

Chapter 521 - Date With Linhou (1)

Their conversation was interrupted by a call from Luna. She picked it up and glared at him to behave himself and not say anything he shouldn't "Hey sis."

"Are you alright, Lanni?" Luna detected from her sister's tone that something must be wrong.

"Yes, I'm okay." It was not a lie, since she was not going to let her sour conversation with Wen Lin ruin the rest of her night.

Luna was not having it. "You don't sound alright. You went to visit your in-laws. Did something bad happen over there?" She asked directly. From her tone, she was ready to drive over and battle it out with the Ji family if they did anything to hurt her.

Lanni chuckled at her sister's protectiveness, touched that she would not be on her own if things really went south. Of course, she knew that Xiehan would always be there for her too. "It's really nothing, Luna. I'm just tired." She didn't want to kick a fuss over something negligible.

"If you say so." Luna didn't sound convinced but had to take her sister's word for it since the latter would not spill her guts anyway.

"Did you have something to tell me?" Lanni asked. It was not usual for Luna to give her a call in the evenings, especially now that everyone assumed that she and Xiehan were in their honeymoon phase and wanted nothing but to cuddle each other with no distraction.

"Well, are you busy tomorrow?" She asked, then expressed her uncertainty immediately as it had just dawned on her. "It's not something important, actually."

"Not exactly busy." Lanni responded. "My boss gave me time off for my marriage but Xiehan has to go to work. I'll be on my own the whole day."

Luna was relieved. "Can you accompany me to shop for the kids? I'm sure they would love their aunt to tag along."

"I would love to!" There was no question about that. Hearing the cutte giggles in the background, she knew that the kids couldn't wait to go with her either. "At what time will you go?"

"About 10am. Is that okay with you?" She confirmed.

"Yes. See you there." Lanni excitedly hung up, looking forward to the next day.

He gave her a sidelong glance. "You have plans for tomorrow?" he had been worried that she would be bored once he had to leave for work.

"A date with my nephew and niece. Of course I'm excited." She almost hugged her phone as though the hug could be sent over to her nephew and niece.

Her joy was contagious, Xiehan smiled. "Have fun."

"You too." She teased even while knowing that work was probably anything but fun.

"There's not a minute of fun without you by my side." His brows knitted.

"But you need to work." She reminded him before he could think of cancelling.

"Mmh. Such a bummer." He groaned.

She thought about it and leaned over to kiss him. "On the bright side, I will be waiting for you in bed when you come back. Our bed."

Her emphasis on the last two words made his manhood harden in his pants in excitement. He frowned slightly. 'Relax, will you? She is already ours.' His heart raced from her kisses. "Can you not mention bed when you kiss me?" He complained.

"Okay. I'll mention it as I touch you." And she went on full husband-teasing mode.

"You look bright. You have become more beautiful in just a couple of days." Luna commented when Lanni joined her and Cheng Yu at the children's clothes and toys store.

"That's what marriage does to you." Lanni's cheeks flushed as she sneakily jabbed at Cheng Yu who had decided to join them at the last minute.

"I absolutely agree." Luna went along.

As expected, Cheng Yu complained. "Are the two of you trying to show off to me?"

"Sorry." Lanni chuckled.

"You're not sorry. Hmph. I'll play with my godson instead. He is more fun than the two of you." Cheng Yu ignored them and picked up Linhou who was trying to leave the cart.

"Don't be mad, CEO Cheng." Luna laughed teasingly. "How are things going at work?"

"Busier." Cheng Yu sighed. It was difficult to take a day off but she totally needed it. "But I will never let you down, Luna."

"I never doubted that." Luna smiled gratefully. She knew that Moonlight Studios was not just her hard work but Cheng Yu's too. The last thing Cheng Yu would do was let it go down the drain.

"She is the CEO now?" Lanni blinked at the news.

"It's still unofficial but yeah." Luna answered.

"Luna is giving up the position to me so she can save time for her softwares." Cheng Yu added.

Lanni thought about it and nodded. "I don't think it's a bad choice. Actually I think you are much better off behind the computers than a large desk labelled CEO."

Luna chuckled. "Yes. Except, I'm moving to a large desk labelled COO." It didn't sound like there was much difference but Luna and Cheng Yu just how much busier the CEO was. After discussing it with Xingyu, they decided that Luna would continue working from home whenever she could but when she had to attend meetings, she would go to the office.

On the other hand, Li Yuming helped them contact her old friend. The woman had been Lanni's nanny throughout her childhood and had only left because Lanni was a grown up and no longer needed a nanny. If the woman had been trusted with Lanni for all those years, then it must mean that she was worth a try. Otherwise, she would have been fired long ago.

After speaking to Xinghe about the matter, the latter had also sent over two of the servants who had worked for the Jiang family for the longest time and were the most trustworthy.

The new nanny would arrive the following day and after that, Luna would no longer have too much work in her hands.

When Lanni heard about the new arrangements, she was genuinely elated. "I'm happy for you, sis. And you too, Xiao Yu, you both deserve it."

Chapter 522 - Date With Linhou (2)

"Check this out, Lanni. I think it would look good on you." Cheng Yu exclaimed as though she had just won the jackpot.

Lanni excitedly looked over at her. "Let me see." In the next second, she frowned. Cheng Yu was holding a little princess dress whose tag was labelled 2-2 and a half years. She shook her head. "You naughty thing."

"You totally fell for it." Cheng Yu threw her head back, laughing so hard that Lanni wanted to punch her in the face. How could she have fallen for such a lousy trick? When Cheng Yu mentioned a dress that would look good on her, she had totally forgotten that they were in the children's store.

"I will take revenge for that. Just you wait." She threatened Cheng Yu.

"I'll be waiting, your majesty." Cheng Yu teased and was about to return the dress to its rack when a tiny hand tugged at it. "Do you like it, Mumu?" She looked in Xiaomu's direction only to find that she was not the one holding it, but Linhou.

"Luna, your son wants to wear a dress." She laughed teasingly.

Luna chuckled as she watched Linhou grab the dress as though he liked it. In the next second, he looked towards Xiaomu and cumsily passed the dress to her.

"How smart. He knows that Mumu wears dresses so he thinks all dresses belong to his sister and is returning it to her." Lanni observed with a smile.

"How cute. He is looking out for his sister. I want a twin brother too." Cheng Yu's eyes were filled with adoration.

Luna smiled dotingly at her children and focused her gaze on Xiaomu. "Mumu, if someone gives you a gift, you thank them by saying 'thank you'. Go on, thank your brother."

She tried to, but the words were difficult to pronounce so she simply flashed Linhou a smile that could melt hearts.

"I swear, I'm going to ask my boyfriend to do me without protection next time. I hope I will have a child that cute." They overheard a young woman expressing her awe in the most unfiltered way.

"Do you think they will be that cute? Those are Jiang Xingyu's children." Another young woman gossiped while trying to lower her voice, clearly doing a horrible job at it. "Besides, look how beautiful their mother is. I would kill to have such a cute pair of twins but I simply can't hold a candle to them! Why is life so unfair?"

Several gasps of admiration followed them no matter which alley they took, and Luna caught a few teenagers trying to snap pictures of Linhou in the name of admiring the little Xingyu. It was hard enough just convincing them that they should delete the photos because Linhou was too young to be exposed to the media, without sounding rude. In the end, she decided to send the twins to the play area.

There were many little kids in the play area and no one had the time to comb through the adorable mess of pink and blue just to look for Jiang Xingyu's kids. They sat on the first floor, where they could see the play zone through the mezzanine. They were tired and needed refreshments.

"The kids look happy." Cheng Yu observed as she sipped her juice. She couldn't get her eyes off Xiaomu who was bouncing happily on what looked like a small deflatable castle. She even held hands with a little girl who was probably her new friend.

"I've never seen my Mumu smile so happily." Luna felt her heart melt. Xiaomu had always been active, walking laps throughout the compound in search for heaven knows what. Yet, this was the first time that her adorable laugh was filled with so much joy. "Turns out it's because she doesn't have friends. I overlooked this."

"But she has a brother at least." Lanni commented.

Luna chuckled at the thought of it. "Brother, yes. They are like boiling oil and water. Whenever they are in the same frame, screams happen and the house falls into chaos."

"Uh... is that how twins usually are?" Cheng Yu didn't want to imagine it.

"It's funny if you ask me. I had to ask their pediatrician if it's alright. He said it was because they had some sense of competition against each other, probably regarding the people around them."

It was almost unbelievable, especially since they were both so adorable. Everyone's first reaction upon seeing them was usually to hold them on one arm each, or hug them one after the other. It was hard to not love either twin.

"Xingyu and I strive to treat them fairly all the time. To be honest, I don't have a preference between them either. I just love them both with all my heart. But in their little minds, they want to know who our favorite is." She found them amusing.

"What if your favorite were Linhou and Xingyu's favorite were Xiaomu?" Cheng Yu asked.

"They would want to oust each other and want just one of them to be both parents' favorite."

"Uh... that sounds complex for their age."

"I know. But on the contrary, it is because they are little that they can think that way. When they are older, doc says that they will probably be so dependent on each other that Xingyu and I will feel like backdrops. Honestly, I wouldn't mind. As long as they stop fighting."

"Look, isn't that Linhou? He is befriending a little girl." Lanni was awed. With their rivalry, she had almost thought that Linhou ignored Xiaomu sometimes because he had realized that they were different and he disliked little girls.

"I didn't know kids that young could be let into the play zone." Cheng Yu noticed that the little girl eating Linhou's snack couldn't be two years old yet. But it was not surprising. There were professionals looking after the kids so their age didn't actually matter.

"The point is, Linhou has a little girlfriend." Cheng Yu cheered, earning a smack from Luna.

"You are dirty minded! My son is just a toddler."

"So protective, are we? He will have a girlfriend sooner or later." She teased.

"Just shut up." Luna frowned. Although she knew that kids that age probably didn't know the difference in gender, she looked over at her son who was laughing so hard that he fell onto the carpet along with the little girl. "Wait. Isn't that girl Yue?"

Chapter 523 - Trouble In Paradise? (1)

"Huh? Yue?" Cheng Yu found the name familiar but no matter how hard she thought about it, she couldn't remember. She inched closer to Lanni and asked, "Who is Yue?"

"Han Xichen and Xiaoshi's daughter. What a poor memory." Lanni called her out for having the memory of a goldfish but she could not be blamed. She had only met Han Yue once at Xiehan's welcome party.

How the hell was she supposed to remember her when she rarely heard anything regarding Han Xichen and Xiaoshi?

But when she looked over at the adorable little girl, she had to admit that she looked like a tiny version of Xiaoshi. "Ah, yes she does look like Xiaoshi's daughter. She even has her mother's red hair."

Red hair was becoming more common in the Ji family lately, Lanni started wondering what color her own children might have when she had them—not that she had a particular preference. Her own hair was no longer its natural color after all. It kept growing out too fast whenever she dyed it and would have conspicuous black roots within just a few days, so she opted to let it grow and dyed the tips silver. Her kids could simply do the same if they wanted to.

Cheng Yu continued observing Linhou who had just received a toy from one of the professionals taking care of them. Instead of playing with the tiny car, he stuffed it into Yue's little hand and smiled. "How adorable. Your kids found each other and became friends."

Although the mothers were no longer awkward around each other since they were not pining for the same man anymore, they were not the closest of friends either. They would greet each other briefly when they had to and each mind their business afterwards. Apparently, they would probably not become friends any time soon.

"Xiaoshi must be nearby. I'll give her a call." Lanni pointed it out based on Yue's presence.

She dialled Xiaoshi's number and sure enough, the latter was in the store. "Hey, Lanni. I was about to give you a call. I saw Xiaomu around and thought you must be here with her."

"I came shopping with Luna and Xiao Yu." She informed the latter, so she would decide whether or not to come over even with Luna around.

"Where are you guys? I will come and say hi." Xiaomu said, much to Lanni's relief. She was still waiting for Lanni to describe her location when she heard a gasp. "Ah, I think I saw you. Wait for me."

When the latter hung up, Lanni turned to her friends. "Shishi is coming to say hello." She especially looked at Luna.

"Stop looking at me. I don't mind being her friend if she wants to. I have nothing against her." Luna chuckled. Having nothing against her was an understatement. She respected Xiaoshi. If it were another woman, they would probably still be battling it out for Xingyu's attention. Xiaoshi chose the high road by giving up and moving on, and the heavens must have rewarded her by giving her her own happy family.

Xiaoshi arrived in a few minutes, out of breath from having used the staircase. She was holding a shopping bag with everything she had purchased.

"How have you been? It's been long." Lanni embraced her.

"Long? We saw each other on your wedding night." Xiaoshi laughed. "But I'm great."

"Hey there, bosses." She still called Luna and Cheng Yu her bosses despite being more casual with each other. The women laughed at her form of address and hugged her. When Luna raised a cup to her arrival, she frowned. "You are drinking tea on such a hot afternoon?"

"I can't drink cold juice..." Luna cleared her throat and the other two women gave her suspicious glances too. She could only explain. "Uhm... my period is late."

"That's not fair!" Lanni jokingly pouted.

"Hey, it's not for certain, okay?" Luna burst into laughter at her sister who sounded like she had been robbed of something. Well, seeing her sister have a third child before she had her first might make her a little jealous. She chuckled as she explained to the shocked women who looked like they were about to salute her. "I like to take precaution every time my period is late. Just in case."

"You and Xingyu want another baby?" Cheng Yu asked in surprise, not because it was odd but because Luna had never mentioned it.

"We are not specifically trying but we wouldn't mind one more bundle of cuteness." She smiled. "Only, I think the twins are still little. We may start trying when they are older—if we will want it."

"I'm so jealous. I'm not even married yet." Cheng Yu pouted, painfully realizing that she was the only unmarried woman in the group.

Lanni and Xiaoshi laughed at her expense while Luna asked, "When is Cedric going to pop the big WYMM question? I mean, he is planning to, right?" She hoped that Cedric was not holding her friend back because he was afraid of commitment or some other crappy reason.

Cheng Yu took a sip of her iced apple juice. "I don't know...I think it's still too early for us."

"You have been dating for two years. Your third anniversary is already knocking, hello." Lanni waved a hand in front of her as though to wake her. "And you are certainly not too young for marriage. He isn't either."

"Uhm...you are right. I just feel like there are things that need to be settled." She looked uneasy. "It's not that I don't want to spend the rest of my life with him but marriage is something else altogether. I'm not sure."

It was probably crazy now that she thought about it. She was willing to be with him forever without the piece of paper but when she added the thought of said piece of paper to the mix, she became nervous.

"It's totally fine. Take your time, Yu." Luna rubbed her back.

"As long as you explain your views to Cedric. Don't let him misunderstand your hesitance." Lanni reminded her, then noticed that Xiaoshi looked off. She had blanked out at some point and looked sad.

"You look unhappy. Trouble in paradise?" Lanni teased. She had merely said it as a joke because she knew that Xiaoshi and Xichen would never have trouble but when she saw the former's eyes dim, she freaked out. "Oh no, I'm sorry. I..."

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"It's okay." Xiaoshi smiled, not thinking it was a big deal that Lanni had poked fun at her.

Lanni was worried and still felt horrible. "Is everything alright?"

"Yeah." She took a deep breath. It was obvious that she wanted to talk about it, she needed someone to speak to, but was probably afraid to open up.

"It's okay, Shishi. You can tell us anything." Cheng Yu urged, ready to listen and Luna nodded in agreement. Seeing that they were all ready to listen and probably help, she took a deep breath and let it out.

"I just think... Xichen is a bit detached lately."

"What exactly do you mean?" Lanni probed.

Since she had spilled it, she might as well go all the way. "He no longer has time for us. He is always busy with heaven knows what." It was unsure whether the words were for Lanni, Luna and Cheng Yu, to fill them in on her situation, or for herself to realize what exactly was happening with her husband.

She looked defeated." I checked his schedule a few times and it was not necessary for him to take up the patients he had decided to be responsible for. It's almost as if... he is looking for something to keep him away from home." She almost laughed at herself when she said it.

Lanni's brows furrowed." Maybe you are overthinking it."

"I would love to think so too." She let out a breath, not in the slightest bit convinced. She had also believed that she was overthinking things until they stayed under the same roof for a whole week without exchanging a single word. He would basically be long gone by the time she woke up and would return while she was asleep. She would feel him slip into bed but didn't have the strength to talk to him either. What else was she to think other than that he was avoiding her?

Luna guessed what she was thinking and chimed in, "Don't be discouraged. What time does he get home?"

"9pm, sometimes 10 or 11." She facepalmed. "By that time, Yue will be asleep. If he comes a bit earlier, he will spend a little time with her before turning in."

His behaviour was certainly strange, she could see that the three women looked suspicious too. She shrugged and still tried not to pass a harsh verdict.

"Sometimes I used to think that it's because he doesn't love Yue anymore. At least not as much as he did before she was born.

Lanni didn't think so. "Do you think there's a specific reason why he could possibly be distant from her? One that he has not told you about?"

"I know, right? Aren't fathers supposed to be obsessed with their daughters?" Cheng Yu added, finding it more odd the more Xiaoshi spoke.

"Maybe because she is a girl?" Xiaoshi spat the guess on her mind.

"Don't start thinking of it that way. I don't think he has a preference. I mean, he doesn't strike me as that kind." Lanni was certain from when he saw the man's interaction with his daughter before. If he did have a preference, then he definitely loved daughters.

"What about his interaction with you?" Luna asked.

This was the part that made her want to pull her hair. "He is often tired after work. After kissing Yue goodnight or playing with her for a bit, he will come to our room and hold me to sleep. It's strange."

The women exchanged glances, which made Xiaoshi even more worried. "Are you thinking what I'm thinking—that he probably found another woman?"

"I don't know Dr. Han that well but I don't think so." Cheng Yu expressed her opinion. "For one thing, you are so beautiful. What else would a man be looking for in a woman outside his marriage? Secondly, your description doesn't make me think of a cheating scumbag. It makes me think of a man who is either stressed as hell or has his priorities jumbled into a mess."

Xiaoshi scratched her chin as she tried to think. What kind of priorities would Han Xichen have aside from work and family? She suddenly realized that she no longer knew him. Two years ago, she would know when to find him at any random time and what he would be doing—down to the last detail. Now, she didn't even know what his plans were. How ironic.

The women fell into discussion for a while before Cheng Yu spoke up. "I think I know what you should do."

"What's that?" Not just Xiaoshi, Lanni and Luna were also curious to know what their love expert had in mind for this bizarre fix.

Cheng Yu deliberately made them wait before she crossed her arms and slacked back in her seat. "First off, perhaps you need to understand that if he didn't love Yue, that would have nothing to do with his interaction with you. He would still come home at the usual time and just spend all his time with you while avoiding her. He would probably be pressing you for another child without explaining why he wants it."

"Well..." She thought it made a lot of sense. But if it had nothing to do with Yue, then what the hell was wrong with him? She had thought it had something to do with their daughter because they were alright before she was born.

Cheng Yu looked straight at Xiaoshi. "Something is definitely lacking and I have a feeling it's between the sheets. So, you should charm his boxer briefs off."

"Xiao Yu!" Luna glared at her and Xiaoshi went red in embarrassment. It was a little awkward, she had to admit. It wasn't every day she talked about such intimate things with a trio of friends.

Cheng Yu raised an eyebrow and massaged the area between her eyes." Oh, I'm sorry if that sounded like a joke. I was not kidding. I seriously think you should charm the hell out of him. Let him know what he has been missing."

Chapter 525 - Trouble In Paradise (3)

Xiaoshi's face was still red when she lowered her voice to ask, "How am I supposed to do that?"

"I'm glad you asked." Cheng Yu looked like she had snagged the opportunity to show off her heavenly skills.

"The lingerie store is next door." She scratched her chin a little and whipped out her phone. "Luckily, they have a website. We can simply decide what to buy and pick it up on our way."

Xiaoshi almost choked on her drink. "You want me to seduce him?"

"Yes. Remind him that he has a hot wife at home." Cheng Yu did a naughty wiggle of her brows that made Xiaoshi almost want to bury herself in her cup. She winked. "Seduce him, make him crave for you but but don't have sex with him. Just let him see what he has been missing. I'm certain you haven't been doing it that often with him."

"You are so dirty minded." Lanni wanted to hide away when she realized where this conversation was heading.

Cheng Yu shot a glare at her. "Do you have a better suggestion?" Seeing as Lanni was about to shake her head, she shrugged. "See? Anyway, I'm sure of this method. Trust me. It will work no matter what jerk you are married to. Since Dr. Han doesn't score much on the jerk spectrum, it is even more certain to work."

After convincing them, she resumed her questions. "Have the two of you been active since he started acting that way?"

"No." Xiaoshi shook her head amid her embarrassment.

"That's my point." Cheng Yu swiped through the selection of lingerie.

"But..." Xiaoshi seemed hesitant when she saw the bright colored seductive bras and knickers.

"Come on. Are you scared to seduce the man who sleeps next to you in bed every night? The one who has seen you naked so many times?" Cheng Yu raised an eyebrow and looked like she was going to scold her for being innocent.

"No. It's just..." She looked hesitant. "I won't look good in lingerie. I'm not as attractive as I used to be before having Yue."

It finally dawned on the three women, why Xiaoshi didn't seem to have ever taken the initiative when Han Xichen slipped into bed. She was insecure about her body.

Lanni patted her hand. "Of course you are not as attractive as you used to be before having Yue. You are a hundred times more attractive, okay?"

She was not exaggerating.

Luna nodded as she added, "Let's face it, Xiaoshi. We are humans and we are women. When we get pregnant, our bellies will protrude. Whether or not they will fully return to normal later will depend on how much effort we put in. Our boobs will definitely not look the same after feeding our babies. Our bodies are undergoing hormonal changes, which means we are likely to add more weight someday. We will age with time. You can't expect to look like a teenager at fifty. Even those women who look like supermodels in their forties and fifties don't look like they did as maidens.

But that doesn't mean that our husbands will stop loving us. Sure, some blokes will run around looking for younger women but that doesn't make us unattractive, okay? It only makes us normal humans—just like their c*cks will one day become flabby as hell."

The women burst into laughter at her last statement. And to think they were about to applaud her from pointing out the facts that everyone needed to face.

Lanni was still dying in laughter. "Luna is right. And what makes you think he would not be dying to have you when he sees those beauties in a sexy bra?"

"Uhm..." Xiaoshi covered her chest that Lanni was staring at. These girls!

Her face was red as she swiped through the selection of lingerie. She settled for a blue, conservative pair. "Okay. I'll pick this."

Cheng Yu rolled her eyes. "He will find it attractive but it is too modest. Go for this." She pointed at a black lacy pair that had a bunny ear headband and a curved devil tail.

"I've never worn this kind." Xiaoshi was slightly hesitant, but the thought of Xichen's reaction made her look forward to it.

"Which is exactly why you should. Show him the seductive side of you." Cheng Yu's words finalised the deal, earning approval from both Lanni and Luna.

"Okay." Xiaoshi said decisively. She was doing this mainly to save her marriage so there was no time to hesitate.

"So, first step, put Yue to bed." Cheng Yu ran through the steps.

"Next step, take a nice, refreshing bath with essential oils and change into this. Then, throw a coat over."

"Okay." Xiaoshi blushed all over again.

"When that bloke comes home, welcome him with a peck on his cheek. Not a kiss. Leave as soon as you peck him so he can't kiss you—you will be smelling so nice he wouldn't want to miss the chance." She continued. "Next, go back to your room and wait for him. Once he is preparing to sleep, casually take off your coat and flaunt your body around the room. Don't look in his direction. Let your body do the talking."

"Oh my God, Xiao Yu." Lanni couldn't hold her tongue anymore. How did Cheng Yu turn into such an expert? She was even teaching others how to do it!

"I suddenly feel pity for Cedric." Luna rocked in laughter. If he messed up, he had trouble coming for him.

Cheng Yu ignored them and continued telling Xiaoshi what to do. "If he tries to touch you, give him a random excuse and go to sleep—in your lingerie if you can. Make him hard all night."

"Poor Cedric." Lanni agreed with her sister.

"This is about saving Xiaoshi's marriage, okay? Cedric has nothing to do with it." Cheng Yu suddenly felt embarrassed from the teasing.

"I know what else to do!" Lanni gave a naughty wink.

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"What is it?" Cheng Yu asked, stopping when she was about to conclude that Xiaoshi should use the chance to talk.

Lanni naughtily cleared her throat.

"When that bloke wakes up the next day, ask him to massage your neck and waist. Don't let him touch you in other parts." She winked. "Make him hard all day. Let him think about what he could be having every night if he spent more time at home."

"That will be torture but serves him right for making his wife so stressed out." Luna seconded.

Cheng Yu thought it was brilliant too. "In the evening, you can tease the hell out of him with a new pair. Choose a red one this time and be a real devil, worse than on the first night. He probably wouldn't be able to take it anymore."

"Don't say it, don't say it." Xiaoshi didn't think she would be able to handle the embarrassment if Cheng Yu stated the most intimate aloud. The women laughed at her expression.

Cheng Yu resumed after a long pause to let her take it all in.

"When you are done, nestle to him and talk about everything you wish he knew. Air out what he has been making you feel, your insecurities and if he lets you, tell him what you need. If he is really too busy, you can work out a routine that works for you both. As long as he spends more time with you."

What was a happy conversation suddenly took a nervous turn.

Xiaoshi played with her glass. "I'm afraid things will spiral out of control if I open my mouth. I mean, we have planned all of this out while assuming that he still loves me and our daughter deep down, right? But what if he doesn't? What if my opening up makes him realize that he can no longer put up with me and he decides to let go?"

Lanni's eyes drooped. It hurt to see her friend so insecure. "Shishi, I think you are misunderstanding something. A man who no longer loves a woman will not want to be anywhere near her—let alone hold her to sleep."

"Lanni is right. He would have been spending the night at the hospital. They have resting rooms after all. The fact that he still comes home no matter what time it is, even if he doesn't touch you and doesn't engage in conversations with you, means that he definitely still loves you.

"And to think that the wife of a psychologist needs relationship advice." Xiaoshi laughed at herself.

"He hangs out with Xingyu a few times lately. Not too often but once in a while. I will give him a piece of my mind when I see him." Luna promised.

However, Cheng Yu shook her head in disapproval immediately. "Don't do that yet. Let them solve their own matters first. If they can't, then we can step in." If they were under pressure, they might have trouble communicating their sentiments.

"I will be ready for a fist fight." Lanni declared.

Cheng Yu looked at her suspiciously. "Why do I get the feeling that you are more excited about getting to beat someone up than you are about teaching a blockhead a lesson?"

"Because she wants to try out the moves I have been teaching her." Luna exposed her sister mercilessly. Since she was allowed to exercise again after childbirth, she had been teaching Lanni some self defense moves. The latter was yet to use them and was probably itching for a fight.

Lanni shrugged. "Two birds, one stone." The others burst into laughter.

"Thank you." Was all Xiaoshi could say to them. She already felt better with the solution in her hands even though she was yet to try it. She was unsure whether or not it would work but after letting out her pent up emotions, she was relieved. More than anything, she was more convinced that Xichen was not cheating on her—thanks to the reasons that the women had pointed out that made it unlikely.

"You don't need to thank us, Shishi." Lanni hugged her.

"You need a makeover." Luna remembered in a flash.

"A what?" Xiaoshi asked.

Before she knew it, she had been dragged for a wax and her hair was in perfect waves that made her look bold and seductive. Her nails had been done too and they had shopped for new clothes—none of which was chosen by her. It was only after seeing the reflection of her new look that she realized that for a while, she had started neglecting her looks.

"Good luck. Tell us how it goes." Cheng Yu winked.

"I'll help you take care of Mumu tomorrow." Lanni offered, which was needed since the adults would be too busy for her.

"Thank you." Xiaoshi hugged her, then they went to pick the kids from the play zone of the women's clothes store.

...

All they saw was Linhou placing Yue's hand in his mouth.

"Linhou, that's not food. Let go of Yue's hand." Luna facepalmed at her foodie son, as the others roared in laughter.

In the next second, Xiaomu hit Yue on the head.

"Mumu!" Luna pulled her daughter away and reprimanded her, while Linhou tried to hit Xiaomu. Yue screamed on top of her lungs.

"Okay this is a mess." Xiaoshi picked her daughter up to soothe her.

"Excuse me, may I know what happened here?" Cheng Yu asked the attendant.

"Kids fight all the time. It is nothing fatal." The woman answered.

"Mumu, what happened? Could you tell mummy?" Luna asked gently, trying to understand why the usually calm Xiaomu would hit another kid.

"Mommy..." She cried.

"Mmh?"

"Brother." He pointed at Linhou while drawling the syllables that were still hard to pronounce.

Luna looked at Linhou in Lanni's arms. "What did your brother do?"

"Brother, mine." Xiaomu cried.

Luna didn't know whether to laugh or cry when she finally got it.

Cheng Yu was at it again. "How cute. She is jealous that her brother is being taken away."

Luna looked over at Xiaoshi. "Is Yue okay?"

"Yes. It wasn't a forceful hit." Xiaoshi responded, making Luna relieved.

She put her daughter down to reprimand her. "Mumu, I understand that you love your brother but don't hit other kids, okay?"

Xiaomu nodded with teary eyes.

"Mumu hit Yue, so Yue is sad. She will not want to play with you." She tried to explain in the simplest terms before nudging the girl, "Say sorry to Yue."

"Yue, sorry." Xiaomu drawled.

Luna felt relieved and brought Linhou over, to place their tiny hands together. "Look. He is still your brother. Your brother will always be your brother. No one can take him away, okay?"

It wasn't sure whether the girl understood.

"Linhou." She took Linhou's hand, placing it in Xiaomu's. "Mumu's brother."

She then poked Xiaomu and looked at them. "Mumu, Linhou's sister."

They didn't know what the terms "brother" and "sister" meant on their own, but they understood that it meant they could still play together. The two exchanged a clumsy, adorable hug.

Cheng Yu almost cried watching them. "What happened to the rivalry?"

Chapter 527 - Little Devil (1)

That evening, Xiaoshi took a bath according to the plan. She knew that Han Xichen usually arrived at 9pm so she panicked slightly when she realized that it was already 9pm. After feeding and cleaning up Yue, the girl seemed to be part of the plan as she fell asleep. She only changed into the lingerie she had bought after putting the girl to sleep.

The clock in the bedroom ticked away the minutes and she couldn't help checking it a few times. It was half past nine, which was also within the time he usually came. She poured herself a drink to calm her nerves. Why was she feeling this way when it was her husband and not some monster she was waiting for?

At a half past ten, her brows furrowed. Was he stuck in traffic? She knew that she was starting to make excuses for him—like she'd been doing for the past few times that he started being distant. There was no such thing as traffic at 10pm. That would be insane. Those were usually the hours when drivers were tempted to overspeed because the road was a little too clear.

She nodded off on the couch and when she woke up, there was still no sign of him. Fear started to creep in. Could it be that he had finally decided to not come home? It was already midnight! Could something have happened to him?

The thought jolted her. Why was she acting insecure when something could have happened to her husband? She picked up her phone with trembling hands and was about to make a call when she heard the front door open.

In relief, she rushed downstairs. She was about to rush right into his arms when she remembered what the plan was.

"Xichen, you are home." She pursed her red lipsticked lips and planted a chaste kiss on his cheek.

"I'm sorry I'm late." His attention seemed drawn to her lips. She usually wore pink and nude, so this bold and bright shade was a novelty. He moved to pull her into his arms. "The project took longer than expected and I lost track of time."

So he knew to apologize. She stopped herself from glaring at him and helped him take his jacket off, seeing how tired he was. For some reason, she felt guilty for blaming him.

"Is Yue asleep?" He asked.

"Yes. I'll make you something to eat." She made a step towards the kitchen, only to be stopped by his words.

"I had dinner at the hospital cafeteria."

She froze. No, it was not happening.

Her lips were clenched to a thin line and she didn't turn when she asked, "So you don't want anything to eat? Not even coffee to drink?"

"I'm too tired to stay awake." He rubbed his temples when he detected displeasure in her tone when he mentioned having had dinner. "Tea will do."

"Okay. Coming right up." She disappeared into the kitchen right when he was about to compliment her looks.

She was wearing a beige jacket to cover whatever was underneath it but it seemed to drive him crazy already.

She didn't give him the chance to silently admire her, speaking as soon as she brought the tea.

"What have you been busy with lately?"

He sipped the tea. "A pharmaceutical project. I'm taking part in the research that my family started."

"I see. No wonder you have been busy." She blinked, the guilt seeping in again. No wonder he had dark circles, he was probably not getting enough sleep.

But then again, he deserved it. Why was he taking on so many random projects anyway?

Her thoughts were interrupted by him taking her arm to pull her closer. "Come here."

"I'll run you a bath." She slipped away before he had the chance to hug her. He seemed surprised, because she had always loved hugs. They had been cuddling every night, so why was she avoiding it?

He was still confused when he finished his bath.

He left the bathroom only for his eyes to be filled with a tempting sight. The bra barely covered her boobs. Instead, it highlighted their fullness. She was shyly trying to cover up with her hand but that only made her look more seductive, more inviting. His manhood hardened as his eyes trailed down her body. Her small waist looked delicate with the lacy thong that had a tail behind it. If this was what the devil looked like, he was certain that he was ready to go to hell.

He itched to touch her, to taste her delicious skin.

But when he took a step to hold her, she slipped away.

"Shishi..." His manhood throbbed with need.

"Xichen, not tonight. I'm not in the mood." She walked around the room doing nothing in particular and finally climbed into bed. She wanted to glare at him.

'How can you not understand me?' She thought painfully. What happened to the heavenly mind-reading abilities when she needed them? If he understood how lonely and insecure she felt by his distance, she would not have resorted to doing this kind of thing.

And that Cheng Yu! Why did she not tell her that she was supposed to feel so turned on, feeling her husband's lustful gaze on her? She almost couldn't resist the urge to let him touch her.

"Can I at least hold you?" He inched closer. She shrunk away and he was disappointed. "If you are uncomfortable with it..."

"I would like to sleep on my own tonight." She covered herself. She would definitely give in if he hugged her.

"Okay." He was well behaved. She almost believed that he managed to sleep until she heard running water in the bathroom a few times in the night. He sure wasn't going to get enough sleep tonight. Thinking that it might make him sleep in, she didn't think it was a bad thing after all. He needed to spend some real time with their daughter.

She woke up before him and when he finally woke up, she hissed slightly as she rubbed her waist. "You are awake, Xichen. Good morning."

"Are you alright?" He asked worriedly.

She shook her head with a pout. "I think I slept in a poor posture. My waist hurts. Could you give me a massage?"

That was the most tempting thing he had ever had to do. He could only resign to his fate with his manhood fully awakened. He pressed the sides of her waist. "Here?"

"No. At the centre. A little more to the left. Right there."

He frowned when he felt the part she claimed to be in pain. Her muscles were alright. Why would she be in pain? He inspected further by rubbing circles around it and when she didn't flinch even when he applied pressure, he finally figured it out. There was no pain. She was merely making him massage her.

An evil grin formed on his face. She was seducing him! When his hands trailed to her back, she backed away with a start.

"Xichen, no."

He frowned. What was going on with her? Seducing him when she didn't want him to touch her?

Knowing that it would be hard to even breathe with her like this, he nodded. "Then I'll get ready for work."

"I'll run your bath and get your clothes." She said, and did so while flaunting the curves around the room as she moved.

"You are definitely trying to drive me crazy." He groaned when she was close to him and he couldn't even touch her although her boobs were right before him.

"What did I do?" She feigned innocence.

He swallowed hard. "If you are going to ban sex, can you not walk around in lingerie?"

"I'll consider that." She chuckled.

When he was about to leave for work, she called after him, "Xichen."

He looked over at her.

"Can you come home early tonight? We need to talk."

"Okay." He nodded.

He would have returned early anyway, because the thought of her was making it hard for him to concentrate. It wasn't that he didn't usually think of her while at work, but today it was purely her body he was thinking about. The way her waist looked this morning when she bent over to let him massage her. He made zero progress by evening so he simply stopped his work and drove back. That little devil was killing him.

....

Xiaoshi was prepared earlier today, and Lanni had already taken Yue away for the night. When he arrived, she once again pecked him. This time she was wearing a little red dress—just long enough to cover her butt. It made him hard as soon as he saw her.

"Take a nap. I'll make your dinner." She instructed and he could only do as he was told.

"Thank you." He was tired anyway, so he fell asleep soon.

Much later, he woke up to a warm pair of red lips wrapped around his manhood. "Shishi..." He groaned, his mind clearing up.

"F*ck, I thought it was a dream."

She smiled at his predicament and paused what she was doing. "Do you have such dreams often?"

"Will you hate me if I said that I do?" He asked back.

She shook her head and flicked the crown of his manhood with her tongue, once again taking him in her mouth. Her boobs were pressed against his thighs, and the red lingerie she was wearing made him almost lose his mind.

She stopped and looked at him.

"Why did you stop, honey?" He was aching with need.

She gave a sly smile and reached behind her back. "I thought you would need a little more visual."

With one swift move, her boobs bounced slightly after being released from the bra.

"I want to touch them." He reached a hand for her.

This time, she didn't stop him. She inched closer and took his hand to place on them. "You can do that."

He caressed her boobs gently like he was handling a treasure, before he pulled her down to him and kissed her. The kiss was passionate and lustful. He was about to move down to her neck when he felt a tear drop on his face.

"Baby, what the..." He sat up, freaking out.

"Why are you crying?"

She couldn't stop her tears from flooding her face. All the pent up emotions came gushing out. "Xichen, we need to talk."

"Baby, what happened?" He reached to wipe her face, but she pushed his hands away.

"Your negligence happened!" She didn't expect to sound so angry but she couldn't stop herself, glaring at him. "How long are you going to ignore me, ignore us?"

He was taken aback by her sudden outburst. "What? I..."

"How many hours do you spend at home lately?" She glared at him with chest heaving in anger. "You are always busy if you ask me and you could be saving the universe for all I care."

She didn't let him say a word before she angrily slipped out of bed and draped a jacket over herself, pushing him away when he tried to hold her. "I know that you are obliged to save lives but what about your family?"

He shut his eyes as her words sunk in. Before he could say a word, she fled out of the room. "I'm sorry." He said as she ran after her. He didn't realize that he had been hurting her, so much at that. "My love, let's talk, okay?"

She ignored him and ran all the way to the nursery, locking herself in.

"Shishi..." He knocked gently, afraid that being loud would scare Yue, still unaware that the girl was not home.

"Shishi, let's talk, okay?" He leaned against the door. "Please, open the door."

"Leave me alone." She yelled at him, breaking down.

She crouched on the floor with her back pressed against the door. She didn't want to see him. If he loved her, how could he bear to spend so many hours away from her? How could he be too busy for her? No matter how busy he was, a phone call or a simple text message could do too! He even worked the freaking weekends!

And what about their daughter? Even if he believed that she would understand, surely he didn't expect Yue to grow up without fatherly affection, did he?

The fact that he needed to be yelled at to realize it was what infuriated her the most.

Chapter 529 - Little Devil (3)

Xiaoshi did not return to the master bedroom even after a couple of hours. Han Xichen went to check on dinner and found that she had already cooked. Warming the food up, he severed some of it to a plate and was about to take it up for her when she entered the kitchen. He placed the plate on the kitchen counter with a sigh of relief. "Baby,"

Under his nervous gaze, she walked over to him and wrapped her arms around him. He let out the sigh he had been holding as he pulled her to his chest. He had been holding her every night so it was barely noticeable before but now that he held her waist, he realized that she had lost weight.

He so badly wanted to slap himself. How could he make her so worried? She must have been under so much stress.

He was about to speak when she spoke first, pulling out of his arms. "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to explode on you like that."

He held her hand and brought it to his mouth to kiss it. "I'm glad you did. You let it off your chest."

When he left the door where he had been knocking incessantly, fear had drowned her. She had been afraid that she went too far, that he would decide to give up on them. Seeing him in the kitchen was such a relief, and she was even more relieved when he held her.

"I'm sorry, my love."

He leaned in to kiss her but she turned away, slapping him instead. He was not shocked. He took her hand, hitting it against his face. "I definitely deserve that and much more."

She frowned at him. Did he really think he could charm his way out of it?

"Honey, I've been thinking about it." He placed her food on the kitchen island and pulled out a chair for her, sitting opposite her once she sat down.

"The reason I was so busy was not because I don't care about you and our baby. It's the contrary." He looked into her eyes that looked at him in surprise, pondering his words.

"I care about you. I love you so much. How could I stop loving you?"

She found it ridiculous. "You have been detached because you love us?"

"I've not been detached. I think about you every time I'm away from home and it keeps me going." He made it sound like she was his motivation for something, which confused her. What the heck?

He placed his hand on hers that was on the kitchen island. "Honey, when we had Yue, I vowed to be the best father and not let her ever lack anything she needs. I wanted my wife to be able to live the kind of life she wants too."

She finally understood him, and her eyes widened. "Wait. So you took on more projects because..."

"Yes, I wanted to earn more money." He completed the statement, confirming her speculation.

He looked down and wanted to punch himself in the gut. "I'm sorry. I got carried away and forgot that the one thing my wife and daughter need the most is me. I love you but I didn't do enough to show it."

Tears clouded her vision. So all this fuss was because he wanted to earn more money? "Fool." The tears dropped out of her eyes before she could stop them.

He reached to wipe them off her face, and she held her hand that was against her cheek. "I'm sorry, I have been unreasonable. I even started to think... that you had met someone else."

"Who is the fool now, huh? Why would I ever fall for someone else when I have two of the most beautiful girls in the world right in my house? And I love them both so much." He wiped the remnants of her tears. "And no. You you haven't been unreasonable. I'm glad you knocked me out of it." Now that he thought about it, he realized just how his actions seemed. Anyone would think that he was losing interest in her, and the fact that they spent the night together every night made him forget that holding her was not the only way to express it.

They ate in silence, and when they were done, he finally had the courage to cautiously talk about her knock-out appearance. "You are so gorgeous, my love."

"Thanks." She blushed, thinking that she had almost ruined the whole evening with her tears. On the contrary, she felt closer to him now that she understood his reason.

"Where is Yue anyway?" He found it odd that she was still sleeping. His daughter could never sleep for that long without seeking attention by whining.

"Lanni took her away so we could have some time alone." She dared not look at him.

He felt his throat dry from her words. It seemed like his little wife had been preparing for this. He held her waist. "I owe her one. Because I want you so badly right now."

"So insatiable." She playfully jabbed him.

"Says the woman who wore lingerie and woke her husband in an 'extra-special' way." He retorted. His lips crashed against hers in the next second. His hands were under her coat before she could process it. He kissed and sucked on her skin, pressing her against the wall as his hands hungrily explored her body. His manhood pressed against her and made her crave for him just as much as he wanted her.

Their clothes were down in a mess in what felt like five seconds and they were out of breath as their hot, naked bodies rubbed against each other.

"Xichen," She moaned against his shoulder as he parted her knees and positioned himself between her thighs. "Take me hard and rough."

That was his cue to slam himself hard into her, earning an unrestrained moan as her nails dug into his back.

Chapter 530 - Awful Timing

Much later, the couple lay in bed with their arms wrapped around each other, still out of breath.

Xiaoshi pushed him onto his back and crawled onto him, drawing circles on his firm chest. She couldn't believe how long it had been since she did this. She smiled down at him.

"Xichen, I want you to know that it doesn't matter how rich or poor we are. Yue and I will still be grateful. Besides, you have already been doing enough before you went all crazy." She was not exaggerating. He must have felt unsure of his capability with the arrival of a new member in the family but in real sense, there wasn't anything to complain about when it came to him taking care of the family.

"Besides, I have a job too." She added after a short pause.

He spoke for the first time. "I can't use your money."

He sounded so natural saying it that she wanted to roll her eyes at him. "Screw those stereotypes. What if I had a job but you didn't? Would I let you starve just because of some outdated beliefs about the husband being the one responsible for the family's financial needs?"

Knowing that he would never be able to talk her out of it, he smiled. She was right, but he was not going to let her worry about him.

"Don't just smile." She pinched his cheek furiously. "You are not allowed to work yourself to death for the extra income. Do you understand?"

"Yes, my wife." He hugged her.

After playing with Yue all night, Lanni felt bummed when Han Xichen and Xiaoshi came to pick her up in the morning.

"Aw, you should have let me stay with her a little longer. Spend some time with your husband." She whispered to Xiaoshi. Seeing their lovey dovey gazes for each other, the hickeys that Xiaoshi had hidden with the collar of her dress and the fact that they were here together, Lanni figured that Cheng Yu's method had worked. She was happy for them, but she hoped to spend more time with the adorable girl.

Xiaoshi hated to drop the bummer. "It wasn't going to be long before she started throwing a tantrum and looking for me." She chuckled. It was why she didn't work long hours.

Lanni gave the girl to them, who immediately jumped onto Han Xichen like a clingy kitten. The heartwarming scene didn't stop her from shooting a warning glare at Han Xichen.

"I know. I will not be so stupid anymore." He smiled and muttered thanks.

"What was that? Are you bullying my cousin?" Xiehan narrowed his gaze when he caught Han Xichen's words.

Xiaoshi chuckled at her husband's predicament. "He wouldn't dare. We talked about whatever it was."

Since it was settled, Xiehan did not pry further. He invited them for breakfast after which the family of three left.

As he and Lanni loaded the dishwasher, Xiehan asked, "When will you get back to work?"

"In a few days, why?" She threw a question back at him.

"Would you like to accompany me on my business trip?" He was practically pleading. "I will be gone for a week, I will miss you too much."

She thought about it. "One week is a lot of time. I would like to go, but I will miss work if I follow you for a week." She felt bummed. She didn't want to be late for work after being given a break even though it was not around the time of the wedding.

"You can come back earlier." He pulled her into his arms to talk her into it. "We can go for three days and after that, I will send you back in time for work." That way, they would only miss each other for four days.

"Let me think about it." She deliberately made him nervous.

"Please, honey." He coaxed with his arms wrapped tightly around her.

"Is there any way to say no to you?" She chuckled at his dramatics. Had her husband always been this clingy?

"No there isn't." He laughed along and kissed her neck, ready to tell her that she didn't have to follow him if she thought it would be troublesome. After all, it was just a week and he had survived being away from her for two years with only a few minutes of communication every week. Seven days with daily communication was nothing in comparison. Well, that was him telling himself a blatant lie. He knew that a week would feel like forever whether or not he had been away for two years.

Those two years had bordered on his limit and all he wanted now was to see her every day. This was torture.

The doorbell buzzed.

"Someone's at the door." She pulled out of his arms and slid the straps of her dress back onto her shoulder, which had been slid down by his swift hands.

"Who has such insane timing?" He groaned, making her chuckle.

"Probably one of your friends, congratulating you once again.

When she opened the door, the incomer was someone she would never expect.

"Oh... uh..." She felt awkward seeing Wen Lin at the door. What was she doing here?

"Hey, Lanni." She greeted cordially as though they were best friends.

The day before, in the old Ji Mansion.

After dinner, Ji Huifen looked at his wife who was sipping on a cup of flowered tea. "We cannot put it off any longer."

She placed the cup on the table. "Put what off?"

"You know what I'm talking about." Ji Huifen hated that she was feigning innocence. "Your attitude towards Lanni. You know what you did."

She shrugged and sipped on her tea, with her legs crossed as though she didn't know what was wrong with that. "I merely told her the truth, Huifen. I don't like the idea of my grandson being named after another family."