followers. After all, many people wanted to curry favor with her.

Her main concern right now was to find an excuse to make Li Lanni stay away from that car.

Though she wondered, was V in their school right now? If not, now did they know that Li Lanni's car had been tempered with?

She thought about something else and her heart raced. She could distract Lanni, but what about Li Yuming? She had seen her drop Li Lanni off this morning. Would she be safe?

That was Li Lanni's mother. Of course Cheng Yu would care.

In attempt to know her whereabouts, she looked at Li Lanni and asked, "Will your mother pick you up after the exam?"

"I don't think she will. She might be busy later."

Cheng Yu was relieved but then she wondered, if that was the case, how did V come to that scary conclusion?

A tasteless snack and a music exam later, Cheng Yu was drenched in her own fear.

As soon as Li Lanni came out of the music building, she grabbed her arm. "Lanni, how about we take the subway today?"

If Li Lanni had not realized anything wrong earlier, she would be a fool if she didn't realise it now. Cheng Yu was acting out of the ordinary.

With her multiplied sensitivity lately, she instinctively felt that whatever was up must be quite serious to make Cheng Yu so worked up.

After thinking carefully, she raised her eyebrow. Was someone perhaps trying to hurt her?

Maybe... someone had bribed Cheng Yu to lead her to a dangerous place and use the opportunity to attack?

She shook her head. Her trust towards Cheng Yu may be very low, but she definitely knew that the girl could not bring herself to hurt a fly.

The other likely situation could only be that someone was trying to hurt her, Cheng Yu found out and was trying to protect her. Well, that sounded far-fetched too. What were the odds of such a thing even happening?

As she contemplated whether to follow Cheng Yu and take the subway or not, a figure rushed out from the Literature building and hugged Li Lanni's arm. "There you are. It's been quite long since we last shared a meal. How about we go to my home for dinner? Xiao Yu can come with us too..."

Li Lanni instinctively pulled her arm away. Girl, I don't know you. Aren't you being overly close?

The girl didn't mind being pushed away and continued with her persuasion. "If you don't like the food made by the chefs in my home, we can all go somewhere else. Later, I will drop you home."

'Just great' Li Lanni thought. It was already tiring enough to keep off the guys that kept fawning over her when she didn't remember who they were. Did she have to start dealing with girls too?

"Hey, Lanni! Lanni, are you not happy to see me?" The red haired girl plastered herself closer to Li Lanni. Any closer and one would start to have strange thoughts.

Cheng Yu was annoyed now. "Lanni already said she has plans."

"She didn't say that!"

"No difference. I did."

Ruby Chan rolled her eyes. She was probably the kind of pampered princess who felt that everything must go her way. After glaring at Cheng Yu for a while, she let out a long sigh. "Fine. You guys take the subway. Lanni, see you tomorrow!"

Seeing the girl saunter away, Li Lanni was helpless. "Honestly, this trick of pretending to be close just to dole out a stab in the back is too outdated. Doesn't she think?"

Cheng Yu expressed that she had nothing to say.

As they talked, a bodyguard went up to them, looking like he didn't have a choice. "Miss, Master wants you to go home right away."

Cheng Yu's heart skipped a beat. No way...

Li Lanni had made a choice. "I'll take the subway with my friend. Don't worry about me: I'll give my mother a call."

The bodyguard was a bit insistent, making Li Lanni narrow her eyes. Something was really wrong!

...

In her room, Li Lanni flopped onto the bed. Was it so exhausting to try to be alive?

The anonymous message sender was at it again.. [Lanni, are you alright? Sorry, my carelessness almost let you get hurt again.]

Chapter 59 - Give Up Already

Li Lanni's eyes narrowed.

Again?!?!

A chill ran down her back. Just who was this person? Wasn't he tired of messing with her yet?

If this was some sort of prank, It was not funny at all!

The worst part was that the messages would always disappear soon after she read them.

She tossed her phone aside and closed her eyes. Whatever, stalker! Stalk all you want. I'm not afraid of you! Really, I'm not.

Not long after, Li Yuming came into her room. She skimmed her all over. "Honey, are you alright? Luckily you took the subway. I don't know what I would have done if anything really happened to you!"

Li Yuming looked worried, her hands were still trembling.

Li Lanni sat up in confusion. "What happened?"

"Those bastards! I have treated them very well for many years. How dare they collude with someone to hurt you? If that lad from the Ji family didn't warn me, I would never have known."

Li Lanni was shocked. So there was really something wrong with that bodyguard! Luckily she had followed Cheng Yu. She didn't want to ask what had happened to the bodyguard in the end.

"Wait, wait... how is this related to that pervert?!"

Li Yuming held her daughter's hands and had a meaningful glance. "Will you stop calling him a pervert already? He has already proved that not only does he not want to harm you, he wants to protect you too. Right. I called him back for dinner. Freshen up and come down, okay?"

Li Lanni was still lost in thought. Cheng Yu found out that something was wrong and so did Ji Xiehan. Heh, Ji Feifei wasn't so careful this time, was she?

But after thinking about it, Li Lanni didn't find it too surprising. He was Ji Feifei's brother after all. She just couldn't understand why the hell Ji Feifei's brother would go against her. Weren't they brother and sister and hence supportive of each other?

Or could he be using this incident to gain her and her mother's trust?

Thinking about it, such a thing was possible.

In real sense, Ji Xiehan only found out what was happening because he had asked Qiao Luna to report Ji Feifei's every move.

Between warning Li Lanni who was wary of him to the point of hatred and Li Yuming who liked and trusted him, surely even an idiot would know what to do.

...

At the dining table, Ji Xiehan sat opposite Li Yuming.

"Xiao Han, how is your mother? Is she doing alright?" Li Yuming asked to strike up a conversation.

"She's alright."

"That's good, that's good... I heard bits about what happened to Feifei. That girl, you must not misunderstand her. I have watched Feifei grow up and I know she's not that kind of person. As her brother, you should help her bring the truth to light."

Ji Xiehan nodded but remained silent. 'My dear aunty, I'm afraid the truth is right before you.' He thought.

Li Yuming saw that Ji Xiehan wasn't very happy so she stopped talking after some little questions.

Amid their chatter, soft footsteps resounded as Li Lanni walked in.

She walked over and sat beside her mother, only distantly greeting the man on the other side.

Li Yuming sighed. Her daughter was still too paranoid.

Unbeknownst to the two of them, Li Lanni was currently making another connection in her mind.

She had not realized this before but every time that weird stalker sent a message or letter, she would meet Ji Xiehan!

Her gaze narrowed as she observed the man opposite her. Could he be related to that stalker?

Or perhaps he was the stalker himself?

Wait. He was the young master of the Ji Family. He shouldn't stoop that low, right?

But then again, he was a pervert. That was definitely one of the things perverts were capable of doing.

Ji Xiehan felt uncomfortable under the girl's piercing gaze. What had she misunderstood this time?

Damn it. It was hard enough to simply have a meal with one's future mother-in-law!

—

Finally, it was the day of the art competition. Li Lanni's mouth twitched when she saw the new notice in the art class forum. The rules for that damned competition had actually changed.

All the previous years, the judges would decide on the winner at the end of the competition.

This year, however, the organizers had added new rules.

At the end of the competition, the students from all the participating schools would be allowed to vote for three hours.

Not only that, the paintings would be submitted anonymously. This way, the students would vote for the painting they genuinely liked.

"Why are you still here? We will be late if we don't go to Hall of Legends right away."

Li Lanni turned back to see an extremely anxious and nervous Cheng Yu. Her 'special' hairstyle was still on, maybe the palm print on her face was yet to fade.

"You..."

"Talk later! Let's go!" She practically dragged Li Lanni away.

After being persuaded by Cheng Yu for days, she had decided to join the contest for fun.

However, her arrival was not a laughing matter to other students.

"What did you say?! Li Lanni is here too?!!"

"Perhaps you're mistaken?"

They looked like they had just lost their souls.

"I really wish I was but absolutely not!" The short haired girl was on the verge of tears.

"Urgh... I was just starting to hope that I'd win." A disappointed lad complained.

Ah Chen found them comical. "Forget it already. You should have aimed for second place from the start. What makes any of you think you would beat Li Yuming's daughter in painting? Even those punks from Hun He Art School can't achieve such a feat, okay?"

This is the first thing Li Lanni heard when she arrived with Cheng Yu.

She had an interesting expression. "Senior Ah Chen, what do you mean by that? What's my mother got to do with this?"

Everyone looked at Li Lanni like she was an idiot.

Ah Chen coughed to explain. "Isn't it obvious? You're the legend's daughter. Of course you're a legend."

Li Lanni laughed at their exaggerated attitude. "Don't exaggerate."

Ah Chen's expression changed. He instantly transformed into a love-struck fool. "Eh? Goddess, I was lost in thought just now and didn't realize it's you! Do you think we could..."

Li Lanni shot him a disdainful glare.. "Ah Chen, not now."

Chapter 60 - Perhaps I Should Help You Take It Off?

Ah Chen looked heartbroken, but he could only hold it in. Everyone who knew Li Lanni months ago said that she had changed. She had become much less friendly, and he could understand why...

He just needed to give her some time. Perhaps Lanni would soon be moved by his sincerity and fall in love with him.

But unfortunately, even in his dreams, he might not have imagined that the number of suitors wooing Lianni was beyond his imaginations. Some of them were even willing to go out of their way to protect her.

Soon after that brief interlude, the competition began.

Li Lanni had initially thought that the new rules were useless because people could buy votes if they wanted to.

However, when they reached the venue, she realized that her worries were groundless. The contestants were asked to randomly pick a tiny ball from the pile in a jar at the entrance. Just before the start of the competition, the contestants were allowed to open the ball. Each ball had a number in them, which they had to use to label their paintings. Anyone who ignored the rule and wrote their name would be disqualified immediately. The seating arrangement also made it impossible for plagiarism to happen.

Li Lanni was impressed. She then recalled what that pervert had mentioned about Star Art International deciding on the winner even before the competition started. But since the rules were this strict and the venue was even in B City university, there wouldn't be a loophole. Right?

A soft smile escaped her lips. If the contest was this fair, Cheng Yu might really win. Heavens knew how determined that girl was!

Her sweet smile was infectious, and soon, everyone near her smiled too.

Yet, precisely at that moment, a sudden arrogant voice interrupted her musings

"Move it! Don't block the way!" A tall young man arrogantly walked in, an entourage of girls following behind him. All of them behaved arrogantly with their noses in the air.

Cheng Yu's face sank as she watched the entourage take their seats, and unconsciously the words slipped from her mouth, "Hun He Art School."

"Hun He?" Li Lanni looked at her dazed expression.

"The man at the front is the Legend of Hun He."

Li Lanni was caught between laughter and tears. "Is he that good?" Just how good was he to make Cheng Yu have that kind of expression?

Cheng Yu looked like she had just given up on the whole contest. "You haven't heard of him yet? Legend has it that he came from a lineage of several art grandmasters."

Li Lanni was still wondering if Cheng Yu was exaggerating when a petite girl came out of nowhere and joined their conversation. "Are you talking about Cedric? I thought those were just rumors."

Cheng Yu didn't mind the newcomer and enlightened both of them. The more she spoke, the more excited she became "They are not fake. I have done a lot of research about all art grandmasters, and he is indeed a descendant of the Great Master Qin."

"Who is that?" Li Lanni and the petite girl asked in unison.

"Story for another day. Legend has it that Cedric was terrifyingly talented in painting since he was just a toddler. It's just that he wasn't interested in art. But in recent years, something has happened, and Cedric suddenly got a surge of inspiration. He began painting like crazy, breaking countless records, winning contests after contest, and creating masterpieces, making various art admirers fall in love with them. One of his paintings, The Cry, was auctioned in America for an insane price of 500 million dollars!

Soon after that, several companies wanted to scout him, but he rejected all of them and preferred to act solo. Apparently, none of the terms they offered interested him.

It was only recently that he found something that caught his eye, so he went to Hun He Art School. I heard they are now grooming him to be a second Li Yuming."

When Cheng Yu was done, Li Lanni and the petite girl were speechless.

Sis, are you sure you're not describing some hero from a television drama?

She made him sound so grand and mysterious!

Also... Li Lanni raised an eyebrow.... why was her mother being dragged into this topic again?

Nevermind, she will just let it be. As they were chatting, they realized it was already time for the start of the competition. The three of them rushed to take their seats.

Of course, they earned scoffs from the students from Hun He Art School in passing. It was as though they were mocking all the other contestants for wasting their time participating in a competition they were bound to lose.

Li Lanni shot a glance right back at them, murmuring in her heart, "Wait until my Cheng Yu kicks your butt. Let's see if you will still be this arrogant."

In a moment, the organizers explained the requirements and they officially started.

Meanwhile, in Feng Ji International, Ji Xiehan's office.

"Boss, I've already taken care of the task." Qiao Luna reported.

"Mm." Ji Xiehan was busy typing in his laptop, and he casually let her leave.

Moments later, however, he felt something wasn't right. He lifted his head to look at the woman still standing in front of him.

"Boss..."

Qiao Luna had her head down, and when she lifted it, her eyes were blazing with a passionate gaze.

Then she sashayed to him, a step at a time... until she was right in front of him.

"You..."

"What are you doing?" Ji Xiehan looked at her sternly. His eyes became cold and stared daggers at her.

Qiao Luna closed in on him, took a deep breath, and tried to sound as normal as possible. "Boss, we are in the middle of the freaking scorching summer. Don't you feel too hot wearing your tie?" She inched even closer, successfully removing the distance between them. "Perhaps.... I should help you take it off?"