

Chapter 551 - Emptiness

Flynn was laid to rest a few days later. There were only a handful of family members present and his friends weren't many either.

Lanni and Luna were still in disbelief when they gave their final respects. Who would have thought that the carefree man that liked to make fun of everything would perish so easily? It was unbelievable but they had no choice but to accept it.

Veruschka spent the few days that followed in B City. Although they had only met recently, she hit it off with Luna and one would think they had known each other for ages. They had a lot in common and would chat for hours on end.

Since Xingyu and Luna's villa was spacious enough, they let her temporarily live with them instead of staying at the hotel on her own. She had no family to get back to in Germany and was in no rush to get back, so she waited until the day that Flynn's will would be read.

The executor was invited to Li Yuming's villa where everyone had agreed to gather.

Veruschka sat next to Luna and looked tense.

Luna patted her back. "It will be alright."

The latter nodded but didn't stop the tears from gathering in her eyes. This was the final evidence that her man was dead. The tiny hope she held that he would be back—despite watching him being lowered into the ground—had snapped.

She burst into tears as soon as she heard the representative read the declaration of Flynn's identity on his will.

Xingyu grabbed Luna's hand before she could follow her and whispered in her ear, "let her calm down on her own."

Luna nodded reluctantly.

It turned out that Flynn had more estates than they could ever imagine. He had left all his properties in Germany for Veruschka and their unborn baby, while the estate he had gathered in B City was distributed among Lanni, Luna and Li Yuming.

He had also left behind a letter for Li Yuming, stating that he had never held a grudge against her and that he regretted not reaching out to bury the hatchet that shouldn't have existed in the first place.

Li Yuming had tears in her eyes when the letter was read out.

"I should have been the one to reach out. He was just a child with nothing to be blamed about." She sniffled. "We were both victims and shouldn't have hated each other and played the blame game."

"It's not your fault either, mom." Lanni patted her shoulder.

Li Yuming hugged her to comfort herself and went out to speak to Veruschka. She found her staring at the fountain as though the water made her feel calmer.

"Hey," She whispered.

Veruschka turned and offered a smile when she saw that it was Luna's mother. "Hi. I'm sorry I couldn't keep my emotions in control."

"You can't be blamed for that." Li Yuming consoled her and closed in on her. "I know we have only known each other for a short while but... if you ever need anything, I'll be here to help."

Veruschka smiled gently. "I don't want to impose on you. It's already enough that Lanni and Luna have been so helpful to me."

"You wouldn't be imposing on us." Li Yuming reassured her. "It's not safe to be on your own while pregnant. If you feel like moving to B City, we will be there for you."

"How did you know I wanted to move to B City?" She stifled a laugh in embarrassment.

"It's nothing to be shy about." Li Yuming smiled. "But if you want to move, you should do so soon while you are still allowed to travel around."

"I'll take note of that." Veruschka offered her a hug and rubbed her stomach.

Seeing her actions, Li Yuming vowed to help her through her pregnancy. It was the least she could do for Flynn.

"I'll go back to Germany in two days." She stated.

"I'll help you prepare for your departure if you don't mind." She promised, and Veruschka nodded.

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Lanni got back to work the next day. It was hard to focus at first but she had a lot of work to do, so she had no choice but to try her best.

Lin Jian kept checking on her every hour or two. He would bring random snacks and drinks to help her feel better, or a blanket and a pillow which made her wonder whether she was supposed to work or sleep in her office the entire time.

"Sister-in-law, are you alright?" He asked when he poked his head into her office for the umpteenth time in the afternoon. He had dropped the friend-in-law honorific and switched to sister-in-law.

She massaged her forehead in frustration.

"Does your head hurt?" He asked worriedly and prepared to bring her painkillers or call a doctor.

Lanni shot a glare at him. "I'm perfectly fine, okay? Don't make it sound like I'm a toddler in your care."

Lin Jian scratched his head. "If I don't check on you often enough, Xiehan will kill me for not taking good care of his wife. Who am I to disobey?" He said in his defense.

"It's enough to check on me once. Don't do it every few minutes like I'm on the verge of death!" She glared at him. How was she supposed to work with him buzzing around her like an annoying fly?

The mention of death dimmed her mood yet again. It had taken her what felt like forever to take in the fact that her brother was no more. She had only known him for a few years, known that they were siblings two years ago and it had taken her too long to accept it. When she finally did, he was no more. She felt empty.

"Are you alright?" Lin Jian asked, which resulted in her grabbing the pillow he had brought her to make her rest better and throwing it in his face. He laughed and caught it before it fell. "I'll take that as a yes."

She smiled bitterly and tears spilled out of her eyes.

Lin Jian panicked. "Lanni, are you feeling unwell? You can take the rest of the day off."

She shook her head and wiped her tears away, biting her lip tightly to stop another bout. "I'll be alright."

She had been saying the same thing every time she thought about her past with Flynn—when she still thought he bullied her because he hated her—and couldn't stop herself from crying.

Lin Jian closed in and sat on the chair opposite her desk. "It's okay to cry. Only by recognizing your feelings will you be able to move on. And you are not in any rush to move on. Sometimes it might take a few days, sometimes even years. No one gets to tell you when you should or if it's too soon."

Lanni listened to his words and felt as though she was reading something from one of those articles written by shrinks. Why did shrinks even exist?

Realizing that she was starting to be bitter about everything in life, she grabbed a file from her desk and showed it to Lin Jian.

"Since you are here, we can discuss work-related matters." She suggested.

"You don't have to force yourself to work." He advised.

"Then we can talk about your personal life. Why did you switch to calling me sister-in-law?" She asked. She knew that she was overthinking everything but at the moment, she could cling to anything as long as it helped her forget about the thing she didn't want to think about anymore.

He studied her like she was out of her mind. "Must I have a reason before I can call you that? Ruby and I are in a relationship and her brother is your husband." He explained.

"I see." She slumped into the backrest of her chair.

"Do you think you can have a word with Han Xichen?" He gently suggested. She had lost a lot of weight in just a few days and had dark circles around her eyes from lack of sleep.

She frowned at his words. "Do you think we are close enough for you to tell me that I need to see a shrink?"

He shrugged. "That makes sense, we aren't. Actually, it was just a suggestion.. You can ignore it if you don't want to."

Chapter 552 - Moving On(1)

"You are right. I do need a shrink even though I don't want to admit it." She laughed out of the blue.

He stared at her worriedly. Was it time for him to call Han Xichen? Or could it be that he was in fact late and should have done it ages ago? He took out his phone.

She burst into tears and he was relieved. If she was willing to let it out, she would be alright. Even so, he sent Xiehan a text message to report her situation like a tattletale, just to be certain that she would not be left alone to fall into depression. He knew that was a stretch but he couldn't help being worried about it.

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When she finally left work, she felt as though her head was on the verge of exploding. She had worked like a robot with a mission and wasn't certain that the articles she had approved were the best. If this continued, she would cause Lin Media Group losses so she gave Han Xichen a call as soon as she got out of the Lin Media Group building.

He had already gone home so he asked her over, since he had to leave the country for a seminar the following day. Since she wouldn't be long, she gave Xiehan a call to tell him that she would be slightly late.

When she arrived at Han Xichen's house, she was greeted by Little Yue who tried to run out on her short legs as soon as she got the chance.

"I caught you!" Xiaoshi grabbed her and lifted her up, laughing when the little girl looked bummed. She gave Lanni a brief hug. "Hi Lanni. You don't look well."

Lanni smiled when the girl in Xiaoshi's arms struggled to say "Aunt Lanni". She took her from Xiaoshi's arms and kissed her cheek, playing with her as she responded to Xiaoshi's words. "I feel much better after seeing this little cutie."

She blew air onto the girl's little tummy and the girl burst into a giggle. When Lanni stopped, she stretched her small arms to once again present her tummy for her to blow.

Xiaoshi glanced at them and laughed. "She plays too much."

"It's perfect. Can you imagine how odd it would be for your toddler to be inactive and not play at all?"

Xiaoshi stepped aside to welcome Lanni as she shook her head. "I mean, she gives me more of a headache than her dad does most of the time but I'll choose her any day. If my baby were inactive, I'd think she was sick."

The women laughed loudly when Yue buried her head into her own tummy to blow it and frowned when it didn't tickle as much as it did when Lanni did it.

"Who did you just say gives you a headache?" Teased Han Xichen who was sitting in the living area and reading a thick book. Yue got down from Lanni's arms and bounced away to jump onto her father, nearly knocking the book out of his hands. As though he had always expected her to make such moves, he pulled the book out of her way and held her to support her.

Xiaoshi laughed and looked at Lanni beside her. "The two headaches are each other's sweetheart."

After playing with the little girl who was more active and adventurous than Xiaomu, Lanni and Han Xichen talked in the living room as Xiaoshi took Yue away to play in her toy room.

"How have you been feeling lately?" He asked as he sipped his cup of the tea that Xiaoshi had brought them. Knowing what had happened to her brother, he didn't need to ask to know why she had sought him.

She looked into her cup. "I don't know. I feel sad sometimes. Sometimes I want to scream my lungs out and at other times I'm happier than I should be. I mean, I know it isn't right to be happy so soon..."

"Hold." He made a gesture for her to stop talking. "Who told you that you shouldn't be happy?"

She thought about it. "I don't know. Logic?"

He nodded and reached for the remote control to turn on the television, then switched to a kids channel. "What are they doing?"

Lanni glanced at the little bundles of joy on the screen then at him. What was he getting at? "They're... dancing?"

He switched to a different channel, where as if by coincidence, there was an alcoholic drink commercial that featured people dancing in a bar. "What about them?"

"Uh... dancing?"

When he switched to a fashion channel she was finally confused. Still, he asked. "What about them?"

"Walking down the runway." She blinked in confusion. Did he think she was a child?

He turned off the television and placed down the remote control. "All I did was turn on the television and you saw that everyone is minding their business. Life still goes on, Lanni. You can't mop forever."

"It's different for them. He is my brother." She sighed.

"And that means you have to remain sad for the rest of your life? Do you think he would want you to feel that way?" He asked.

She shook her head sadly. "I can't help myself."

"Why don't you create a happy occasion and celebrate? You can push your birthday forward for a few months, for instance, or do something you have always wanted to do. If you kept postponing anything, this is the right time." He would have suggested that she hit the nightclub but that might just make her misunderstand and think that drowning in alcohol might make her problems easier to face. The last thing he wanted was to be the reason for her alcohol abuse.

She thought about it. Was there anything she had been postponing? For a while, she couldn't come up with anything.

As if reading her mind, he smiled. "Don't think about it right now. Go home and sleep on it. When you are certain of what you want to do, you can start making plans about it. No one's rushing you."

She nodded.. Actually, there was something she had wanted to do in the past and now that she thought about it, there was a way to make it even better.

Chapter 553 - Moving On (2)

Xiaoshi saw Lanni off when she was done discussing with Han Xichen. She was holding Yue in her arms and after hugging Lanni and kissing her cheek, she held up the little girl's hand to help her wave goodbye

to Lanni. "Thanks for dropping by. But why did you insist on not staying for dinner? I was preparing to bring out my best culinary skills." She asked. She had overheard Han Xichen ask her to stay for dinner, but her response was that she had to leave.

Lanni was glad that they were willing to invite her so cordially and would have stayed if she could. "I promised Xiehan to make him his favorite meal. He will be unhappy if I don't." She explained, and they giggled at how Xiehan would probably complain like a little boy if she didn't make his dinner when he was expecting it.

Lanni caught sight of Yue trying to blow her a kiss at the side. She couldn't do it right so all she did was nibble at her hand and then blow out a puff of air. Her heart melted. "Do you want me to take her away for the night?" She asked, majorly because she could not resist the thought of a night with the jovial Yue.

Xiaoshi thought about it and had to drop the bummer. "Xichen has to leave the city tomorrow so we decided to have a family sleepover tonight. Yue will sleep with us so she does not think that her daddy doesn't love her anymore just because he is leaving."

"That's so adorable." She had to admit, even though she would no longer be able to take the little girl with her. She had also heard about Han Xichen's need to leave so she thought it would be crazy to insist on taking their daughter away.

Seeing her disappointment, Xiaoshi leaned over and lowered her voice, covering her daughter's ears even though she was too young to understand whatever they were talking about. "I'll definitely let you take her away in two days. I'll need it." She winked.

"What will happen in two days?" Lanni was confused.

They had discussed such matters a gazillion times and Lanni would take their daughter away whenever she needed some time alone with Han Xichen, but it was still embarrassing to say it out aloud. She cleared her throat. "Xichen will come back."

Lanni exaggeratedly mouthed an "Oh" to tease her, earning a smack. She laughed out aloud. "Leave it to me to get her off your hands."

"Then I'll have to thank you. Wait a second." Xiaoshi let her hold Yue and returned to the apartment, coming back with a plastic bag which she stuffed into Lanni's arms.

"What are these?" Lanni peeked into the bag and marvelled at the assortment of cookies.

"I made these for Yue but her dad doesn't allow her to eat many of them. Then I remembered that you love them so I didn't dispose of them." She explained honestly.

"That was so thoughtful. Thank you." Lanni hugged her. "I'll be on my way then."

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Xiehan arrived just as Lanni finished cooking and had covered the pot of stew. He snuck up behind his wife who was humming a tune that sounded familiar but whose source he couldn't quite remember.

He spanked her backside with a grin.

She turned around and the expression on her face wasn't quite the reaction he had expected. He knew that she liked being spanked and even enjoyed it, but when she laughed out aloud, he found it strange.

"Honey, what are you cooking?" He pretended that everything was alright and wrapped his arms around her waist from behind. He knew that she hated being treated like anything different was happening and the last thing he wanted was to trigger her.

"Your favorite. I don't quite remember what that was because when did you ever have a favorite?" She glared at him for not specifying what to eat.

He laughed into her neck. "How can you not know what your husband wants to eat the most, honey?"

"I wouldn't know if he does not tell me. Now would I?" She reprimanded him and felt something against her butt. "Wait. Is that your..." She was surprised. "We are talking about food. How can you get hard on the thought of food?" She asked, as if in disbelief that such a thing could even happen.

"You can if what you want to eat is not the food, but your wife who is cooking it." He revealed, making her finally comprehend what his favorite meal was supposed to be.

"What about your food preference?" She asked.

"Anything you cook, with you as the dessert." He stated.

Her cheeks flushed at his shamelessness. "You pervert." She remarked.

He slowly let out a secret sigh of relief. His wife was finally back.

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For the next two days, Lanni went to Lin Media Group and worked her brains out, making Lin Jian worried that she would be mentally drained. None of his warnings made her slow down. The more peculiar thing was that as soon as it was time to leave, she literally made a dash for the parking lot and drove off.

It would have made sense if Xiehan had been leaving work early or if she was rushing to pick him up but neither was the case.

On the second day, even Xiehan was too curious to stop himself from taking a peek at her. He searched all over the house and finally found her in one of the guest rooms. He saw that the door was slightly opened so he knocked gently. "Can I come in, my love?"

"Of course." She beamed as he pushed the door open.

He was awed. She had an easel in front of her, and a color pallet before her. She was painting in slow, gentle strokes with a smile on her face, proving just how happy she was to do what she was doing.

On the wall before her was a large painting of him and her, riding bicycles. He was wearing jeans of the same color as her shorts, but he had no shirt on since his checkered shirt was tied around her waist that had been exposed by her tank top. She had her hair in a braid that rested on one shoulder and her smile was bright as she looked up at him. He was looking down at her dotingly and they looked like they were about to kiss.

He certainly would never be able to see how he looked at her but when he saw his gaze in the painting, he was sure that was it. He was looking at her like she was the only treasure in the world. It was definitely accurate because that was how he felt. She was gazing up at him like he had the power to turn on the sun.

"Do you like it?" She prompted beside him, reminding him that he was living in the real world. He had been lost in the painting.

"It's the most beautiful thing I have ever seen." He stated honestly. Though he was curious. "Why did you decide to pick up the brush again?"

"I realized that life doesn't have to stop just because one person's life stopped. And if the real world is too painful to live in, we can live in the imaginary world a little." She smiled.

His heart broke. If only there was a way to take away her pain.

He looked down and realized that the painting she was currently working on included Flynn. It was of her, Luna, the twins and Flynn.

He gazed at it in awe at her talent, then loving every character. But he noticed something odd with her image and compared it with the one on the wall.

He frowned. "Do you paint from your imagination and memory?"

She nodded. "I do, usually, but not on these recent ones. I wanted every detail recorded so I used pictures instead."

He was even more confused. "Then why is there a slight bump on your tummy, on both paintings?"

Chapter 554 - Pregnant (?) (1)

She instinctively looked at both of the paintings for confirmation and the realization baffled her. It wasn't that she had not noticed herself gaining the slight weight around her tummy area but she had thought it was because she had temporarily dropped her workout routine.

"I did gain some weight..." The words felt wrong when she thought about it. Was there something else to it?

He was looking at her meaningfully. Her phone buzzed before he could state what was on her mind. She signalled for him to wait a minute and answered. The call was from Xiaoshi.

"Shishi!" She answered it jovially.

"Hey Lanni." Xiaoshi sounded embarrassed of whatever she was about to say.

Her tone reminded her. "How is Yue? I'll pick her up in about two hours."

"I could drop her off on my way to the airport. That's what I was going to say." She suggested.

It was a good idea so Lanni agreed. "See you soon, then."

When the call ended, she took one glance at her husband and it reminded her what they were about to discuss before the call happened.

"That.... Uh..." She rubbed her tummy and her eyes squinted. She didn't remember when she last had her period and it was regular most of the time. She hadn't even realized how late it had been. Her eyes widened and they met his.

He belatedly tried to hide his excitement.

She blinked and looked down at her belly for confirmation. "Honey, I think I might be pregnant."

"We should confirm it in hospital or with a test before jumping into conclusions." He cleared his throat and acted calm, but he had barely completed his statement when he broke into an uncontrollable dance.

"Woohoo!" He yelled and jumped, punching the air with his fists.

She burst into laughter at his excited theatrics. At least she was not the only one who was a little too excited about the unconfirmed news. Xiehan looked like he was about to whip out a pink notebook to write down girl names and a blue one for boy names.

"I'll order a test kit online." She grabbed her phone, but he beat her to it.

He had grabbed his car keys before she could process it and the next thing she knew, he was dashing out the door. She laughed and let him. Who could blame a man for being overjoyed at the possibility of a little one growing inside his wife's belly?

The only worry was that he might be too excited to follow traffic rules. The best outcome was getting tickets.

Luckily, there was a pharmacy nearby so he was back in just a few minutes. He had also dropped by the convenience store so although he had gone to buy a pregnancy test kit, his arms were full of different

colored bags, all containing fruits, vegetables and snacks. When she checked, she almost laughed at the assortment. He had gathered at least one of the foods that were said to be good for pregnant women.

He was so adorable.

"Thank you so much, hubby." She kissed his cheek only to burst his bubble. "But what if you brought all of these and it turned out that I merely gained weight? What if I'm not pregnant?"

His face fell. "Can you not jinx it?" He joked, then turned serious when he cupped her face. "Honey, we are both excited about this and we know the news we are hoping for. But I need you to know that if it's not the case, although something will change, it will not be my feelings for you. Nothing will ever make me love you less. I can only love you more."

"You are so sweet." She hugged him emotionally, reassured because she knew that he meant it.

He hugged her for longer than usual and let go reluctantly, taking out the box containing the test kit. Seeing the nervousness on her face, he hugged her again to reassure her.

"You are not under any rush or pressure to take it. You can have the test when you are ready and if you are too uncomfortable to do so, you can leave it as well." He left the option to her.

"You are spoiling me too much." She purred.

His response was to smile and look at her as if trying to read what her choice would be.

After an intense mental debate, she decided to take the test. It was easy to ignore it but that would only make her assume that there was a baby growing inside her and if it ever turned out that there was none, her heart would break yet again. She gripped the test kit in her hands and took a deep breath.

"I'm going to do this."

"Okay. I'll be here if you need me." He braced himself and rubbed his palms together as if that was going to generate some confidence. He had never felt so nervous in his life. Not when he participated in the contest whose winning would make his parents let him make his own decision about his career, not

when he waited for the results to be announced. Not even when he proposed to her and waited for her response that was either the most important word or the death sentence.

He waited outside the bathroom door and it was barely a few seconds when he called her. "Honey, are you alright? Do you need anything?"

"Yes, I need you to shut your mouth and stop making me anxious." She called back.

He chuckled and stepped away, only to return after barely a minute. "Honey?"

Lanni laughed at his antics. He was impatient. She was just as impatient so she knew how it felt, but she needed him to calm down so she would calm down too—no matter how odd it sounded.

"My love, could you run me a bath in the guest bathroom, please? I need to take a bath after all this." She gave him a task so he would leave.

But before he did, the doorbell rang.

She breathed a sigh of relief and exited the bathroom just as he went to open the door. Shishi was here. She just had five minutes left before she could find out whether she was becoming a mother or preparing to start trying again, but it felt like the difference between the two was like life and death. It probably was. She couldn't bear the meaning of one strip.

She skipped past Xiehan, who tried to grab her and slow her down.

"Be careful." He called in a hoarse voice and surprisingly, he felt just as relieved by Xiaoshi's arrival as Lanni did.

As soon as the door opened, the little girl was the first to jump onto Xiehan. "Uncle!" She called adorably.

"Hello princess." He held her up above his head for a while, making the girl giggle. Then he brought her back for a hug and adjusted her hair clip that was sliding down her forehead. He then proceeded to kiss her cheeks and only gave her to Lanni after Yue reciprocated the gesture.

"You look so cute." Lanni complimented her outfit. She was wearing a purple princess dress and a matching hair clip that had a little star near her ear.

She kissed Lanni's cheek in response, and the latter melted.

It was odd but she felt closer to Yue today. Maybe it was because it had been more than a day since they last saw, or because she had finally pinned the pieces of her life back in place? She had no idea but she hugged Yue tightly.

"I guess I should take off? I'm sorry but I can't stay for too long." She apologized, her face slightly flushing as she explained that Xichen would arrive soon.

"Go ahead. Yue is in good hands." Lanni urged.

"I never doubted that." Xiaoshi gave the overnight bag she had carried for Yue to Lanni, and waved at her daughter. Alas, the latter had already run off to play with her uncle and was too busy to see her mother. Xiaoshi smiled dotingly and left.

It was only after Xiaoshi left and she settled down that she remembered her test kit. Her eyes bulged and she made a beeline for the bathroom.

Xiehan knew she was finally ready to check. He had tried not to push her but now that she had remembered it on her own, he couldn't help going after her.

But when she left the bathroom in tears, he shut his eyes.

Chapter 555 - Pregnant(?) (2)

He stood still for a moment, trying to comprehend what her tears meant. Was she so happy that she was in tears, or was she disappointed? When she broke into a sob, he finally understood.

"Oh, honey." He cupped her face and kissed her, then held her in a tight hug.

She cried against his shoulder, her sobs echoing through the room. All he did was pat her back until she had gathered herself. Then he carried her back to their room and sat her on the bed.

"I'll make sure Yue is alright. I'll be right back." He whispered over her lips. She nodded, and he kissed her before leaving the room.

Yue was still playing with the toys he had set up for her but he carried her off the floor.

"Uncle?" She whined in protest, not comprehending why he was taking her away from her game which had just gotten interesting. She would be distracted for a long time but there was no such thing as certainty with leaving a toddler on her own, so he relocated her play station to the guest room opposite the master bedroom.

He was about to put her down when the girl turned her small body and hugged him, before kissing his cheek. Her eyes dropped when he didn't react.

He forced a smile and belatedly patted her head, but she probably knew that he was not truly happy.

He didn't know how he felt. Disappointed? If he was, it was with the outcome. Not with Lanni. He knew how awful she felt because he felt it too, and he hated that she was sad because of the false hope he had created in her heart.

He had not intended to break her heart but now that he thought about it, the way he had questioned her recent paintings of herself was the beginning of the whole fiasco. If only he had shut his mouth...

He wouldn't get anywhere by dwelling on it so he put Yue down, gave her more toys than she could possibly play with and left both the guest room and master bedroom doors open.

Lanni was still sitting on the bed when he returned.

"Yue is settled." He reported.

She nodded but continued sitting in the same spot, unmoving.

"Honey, we still have so many years ahead of us. So many months. Heck, we were not even trying yet. There are so many chances."

She shook her head and he stopped speaking, to listen to her.

"It's one strip." She raised her forefinger.

It took a moment for her to realize what she meant.

"You still don't believe it."

She shook her head. She had done a lot of that in the last few minutes.

"Nope."

He considered her words as he weighed the options. He saw it in her eyes so he gently asked, "Do you want to have another test, this time at the hospital?"

She nodded then immediately shook her head. "Nope."

The last thing she wanted was to let her hope rekindle and for her to believe that the results could be different even though she had already seen them. If the blood test turned out negative as well, it would break her much harder than it was already.

He didn't push. He let her lie down and pulled a light comforter over her so let her take a nap.

When she woke up, Xiehan had been replaced by Yue on the bed and she was playing with her hair. She smiled and hugged the little girl. "Yue, you are so cute."

She overheard Xiehan's voice as he talked to someone downstairs so she got down from the bed and headed over. It turned out to be Li Yuming.

"Sweetie, you're awake." Li Yuming was happy to finally see her. "How are you?"

Lanni responded by walking over and hugging her. While she was happy to see her mother, her eyes were swollen and Li Yuming was certain that it had nothing to do with being sleepy.

She knew how much Xiehan loved her daughter and that he would never hurt her but her first reaction was to shoot a glare his way.

"I promise, we are not fighting." He half-laughed.

Lanni's eyes widened when she realized what her mother must have thought, and she felt awkward.

"I was hoping for something and didn't get it. I'm just disappointed." She explained, hoping Li Yuming would not think she was making an excuse to save his skin.

Li Yuming looked at her for a while and as if verifying the truth in her statement, she nodded and pulled her to sit beside her on the couch, and the latter adjusted Yue to sit on her lap.

"I know just what you need. A day out with Luna." Li Yuming winked.

"Huh?" She was taken aback by the sudden change of topic, which had taken her a while to process.

"She wanted me to accompany her to the gynecologist's tomorrow but I think you should go instead. You need the distraction, and besides, I have plans."

Lanni's hands trembled and she balled them into fists away from her mother's eyes. Gynecologist. Sure, that was going to be an unlimited distraction.

She wanted to snap at the thought but she couldn't get a single word out.

Gynecologist.

The mere word was enough to set her mind ablaze. She wanted nothing to do with it but before she could get her response out, she thought about how hurt Luna would be if she knew what her reason was.

Just because she had found out she was not becoming a mother didn't mean she should punish her sister by being jealous of the fact that the latter was.

"Okay." She bit the word out before she could stop it and it tasted bitter on her tongue.

The following day.

Going back on her word after promising to accompany Luna was harder and worse than disagreeing right off the bat.

She felt worse by the second but since she had already gotten herself into this, all she could do was go through with it. She took a few deep breaths and picked out clothes to wear. She ended up selecting dark colors and she didn't mind them. They reflected her mood.

She felt slightly better than she did the day before after seeing the results of her test. Slightly, but that was enough.

Xiehan had already left for work so she fed Yue and dropped her off at Xiaoshi's. She still wanted to play with the little girl but her parents had missed her, so she promised to pick her up for another sleepover as soon as they let her.

She then had the chauffeur pick Luna up before the two went for the latter's routine prenatal checkup.

"I'm a little nervous." Luna confessed when they arrived at the gynecological hospital.

"Why would you be?" Lanni raised an eyebrow. She had somehow managed to keep herself together.

"I don't know. My expectation, maybe? I can't help but wonder whether or not I'm having twins again. I don't know what to expect either." Luna confessed.

"You want twins?" Lanni asked as they left the elevator.

"I wouldn't say no." Luna wanted to cover her face that she was certain must be flushed from how flustered she was. She had asked for the gynecologist to refrain from telling her the gender of her baby once it was discovered, but she did want to know whether she was expecting twins.

The checkup was easier than she thought and it ended in a flash.

"Your baby is in good health." The gynecologist, a middle-aged woman, reported.

Luna's eyes widened, her question hanging unasked. Baby. There was one.

"Okay. Thanks, doc." She smiled. She was not sure what she had hoped for but she was not disappointed.

They were about to leave when the gynecologist stopped Lanni in her tracks. The latter raised her eyebrows in quizzical suspicion.

"I'm sorry if this sounds intrusive, but have you scheduled your first prenatal checkup yet?" Asked the gynecologist, shocking the crap out of the duo.

"Huh? Me?" Lanni glanced at Luna then pointed at herself suspiciously.

"Yes." The gynecologist replied, puzzled by their reaction.

Lanni forced a smile, the words having dragged out the sorrow she had felt all night.

"No. I'm..." She tried not to let her voice break. "I'm not pregnant."

"You're not? I thought you..." The gynecologist looked confused, but Lanni cut her off before she could say more.

"No. I'm not."

She must have caught the sadness in Lanni's tone, and realized just how much damage she could have caused by bringing the word up.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to intrude. I thought you came to the same hospital for your checkup and noticed that you didn't seem to have any interest in having yours. That's why I thought..."

"It's okay. It was not." Lanni picked her bag up and wanted to be out of here as soon as she could.

But that was not nearly as she thought, especially when the gynecologist stopped her before she and Luna could step out.

"Wait. Ma'am?" She called.

"Is there anything else?" She turned almost sharply, and she had the urge to snap. Heaven knew she would if this went on for two minutes longer.

"What kind of test did you take?" The gynecologist asked.

"I've just gained weight, okay?" She snapped, a few seconds before she realized that it was not necessary to. Luna didn't look shocked but that was not what it took for her to know that she had been rude.

She shut her eyes for a second, her hand lingering on the door knob.

"If it means anything, I tested it using a kit at home. It was negative."

"Okay." The gynecologist didn't look like she was done. "Though I need you to realize that those are not usually a hundred percent accurate. Especially if you have been drinking a lot of water."

She nodded and took off before she could hear any more of it.

"For goodness sake!" She slumped into the backseat in frustration as soon as they got to the car.

Luna, who had finally realized what was going on, tugged her arm. "I'm sorry."

"Do I have the word pregnant written on my forehead?" Lanni laughed, but it was not funny.

Luna didn't react to her question but she felt horrible. "I didn't realize you..."

"Don't. I don't need you to pity me, and don't treat me differently." She urged. "If you were going to rant to me about how difficult it is to be pregnant, go right ahead and do it. This has nothing to do with anything other than the fact that I let my hopes spiral out of control for no reason."

Luna had uncountable words at the tip of her tongue but they all morphed to one. "Okay."

Lanni's frustration died down when they started discussing the kind of names Luna would select for her baby this time, but that was until the thoughts started to creep back in.

Why the hell would the gynecologist act like she thought she was pregnant?

She spent a hefty amount of time in front of the mirror that night, trying to draw the similarities and differences between the slight curve of her stomach from that of a pregnant woman. She couldn't draw a line, which is why the following day, she went back to the hospital on her own.

Next day.

"I couldn't sit still so I came for a test." She told the same gynecologist who they visited the previous day.

She didn't look surprised to see her. She must have dealt with millions of such cases, she merely got everything ready. "Sure. I'll need to draw blood."

Lanni braced herself and shut her eyes when her blood was drawn. What did she hope for? Of course she knew what the best outcome would be.. She hoped the test kit had been wrong. But was it?

Chapter 557 - Pregnant (?) (4)

She couldn't sit still and had the urge to pace after just a few minutes. The only advantage was that Xiehan would not be there to receive the news with her. If it was bad news, he would not have to bear it.

He had not said it out aloud but she knew he was disappointed just as she was, but while all she blamed was her life for not being fair, he was blaming himself for supposedly disappointing her. It was not even his fault.

She sighed when she heard the gynecologist's footsteps. She sat straight with her back like a rod as she looked in the direction of the door.

"What are the results?" She asked impatiently.

The gynecologist got back to her desk before she handed an envelope over with a smile.

"Congratulations."

"Oh my God! Are you serious?" She stood to grab the envelope before the gynecologist could finish her statement. She tore the envelope open in disbelief and opened the report just as the gynecologist managed to get a word in.

"Yes. You are four weeks pregnant."

She saw the test results and her eyes welled up with tears. She was actually pregnant!

Whatever else the gynecologist said sounded like Greek. All she knew was that she should schedule a prenatal checkup but she was too excited to do that. Bolting out instead. She vaguely heard the gynecologist laugh and tell her that she needed to slow down, so she did.

She grabbed her phone as soon as she got into the car, dialling Xiehan's number. She spoke as soon as the call connected. "Xiehan!"

"Is everything okay?" He sounded concerned.

"Yes! Everything is okay. No. More than okay." She couldn't control her tears anymore. She had to go silent for a few seconds to gather herself, but her voice was broken when she finally spoke. "I have news. I can't wait to tell you."

He was silent for a while, probably trying to guess what could have made her so overwhelmed. He started speaking unsuccessfully two times before he finally had the courage to guess. "Is it about the pregnancy tests?"

"Yes." She held her mouth in disbelief.

"I'm a dad, aren't I?" Came his voice, hopeful yet full of dread.

Her response was to break into laughter through her tears. "I wanted to tell you in person."

"I'm a dad! I'm a dad!" He exclaimed on the other side, and she vaguely overheard his assistant ask if he was alright.

She laughed. She couldn't stop herself from feeling that way either.

By the time she got home, Xiehan had just arrived and he jumped out of his car at the same time as she left the back seat of hers.

"Xiehan?"

"I couldn't help myself." He pulled her into an emotional hug. "I had to confirm that I was not dreaming."

"It's really not a dream. I'm going to be a mother." She twined her arms behind his neck.

"And you will be the best mother. I'll do my best to be the best husband and father as well." He promised, meaning every word of it.

It took a few hours and several glances and detailed checks of the test results for the couple to really believe that they were having a baby. Their first instinct was to want to announce it to the whole world but they decided to do it in person, so they called their friends and family over for dinner.

It was short notice since they scheduled the dinner two days later, but everyone made it. By this time, Lanni had managed to keep her feelings in check and the news would probably be a pleasant surprise to everyone.

Xiehan did all the cooking and although she was kicked out of the kitchen because there were many utensils that could hurt her, she laughed it off and welcomed the guests when they arrived.

None of the guests knew that the other would be present so they found it surprising that it was a family dinner.

"Okay, spill it. What's the occasion?" Cheng Yu couldn't keep still. The suspense was killing her.

They had finished setting up the table, so Xiehan grabbed a bottle of champagne, standing beside her. He glanced at her, silently asking if she would like to break the news.

They ended up speaking in unison. "We're gonna have a baby!"

"I'm so happy for you!" Luna hugged her as did Cheng Yu, Xiaoshi and Ruby.

"Heaven knows how much you deserve it." Cheng Yu remarked, remarking on how badly Lanni had wanted to be a mother. It wasn't like she had been trying for years but she deserved the happiness.

The girls then joined the guys in congratulating Xiehan, at the same time as the guys switched to expressing their happiness to Lanni.

"How far along are you?" Wen Lin asked, drawing attention.

"I mean, you have the choice not to answer if it's too personal. I just wanted to know when I'd actually meet my grandbaby. I can't wait." She clarified, evading a misunderstanding.

"Six weeks." Lanni answered before she sat down, ecstatic about it as well.

"Six weeks." Ji Meiling repeated the words with a certain pitch in her tone. "At least something happy came out of the events from six weeks ago."

The table fell silent.

Realizing what she had just reminded Lanni, she slapped her forehead. "Uh, sorry."

"I have someone to toast using milk with. Come on, join me." Luna teased Lanni, grabbing a glass of warm milk.

"I hate you so much." Lanni laughed but accepted the milk nonetheless.

"Oh, I know. You love me just as much as you hate me." Luna took her own glass as Xiehan poured everyone champagne in the flutes he had prepared.

After the toast, everyone forgot about Ji Meiling's thoughtless remark as they dove into the topic regarding the baby.

"Have you thought of names yet?" Ruby asked.

"I have no idea what I'll name my baby yet. But we still have eight months, don't we?" She giggled.

"Technically, seven. But that's still enough time to come up with the name you think is the most suitable. Don't be in a hurry." Han Xichen advised.

"You are right. If anyone has suggestions, feel free to drop them.." Xiehan announced, intending to let his family and friends be part of their most important journey.

Chapter 558 - Pregnant (5)

Song recommendation: Still falling for you—Ellie Goulding.

Lanni grabbed Xiehan's hand under the table. He understood her gesture and squeezed hers. "On second thought, it's too early to think about names. We will do it at our own pace." He announced, so everyone went silent about the suggestions at the tip of their tongue.

She was not trying to keep them out of it. It just felt uncomfortable and for some reason, it was as if not everyone was happy with the news of her pregnancy. Was she being paranoid? She didn't know yet, but she couldn't afford to take any risk.

Wen Lin was friendlier, offering her more food every few minutes.

"Would you like some salmon? It's delicious." She offered, just a few minutes after letting her know that she had prepared too much chicken for Luna to finish on her own and that she should have some too.

"I'll eat it later. I'm too full." She politely declined it, knowing that Wen Lin was excited about the news that she would be a grandmother.

"Then, would you like some mangoes? I bought fresh ones today. They are delicious." She offered a plate of juicy-looking mango pieces.

Lanni immediately grabbed a piece and devoured it. Wen Lin's response was to give her more mangoes, which she happily ate but stopped when she felt an ice cold glare on her.

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After dinner, Xiehan discussed with Ji Huifen over a game of chess while she stuck by Wen Lin's side to talk about kids. Everyone else had left so it was just the two of them.

"What was Xiehan like as a kid?" She asked. She had already heard a lot of it from her mother but she wanted to know more.

Wen Lin burst into laughter. "If you are hoping for a boy, you should also be prepared. He was the naughtiest prankster on earth!"

She covered her mouth and laughed. "It doesn't sound like him."

"That's because no one ever wanted to talk about it. He was too smart for kids his age and would always make them cry at every turn. He was a little terror." She laughed.

Lanni touched her belly and thought about it. She didn't know whether she wanted a boy or a girl yet. While a boy would probably be the cutest version of Xiehan, she thought it would be awesome to see Xiehan wrapped around the tiny pinky finger of a little princess.

As if reading her mind, Wen Lin patted her hand. "Just wait to find out when the baby is born. I'm sure you will love them regardless."

"Yes." She smiled proudly. It still felt like a dream. She actually had a baby growing inside her. The feeling was so magical it brought her close to tears yet again. She gently patted the slight curve of her stomach which she had barely noticed before.

Xiehan arrived as they talked and laughed about the kind of father he would be—probably an overprotective one who would start throwing teenage boys over the fence in about thirteen years if the baby turned out to be a girl, and teach his son to protect the woman they both cared about if it was a boy.

"Hey, daddy's here." She muttered and patted her belly when she saw Xiehan walking over.

He must have heard her, because he looked happier as he rushed over and touched her belly. He went on one knee and kissed it. "Daddy can't wait to meet you."

"Congratulations, son." Wen Lin patted his back.

"Thank you." He said and then looked spooked out of the blue.

"What happened?" Lanni asked while Wen Lin seemed to understand what he was thinking about, which made her laugh at her son.

"Honey?" She probed.

"It's nothing. Would you like to spend the night here?" He asked. She nodded, so he took her hand carefully.

"I'm not that fragile." She laughed at his overly cautious actions. She had expected it but she still found it hilarious.

"I'll warm some milk in case Lanni has trouble sleeping. You can pick it up in the kitchen later." Wen Lin instructed Xiehan, who nodded and waited for the said milk to be warmed. He then carried it in his left hand and held Lanni with his right hand like she would break if she didn't get help going upstairs. She ignored his antics and entered his room when he cautiously opened the door. He went ahead to change the sheets as if he was afraid that they would be dusty—although they were usually changed even in his absence—and replaced the blankets. Even so, he was not satisfied. He went ahead to check the entire room for dirt and only stopped when he didn't find any. She shook her head at his dramatics. She was about to laugh when she realized that his hands were trembling.

"Honey, what happened?" She asked.

He paced restlessly and decided to come out with it. "I don't know the primary thing about being a father. What if I can't be good enough?"

She stopped him from pacing another lap and hugged him. "I can't believe that's what's got you looking like you are about to lose a billion dollar deal."

"This is more important than a ten billion dollar deal." He retorted nervously.

"I know." She pulled him down for a kiss. "But you are a great husband. How can you be anything but the best father? It will come so naturally that you will not even have to think about it."

"Are you sure? You are not just trying to console me, right?" He was not convinced.

He was cute. She chuckled. "Of course not. Think about it. I have never been a mother either. I know we can pull it off even without experience."

"You are right." He wrapped his arms around her and pulled her closer.

"Let's just do our best, okay?" She patted his back. "If you are still nervous, we can join a parenting class. You will realize that most of the things they think parents should do are so easy that you would have thought of them sometime."

"That will do." He was more relieved. She had meant for them to gradually find a class but he was too impatient to do so. He immediately grabbed his phone and signed up for an online parenting class with one sitting lesson. He asked her which day of the week she would be comfortable to attend the sitting lesson, while giving her the option to decline if she didn't like the idea of it. A smile ghosted her lips. He was thinking about her even while his mind was a bundle of nerves. She had never been worried about the kind of husband or father he would make but seeing him putting in so much effort, she knew that in nine months, he would be the best father around.

When she saw him exit the class booking window and launch youtube, she thought he was going to watch something fun. She burst into laughter when she saw him search for videos about how to change a diaper.

"I can teach you how to change one. It's even easier in real life." She promised.

"You can? Wait. You know how to?" He asked frantically.

"Of course I do. And you do, too." She rolled her eyes at how fast he had forgotten what he knew from taking care of Yue.

"That's a relief." He finally remembered, and his mind was finally settled.

She crawled onto him, kissing his neck. Catching his tensed gaze, she was stumped. "I thought you were up for celebration tonight?"

"I am. But I don't want to hurt our baby." He held her waist, not making a move to touch her.

She was in disbelief. "So you are going to be celibate for eight months because I'm pregnant." It was a question, one that was meant to tease him about his fears.

"It's not going to be easy." He admitted. "But I will try my best."

She nipped his lip. "No one said it was going to hurt the baby if we did it. But if you want to stay celibate for that long, good luck." She winked, then proceeded to strip out of her clothes and lie in bed wearing nothing.

Chapter 559 - Sour

"You are definitely trying to kill me." Xiehan complained.

"If that's how you want to think of it, yes." Lanni rubbed her knee against his thigh, driving him crazy.

"Honey," He groaned. She was doing it on purpose.

She hovered over his body, her hair falling on his chest. "I need you." She whispered.

He couldn't say no to that. He pulled her down on him and kissed her gently. He caressed the bare skin of her waist as he brushed his lips against her neck ever so gently.

Unbuttoning his pajama shirt, she ran her finger down his chest.

"Do you know, I'm the happiest woman on earth right now." She kissed his abs.

"And I'm the happiest man." He hugged her to his chest, feeling content. His manhood throbbed almost painfully in his pants. The little tease was rubbing her body against his in a slow, torturous rhythm. She slid down his body and pulled down his pajama pants, licking her lips when his hard manhood came into view. She lowered her head and took him in her mouth.

He groaned in pleasure as she licked his crown at the same time as she squeezed the base in her hand, with just enough pressure to drive him crazy without hurting him.

"Baby, that feels like heaven." He sighed in a raspy voice.

"I'm pretty sure this feels like heaven. She climbed onto him with her knees on each side of his lower body and positioned her core above his length, then she held it and gently lowered herself onto him.

Her moan was almost in sync with his guttural groan. He held her waist on both sides and supported her as she rode him. Ecstasy filled the air as their bodies collided. It had always felt great before but tonight, it was as if something had changed between them. Something that made them unable to have enough of each other.

He cupped her boob and squeezed it, controlling his urge to take her harder.

"I'm not made of glass." She remarked at his cautious movements.

Taking her words as a cue, he flipped her onto her back and held her leg on his shoulder, entering her as he caressed her leg. The bed creaked when he got a tiny bit intense and they both laughed.

"They are going to hear us." She chuckled.

He didn't remember the bed being such a piece of crap, but he laughed along. "They definitely know how their grandchildren happen. They will keep their ears closed."

Her next words were drowned out by her moan when he pounded into her. He definitely knew his way with her body. He brought her on edge with his thrusts, making her breathless.

He pulled out just as she was about to reach her climax and before she could wrap her mind around it, he pulled her to the edge of the bed with her legs dangling off of it. He then knelt on the floor with his head between her thighs and went down on her.

Her orgasm came down on her like an explosion and her thighs trembled from the force of it, all of which he devoured like a delicacy before pounding her to his own climax.

Resting her head on his chest minutes later, she played with his fingers teasingly. "Are you still going to remain celibate for seven months?"

"You know I can't do that." He kissed her cheek as he ran his finger down her back.

The following day, Lanni couldn't help smiling every time she looked down at her stomach. It was still unbelievable that she had a little life growing inside her and of course, it was not hard for her colleagues to notice it. Even if they didn't tell from her reaction, they would still know from the number of gifts Lin Jian sent to her office every few hours.

He had started out by sending flowers with bizarre notes.

[Here's to new beginnings.]

[You will make the best mother. Here's something beautiful to cheer you on.]

[Smelling beautiful scents is good for the baby.]

He must have exhausted the flowers in the floral shop down the street, because he switched for fruits and had different reasons why she should eat each fruit. She was helpless.

Of course, he made sure she left her office as soon as working hours were over, stating that she needed to get enough rest and leaving work early was the best way to do so. He was way too excited about it.

She had planned to go baby clothes shopping with Luna, so she had not intended to wait around either. The latter was the first to arrive, this time bringing Xiaomu with her.

"Hey, Mumu!" Lanni hugged her adorable niece who was becoming even prettier.

"Aunty." Xiaomu drawled adorably with a lollipop in her hand which she licked as she looked around curiously.

"How cute." Lanni picked her up and hugged her before she hugged her sister. "Is Xiaoshi here yet?" She asked.

They had asked the latter to join them at the last minute. As if on cue, Xiaoshi arrived and joined them at the front of the clothes store.

"I'm sorry I'm late. Did you wait for too long?" Xiaoshi asked.

"We just arrived." The ladies answered in unison.

Xiaoshi patted the little girl's head, and noticed that she was looking behind her curiously. "What is Mumu looking for?" Xiaoshi asked.

"She thought you would bring Yue along." Luna answered, understanding her daughter's antics. After their previous fight which had started with Yue's hand in Linhou's mouth, the girls had gotten closer and were now friends.

"It's a bummer. Xichen had a day off today so he turned it into a father and daughter day." Xiaoshi answered. "I'll bring her to play over the weekend."

"Sounds like a deal."

The women entered the store and started to look around. Lanni was still in disbelief as she picked up tiny onesies. She couldn't decide which ones she wanted, and she turned to Xiaoshi. "I heard that shopping for clothes before the baby is born is a harbinger of bad luck." She asked. "Is it true?"

"I don't think so? Every woman I know has bought baby clothes as soon as she knew she was expecting. But then again, it's all up to you."

Luna had overheard their conversation so she pulled them over. "How about you help me choose? If you are not comfortable buying clothes before your due date, it's okay to wait."

For some weird reason, she was relieved that she didn't have to buy clothes. But that didn't mean she didn't long to. It just didn't sit well with her. However, she did select a variety of maternity dresses as well as a pregnancy pillow that Luna suggested, which would make it easier for her to sleep during her second and third trimester.

"Oh, you girls are here too." A voice came from behind and they all turned.

"Mother?" Xiaoshi was the first to react.

"Aunt Meiling, you are here too." Lanni went over to greet her.

"Why not? I came to look around and last I checked, that was allowed." She remarked.

Lanni was puzzled, and Luna didn't keep in her shock.

"It was just a question, Mrs. Yun. You don't have to be so sour about it." Luna pulled Lanni behind her to shield her.

"Luna, it's okay." Lanni placed a hand on her shoulder.

"Well, the question sounded as though there is a limit to who can or cannot enter a children's and maternity store." Ji Meiling shrugged. Xiaoshi felt awkward by the exchange.

"Of course there isn't. Is there anything that caught your eye, mother? We can help you choose." She tried to make the conversation mild. "If you don't mind, of course. We just helped Luna choose some unisex body suits for her baby."

"Thanks. But I think my eyes are enough." She sauntered away.

"What's wrong with her?" Xiaoshi was baffled.

"Who am I to ask?" Lanni shrugged.

Luna thought it would be awkward to say it, but Ji Meiling didn't look comfortable with the idea of Lanni being pregnant. She had observed that before Lanni announced her pregnancy, the former had always liked her. It changed after the announcement—how odd.

They were about to forget about it when Ji Meiling returned with a bag of the clothes she had bought, which she handed to Lanni. They were all baby boy clothes.

"Uh..."

"They are a gift.." Ji Meiling smiled.

"Thank you." Lanni took the gift and tried not to show reluctance. Luckily, Ji Meiling didn't seek trouble with her afterwards. She left the mall after saying goodbye to the women but they couldn't help exchanging glances once she was gone.

"Is there something wrong with her?" Asked Luna, finding her odd.

"No idea. Let's go somewhere for a snack." Lanni suggested. Her mood had been ruined but she didn't want to ruin the whole day because of it.

The other two agreed, so they went to a nearby café. They ordered decaffeinated coffee and cake pieces, which they dug in hungrily.

Xiaomu looked at her mother's, and aunts' coffee, then at her own milk bottle and frowned sadly.

"Mumu, do you want to have a taste?" Lanni chuckled as she offered her niece a sip. When the latter nodded, Lanni leaned over to her and let her have some. The girl's eyes brightened as she resumed drinking her milk and eating her cake. It was just a sip of coffee but Xiaomu was so much happier after having it.

"You are going to spoil her to the end of the world." Luna smiled at their heartwarming interaction.

"She's just so cute." Lanni tapped the girl's head and when the latter looked up innocently to ask what was wrong, she kissed her cheek which made her even happier.

When the girl finished her milk, she stretched her arms out to Lanni. "Aunty," She cooed.

"Come here." Lanni put her purse on the table to make space for her niece and picked the little girl up. Xiamu tugged at her little dress, prompting Lanni to stand.

"We'll be back shortly." She explained and dashed towards the restrooms.

"Lanni, it's really you." She heard someone call her name as she left the bathroom with Xiaomu in her arms.

She turned to see a man waving at her, and squinted her eyes while trying to figure out who he was. He seemed familiar but she just couldn't recall where they met.

"Do we know each other?" She asked.

"How could you forget me? My heart is broken." The young man sniffled dramatically, and Lanni finally remembered who he was. "Yu Guang?" She had not expected that they would ever meet again. He had been in B City University at the same time as she was and they had not seen each other since she left.

"I knew you wouldn't completely forget me." He rejoiced, his eyes falling on the toddler in her arms.

The girl defensively grabbed onto Lanni's clothes when she thought that the stranger was going to pick her up.

"Is this your daughter?" Asked Yu Guang, feeling a sting of disappointment. The more he looked at the girl, the more he found that she took after Lanni and the more it dampened his hope.

"Aunty," Xiaomu tugged at Lanni's clothes to remind her that they should get going.

Lanni patted her back as she answered to Yu Guang who was secretly relieved, "She's my niece. We should get going."

"Wait. Let's contact each other later, shall we?" He dug into his pocket for a name card and gave it to her."

"Okay." She took the card and as she withdrew her hand, he caught sight of a glitter at the back of it. He looked closer and his newly found hope drowned yet again. It was a ring. She was either engaged or married.

"Well, I guess we could be friends then." He muttered to himself as he watched her leave, wondering if she had gotten married to Ah Chen. Remembering that she had repeatedly rejected Ah Chen, he speculated the possibility of her marrying the silver-haired man who kept trying to pick her up.

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When the ladies finished their snacks and were on their way out, he walked towards them.

"Lanni," He called, closing in when the latter stopped and turned to look in his direction.

"I'll start the car." Luna pulled Xiaoshi away.

"Is there anything wrong?" She questioned.

"Actually, I think it's a good thing that I bumped into you. I just looked you up and found out that you are now working for a media conglomerate."

"That's right." Lanni wondered what he was up to.

"It's a pleasant coincidence. I need help from the media and I wasn't certain that I could trust reporters I don't know." He stated.

"What happened? Wait. Could you give me a minute to grab my notepad?" She guessed that it was probably something she would need to note down.

"Actually, it's a long story. Do you mind having dinner with me later? I'll tell you all about it." He requested. "If you are not comfortable, I could come to your office too."

"It's okay. We can meet at a restaurant." She offered a smile, much to his relief.

"Choose a venue and give me a call." He walked away when it was settled.

She went back to the car and sat in the passenger seat, fiddling with the name card she had been given by Yu Guang earlier.

"Are you okay?" Asked Luna, who quickly realized that her sister was deep in thought.

Lanni explained the situation, making Luna skeptical.

"Do you really believe that he needs help from the media?"

A frown settled on Lanni's face. "I thought I was reading too much into the situation. I'm relieved you think the same way." Her frown deepened. "Actually, I don't think we met coincidentally and I'm starting to think that he didn't find out that I work in a media agency by looking me up out of curiosity."

Luna shot a look at her. "Yet, you are considering meeting him?"

"Only to find out what he is up to. I'm not meeting him on my own." She revealed, knowing that Luna would definitely chew her out.

As expected, soon came the reminder. "Lanni, you cannot forget that you are pregnant. You need to be more careful and not put yourself in situations that might require you to fight."

"I'm taking bodyguards with me. He must have let me choose the restaurant I want so I wouldn't suspect him."

Xiaomu reached her tiny hand out to take the colorful card in her aunt's hand out of curiosity, and Luna frowned when Lanni let her take it.

"Did you give him your number?"

"No."

"You do realize that Mumu is going to lose or destroy the name card, right?" She reminded. As if it was the prompt that the toddler needed, she opened her mouth to take a bite of the card.

Lanni chuckled as she took it away gently. "Mumu, this is not meant to be eaten." She then turned to her worried sister with a meaningful smile. "Don't worry. He will give me a call."

It took a few hours for Luna to know what her sister meant, and the latter had been right. Yu Guang somehow found Lanni's number and called while the latter painted.

She had called Luna over to help her brainstorm and the latter was busy finding all the information she could about Yu Guang.

"This is crazy. The man erased everything about him in the last five years. It's as if he blinked away five years in a second." She glanced at Lanni's ringing phone. "I bet that's him."

"It is." Lanni answered the call feigning surprise. "Yu Guang?"

"Hi Lanni. I'm sorry I sought your friend to ask for your contact number." He explained before he could be asked, as if that would prove his innocence.

"That's okay." Lanni exchanged glances with Luna. She had put the call on speaker which enabled the other to hear what Yu Guang had just said, and she scoffed. It was obvious that Yu Guang had Lanni's number all along. Was he a stalker?

"I forgot to ask what time you would like to meet up." He said, and the two women concluded that it was a lie to cover up for the fact that he wanted to make sure Lanni didn't forget or ignore the meeting.

"We can meet up at a half past six." She gave the response that Luna mouthed to her.

The latter quickly wrote down the name of a suitable restaurant, which Lanni said out to Yu Guang.

When the call ended, she raised an eyebrow at her sister. "Why Onyx?"

"Because I know enough about their surveillance system." Luna responded. "Do you want to have Xiao Yu accompany you?"

Understanding that her sister hoped it wouldn't come off as a date and cause a misunderstanding with Xiehan, she shook her head. "I don't know. It would be better if I took Xiehan along. No one would bring their husband to a date, but I'm not certain of how busy he will be in the evening."

She knew he would certainly make time to go with her but she didn't want to impose on him.

Luna had an idea. "Didn't he say he wanted help from the media? Bring Lin Jian along. You can let Yu Guang know that Lin Jian is your boss and you cannot hide work-related matters from him."

"You're a genius." Lanni patted her shoulder.

Luckily, Lin Jian didn't have plans for the evening so he made his way to Onyx, arriving a few minutes before Lanni. Yu Guang had already arrived and he didn't look pleased to see Lin Jian.

"I didn't know you were bringing someone else." He wondered whether this was Lanni's husband. He frowned at the thought. Wasn't this B City's infamous playboy?

"This is my boss." Lanni explained, wondering how Yu Guang could have missed this when he looked her up.

"I see. Well, I'm not talking in his presence.." He stated resolutely.