

## Falling for the Contract Bride Chapter 231

### Chapter 231 Too Beautiful

Mu Zhi stood rooted to the ground, staring at the man who called himself her father.

Just as Mu Zhi was flustered to manage her thoughts and emotions, the man closed into her unwaveringly. "I understand that it might be hard to accept that I'm your father. But I'll slowly prove myself."

He turned back to glance at the wedding gown designer's studio, then checked his time and said, "Mu Zhi, I was too anxious to rush here upon receiving the news. There should be something you need to do, and I shall not disturb you for now."

Following that, the man who called himself her father straightened his back and left.

Mu Zhi gazed at the man as he walked away doubtfully. She hesitated for a long while before deciding to enter the designer's studio.

Not long after, Lu Jinye showed up. Mu Zhi had picked several designs of wedding gowns by the time he got there.

As soon as he stepped through the door, Lu Jinye pointed at the gown with the royal cathedral train, "This one."

That was similar to what the princess of England wore during her wedding.

The designer created two versions for the princess with some differences in the details.

The princess' wedding gown was magnanimous and eye-catching, while this one skewed towards modesty.

Mu Zhi traced her gaze along the direction Lu Jinye pointed at and found the wedding gown. Her eyes widened with a twitch when she did, and she strode towards Lu Jinye to say, "Let's not go with that."

Moments earlier, when she just entered the bridal studio, the same wedding gown caught her attention.

However, the assistant designer mentioned that it was a priceless piece of work. One could not buy it just with money.

The assistant's tone told Mu Zhi that it was a difficult feat to purchase that piece.

Moreover, the owner of the designer's studio was a first-tier fashion designer. She was responsible for custom-making similar styles for celebrities and occasionally royal

members of the Eastern European countries. All of her designs were beautiful in different ways.

Mu Zhi did not feel like she had to wear the most dazzling one.

However, Lu Jinye proclaimed to her, "I hope to give you an unforgettable wedding."

Then, Lu Jinye lifted his phone to make a call, ordering his man to handle the wedding gown.

Mu Zhi stood on the same spot with Lu Jinye's words echoed in her head. Those words were ruffling to one's heart. The assistants standing next to them were gasping inaudibly, because there were excited by the sound of Lu Jinye's succinct proclamation.

Lu Jinye had a striking appearance, and with his domineering and romantic personalities, he became even more attractive.

Mu Zhi was worried that she might be a target of jealousy if she continued to linger. Thus, she hastily scurried to another room, pretending to pick a dress for her bridesmaid.

In hindsight, there was nothing much to choose, because... The lone candidate for her bridesmaid was Jian Xiaoning.

She went through ups and mostly downs in recent years, and she had to keep a low profile during her first marriage with Lu Jinye.

Jian Xiaoning was the only friend she had by her side as she braved through all adversities.

Mu Zhi merely took five minutes to pick a dress for Jian Xiaoning, but Lu Jinye had managed to take care of the wedding gown within the timespan. He requested the assistant to retrieve the gown for him so he could hand it to her personally.

The studio's staff intended to usher Mu Zhi into the fitting room, but Lu Jinye had taken the liberty to lead her in himself.

The train of the wedding gown draped across the floor magnificently. Under the sparkling crystal chandeliers, Mu Zhi's fair complexion and the elegant wedding gown gave her an ethereal ambiance, as though she had just descended from the heavens.

Lu Jinye had witnessed many beautiful sides of Mu Zhi, including when she was decked up in a splendid evening gown. But he could not hide his astonishment when he saw Mu Zhi at this moment.

He sized up Mu Zhi and then reached out to seize her hand, gathering her towards himself and placing a gentle kiss on her lips. Then, he said to her affectionately, “I should’ve given you the most glamorous wedding a long time ago. That way, I get to see your most beautiful side.”

Mu Zhi did not expect to yield such a reaction from Lu Jinye, but she could sense Lu Jinye’s words’ sincerity.

She was curiously walking towards the mirror to check herself out when Jian Xiaoning suddenly barged into the studio in a timely fashion.

“Mu Zhi, you’re too beautiful!” Jian Xiaoning cheered excitedly from afar.

Listening to her seemingly exaggerated tone, Mu Zhi could not help but laugh, “Stop overreacting.”

“No, I’m not. You’re too beautiful!”

Jian Xiaoning turned Mu Zhi around to face her and said, “Let me tell you what, any woman who sees you in this gown would yearn to be a bride.”

With how pretentious Jian Xiaoning sounded, Mu Zhi did not take her seriously.

However, she was stunned when she turned to face the mirror, awed by how great Lu Jinye’s taste was!

It felt like every other gown in the studio had lost their splendor and she was standing at the center of the spotlight.

The staff at the studio was busy fixing her skirt when she said, “There were some celebrities who insisted on trying this gown earlier, but none of them could rock it with so much elegance like you, Miss Mu!”

“I’m so envious.” Amid the ladies’ rapacious voices, Mu Zhi fixed her eyes on the fitting room entrance, where Lu Jinye had just stepped out of in suit newly-fitted tuxedo. Her jaw almost dropped to the ground.

Lu Jinye looked mature and dignified all the time when he wore a suit. But the tuxedo came with subtle glitter. His gleaming appearance stole the attention of every pair of eyes in the studio. It felt like nobody could take their eyes off him.

It wasn’t until Jian Xiaoning started giggling that Mu Zhi came back to her senses. Jian Xiaoning teased her, “I’ll leave you couple here to it. There’s no place here for me.”

“I feel just like a third wheel in this place.”

“Why do I get the feeling that both of you used to be more reserved to show your affection, but it seems like your love is piercing through my pupils right now?”

Mu Zhi blushed upon listening to Jian Xiaoning playful remarks.

She promptly gathered her thoughts and said to the staff, “Let me take this gown off, I’ve decided to go with this.”

“Xiaoning, don’t go, try out the bridesmaid’s dress.”

Mu Zhi clutched Jian Xiaoning’s arm to stop her from leaving.

In this instance, judging from Mu Zhi’s actions, Lu Jinye knew to leave the girls alone sensibly. He glanced at the time and said, “I have a meeting that’s starting soon, I’ll let you take care of the rest.”

“Sure.”

Mu Zhi nodded and sent Lu Jinye away reluctantly.

For some reason, every time Mu Zhi locked her eyes with Lu Jinye recently, and she would feel her heartbeat racing and her cheeks blushing.

Why did it feel like she had returned to her adolescent self?!

Returning to her rational mind, Mu Zhi fetched the dress she had selected for Jian Xiaoning earlier.

She requested the staff members to excuse them. Then, Mu Zhi and Jian Xiaoning took their time changing in the fitting room while chit-chatting casually.

Jian Xiaoning was the first to speak. “I saw Xiao Qingqing’s car parked at a distance earlier when I came. Do you think she has some ulterior motives?”

## **Falling for the Contract Bride Chapter 232**

Chapter 232 Is the Man Really Her Father?!

Jian Xiaoning uttered as she zipped up her dress.

“Hrm, I suppose not.” Mu Zhi answered good-naturedly, “Seeing what she did out of desperation to win back Lu Jinye’s heart, I feel that she’s quite pitiful.”

“What’s there to be pitiful about? It’s simple, Lu Jinye doesn’t love her. Also, we don’t know how she got pregnant.”

“You’re the only one with all these conspiracy theories.”

Mu Zhi looked at Jian Xiaoning helplessly. “Have you read too many web-novels and as a result, think that the world is dark and strange?”

“Of course not.”

Jian Xiaoning pulled the corner of her sleeves and added, “I heard this from Xu Se. It’s common in the lustful world that after a one-night-stand, women would use the baby they conceive to bind a man to her.”

More From The Web



“Besides, you won’t believe how many of these melodrama-esque incidents we see every day in the gynecology department in the hospital! After delivering the child, some mothers would bribe the doctor to keep mum of their abortion attempts. Also, frequently you see mothers give birth to a child not knowing who the father is.”

Mu Zhi was listening attentively.

“Really?”

Jian Xiaoning nodded with a stern face. “Because some women are insatiable. They might have slept with more than one man at the same night, so they can’t be sure who is the father of the child.”

“So…”

She was about to summarize her remarks when a studio staff knocked on the door and entered with two bottles of water.

Jian Xiaoning instantly silenced herself.

Meanwhile, Mu Zhi was astonished by what she said. Holding the bottle in her hands, it took her a while before twisting the cap open and taking a small sip out of it.

Mu Zhi felt like she must not make rash accusations against Xiao Qingqing. After all, she did not know her personally.

Besides, despite Xiao Qingqing’s exaggerated behavior, Mu Zhi believed that her love for Lu Jinye was real.

Thus, she ultimately took Jian Xiaoning's words light-heartedly.

Jian Xiaoning looked stunning in the bridesmaid's dress. It might've been the best Mu Zhi seen of her. While Jian Xiaoning was distracted, Mu Zhi sent a message to Lu Jinye, telling him to get Xu Se as his best man.

Xu Se was the perfect candidate to complement Jian Xiaoning's beauty.

Upon thinking briefly, Mu Zhi decided that Xu Se alone wasn't enough. She should invite more men to the party, especially those wealthy, young hunks, to create some rivals for Xu Se!

Thus, she sent another text message to follow up with Lu Jinye.

By the time Jian Xiaoning had changed out the dress, Mu Zhi had finished arranging everything.

Both of them left the bridal studio with plans to search for some food. At the doorstep, Mu Zhi was suddenly reminded of the incident where she was stopped by a man who called himself her father.

She hesitated momentarily before asking Jian Xiaoning, "Xiaoning, if someone shows up out of nowhere and tells you that he is your father, what would you do to confirm that?"

"What does that mean?"

Jian Xiaoning replied nonchalantly as she turned her car engine over.

Mu Zhi pondered briefly before recollecting to her what happened in the morning. Jian Xiaoning gawked at Mu Zhi in response.

"Mu Zhi, can you stop living such a melodramatic life?"

Mu Zhi rolled her eyes to the back of her head. "It's not my choice."

"The man must have come to extort you after learning news that you're marrying the distinguished Lu Jinye."

"But based on his stature, I don't think he needs the money."

Mu Zhi replied Jian Xiaoning helplessly to dismiss her surmise.

"Then..." Jian Xiaoning brainstormed vigorously.

Under normal circumstances, when one had lost all traces of a fatherly figure over their upbringing, the abrupt appearance of their father would not significantly alter the course of their lives.

However, Mu Zhi's situation was a little unique.

Growing up without a father, Mu Zhi had a secret desire for a fatherly figure.

Moreover, her mother had recently passed away, which meant that all she had left in her family was her father.

Jian Xiaoning could understand Mu Zhi's struggles. She pursed her lips slightly and thought thoroughly before saying, "Mu Zhi, I think this is worth looking into. What if the man is your father?"

"You could try and ask him about your mother's favorite things. If he can answer you, he might be telling the truth."

Mu Zhi hesitated upon hearing Jian Xiaoning's suggestion, but ultimately agreed to it.

After the meal with Jian Xiaoning, Mu Zhi returned home and started searching for the man's information on the internet.

It struck her that... The man might really be her father because she could find detailed information about him on the internet.

The year he was born and where he grew up matched Mu Zhi's mother's description.

Mu Zhi's mother was Mu Xue, and she was born into a family of doctors.

Mu Zhi and her mother did not originate from City A. She moved to the city when she was little. Her mother did not tell her why, and she didn't dare ask.

Mu Zhi usually did not ask about the past because her mother was resistant about bringing it up.

Her mother came from a village located at the south of City A. The town was surrounded by mountains. The residents in the town were predominantly members of the Mu Clan.

Mu Zhi found out that the man's name was Mu Xianyong, a common surname for where he came from.

He got into business in the later part of his life.

He left the village the year Mu Zhi was born and later ventured around the world, including joining the gold rush overseas. He returned to the country about ten years ago.

During the ten years he was back in the country, Mu Xianyong would ceaselessly bring up his lost wife and child in every interview he was involved in, expressing his concerns for their wellbeing.

He posted several search notices for Mu Zhi and her mother, but he could only use Mu Zhi's photo when she was little.

Most kids looked the same. Besides, Mu Zhi appeared nothing like she was as a young girl. Thus, it was expected that he could not find her.

The more Mu Zhi searched about Mu Xianyong, the more convinced she was that he was her father.

Nobody would lie about what happened dozens of years ago.

The consequences of the lie would be too vast.

While she was lasered in her research, her phone suddenly rang.

Mu Xianyong's anxious voice came from the phone. He sounded like a father who was eager to get to know her. "Apologies, Mu Zhi... Is this the right time to call?"

Mu Zhi was startled for a second before saying, "Not really."

"I'm just done with work. I heard from my friend that your mother has passed. Can I please visit your mother at the cemetery?"

It was nightfall, and the natural black had engrossed the surrounding.

## **Falling for the Contract Bride Chapter 233**

### **Chapter 233 Will You Choose To Come To Me One Day**

Mu Zhi gazed at the blackness outside the window. She could not help but refuse him reluctantly.

"Umm... Maybe next time. Sorry, I'm tired today."

Upon finishing her words, she hung up the call.



She acknowledged that the man was likely to be her father. However, after putting Mu Xiaomu in danger the last time when another man pretended to be her one-night-stand partner, Mu Zhi had to put her guard up.

When the call had ended, Mu Zhi continued to search the internet for more information.

...

Meanwhile, Xiao Qingqing was taking small sips of piping hot tea at Xie Xiu's mansion. She could not help but feel suspicious upon hearing Secretary Rao's plans.

More From The Web



“Mr. Xie, is this all necessary?”

“This is the reason you failed every time.”

Xie Xiu did not address Xiao Qingqing's queries. He snapped at her as a response.

Those words instantly leave Xiao Qingqing with no comment.

But deep down, she was glad. She was happy that Xie Xiu was her colluding partner.

To create the character of Mu Xianyong, Xie Xiu was willing to pull all the strings he had in the media world to alter the articles' release date. As a result, the recently posted articles felt like they had been around for years.

Moreover... He had also taken care of the folks in Mu Zhi's hometown.

Xie Xiu used big data analytics to understand Mu Zhi's mother's behavior and preferences. Then, Xie Xiu made Mu Xianyong memorize all the details and rehearse countless times until he could register the information at the back of his mind.

Despite being allies with Xie Xiu, Xiao Qingqing could not resist being terrified by his deeds.

Xie Xiu was such a terrifying man.

He was both meticulous and vicious even towards the woman he loved, let alone someone he despised.

Seeing as Xiao Qingqing was flinching, Xie Xiu rose to his feet and ordered, "Leave."

He threw a furry blanket on top of the couch and gradually headed into the house. But Xiao Qingqing stopped him.

"Mr. Xie, I don't understand."

She stared at him with her watery eye to observe the expression on his face, then asked, "Mr. Xie, we could've easily separated them with what we have in our hands. Why... Why are we taking a detour instead?"

But Xie Xiu said nothing in response. He filled his eyes with grimness and entered the house.

Xiao Qingqing stood on the same spot, gazing at Xie Xiu until he disappeared from the line of sight. There was nothing else she could say. She hung her head and turned around to leave.

It was almost winter in City A. Transitions between different climates tended to be abrupt in the city. This night was colder than usual.

Xiao Qingqing bundled up herself before scurrying into her car, then headed straight home.

At home, she parked the car, stepped off, and reached in for the car key when a figure suddenly surfaced from the darkness.

Xiao Qingqing was frightened. She took a closer look at the person before feeling much calmer.

"What are you doing here?"

"Can't I be here?"

Shen Mobo's eyes were brimming with judgment. "It's late. Where have you been?"

It had been a while since he last met Xiao Qingqing. But he had been keeping a close eye on her whereabouts.

In the first place, he thought Xiao Qingqing had finally relented. She had made peace with herself and decided not to fight for what was destined not to be hers.

Thus, Shen Mobo was relieved and able to put more focus on work.

However, it wasn't until tonight that he realized Xiao Qingqing had not given up at all.

At least, the discontentment and adavance sparkling in Xiao Qingqing's eyes told him that she was still planning to pursue further.

The light in her eyes signified a glimmer of hope, and that made Shen Mobo terrified.

Xiao Qingqing did not tell him where she went. She turned her face away to avoid Shen Mobo's question, opened her door, and told him, "Where else could I go? I went for a stroll."

Shen Mobo spontaneously followed her into the house. He helped himself to a seat, "Your belly is showing. Stop going around, move back in with me."

"Nah, I don't feel like staying with you now."

Xiao Qingqing poured herself a glass of water, gulped it down, and rejected him listlessly.

Shen Mobo was starting to get upset, but he did not say anything in retaliation.

Instead, he took out a few leaflets from his bag and said, "I've registered you to these maternity care courses. I figured it'd be useful to you. I could go with you if you need company."

"Shen Mobo."

Xiao Qingqing did not bat an eye at the leaflets. She threw an upset look at Shen Mobo.

Afterward, she immediately brushed her anger away, rubbed her forehead, and said, "I'm tired, can I be left alone? I need to go to bed."

"Then take your shower. I'll go."

Shen Mobo glanced at Xiao Qingqing reluctantly before forcing himself to look away and headed towards the door.

Xiao Qingqing watched him left without intending to keep him.

Then, she headed to the bathroom and turned on the shower.

When she was done with her shower, she came out to see Shen Mobo still in the lounge area.

"Why aren't you leaving?"

Xiao Qingqing was not dressed. Her baby belly was protruding slightly. But seeing that he had not left, Xiao Qingqing was not bothered and started drying her hair with the hairdryer.

Shen Mobo stood up, approached her, took the hairdryer from her hand, and started drying her hair for her. "Qingqing, do you have a clue how I feel for you?"

Xiao Qingqing nodded, "Yeah."

"Will you choose to come to me one day?"

Xiao Qingqing craned her head around, seized the hairdryer from his hand, turned it off, and buried herself into his embrace.

However, she did not say a word.

...

The next day, Mu Zhi could barely sleep throughout the entire night. When she was awake, she decided to make her way to her hometown for an investigation.

She thought Lu Jinye had left for work, but when she headed downstairs, she noticed that he was packing his luggage.

"What happened? Are you going on a business trip?"

"I received a last-minute notification that a long-time client in Europe got into an accident. There has been a change in ownership in the company and we've lost contact with them due to this."

Lu Jinye managed to explain the summarized the whole situation in a few succinct sentences.

## **Falling for the Contract Bride Chapter 234**

Chapter 234 Mu Xue Is Dead!

Mu Zhi did not stop Lu Jinye. She said to him, "Then hurry up and go."

"Where are you heading?"

"I plan to visit my mom's hometown."

Lu Jinye did not press on. All he did was examine Mu Zhi's condition before saying, "You don't look that good today. Don't drive. I'll leave the chauffeur behind for you."

“What about you...”

Mu Zhi stared at Lu Jinye in astonishment.

“I don’t need the chauffeur, and I can drive.”

More From The Web



Following that, Lu Jinye lifted his wrist to glance at the time, then said, “Things are changing rapidly over there. I need to go soon, see you.”

He leaned in to kiss Mu Zhi on the forehead, then grabbed his luggage and left.

Meanwhile, Lu Jinye’s chauffeur was waiting for her when she was washing up and getting changed.

She chose a casual outfit to go with a pair of walking shoes before getting into the car.

The hometown wasn’t too far away from City A, but the hilly roads were tough to drive.

It had been dozens of years since Mu Zhi left her hometown. She did not have any memory left of her hometown, and she never visited with her mother.

Lu Jinye’s chauffeur was responsible for finding their way to the village.

Wide, tar roads eventually transitioned into narrow, hilly streets as they advanced towards the village.

When they got closer, the roads became so narrow that the car could barely fit. The streets were mostly for pedestrians or occasionally for bicycle riders.

It was nightfall, and they still had not reached their destination.

“Luckily you took the SUV today.”

Mu Zhi sighed as she looked out at the rugged roads. The headlights of their car made the only source of light in the blackness of the night.

The chauffeur responded with a laugh, “This is Mr. Lu’s idea. He rang me early in the morning to inform me about your schedule and ordered me to take the SUV. He also told me to take this route.”

“Even after working with him for over ten years as a chauffeur, Mr. Lu couldn’t help but tell me what to do because you are my passenger, madam.”

Mu Zhi was touched to hear that.

She took out her phone to send a text message, ‘Thank you for the chauffeur, love you.’

Lu Jinye had just arrived at the client’s company. He sensed an indescribable tension in the air as soon as he stepped through the entrance.

It was a difficult situation to solve. Everyone was overwrought.

However, Mu Zhi’s text message managed to calm him down a little.

‘Good girl, let me take care of work now.’

That was all he wrote to her, but Mu Zhi could feel the warmth coming over what appeared to be an apathetic, cold village upon receiving those words.

They went through another section of dirt road before gradually closing into the village.

The village was small and narrow. Mu Zhi and the chauffeur could no longer advance in the car. Thus, they decided to get out of the vehicle and slowly head into the village by foot under the torchlights’ soft light.

After getting off the car, the chauffeur informed Mu Zhi that Mr. Lu had prepared a spare change of clothes for her.

Mu Zhi chose a thick jacket to bundle up herself before carrying on with their journey.

It was only six in the evening, but not a single soul could be found on the village’s streets. It resembled nothing like the beginning of the energetic nightlife that was currently brewing in the city.

There were street lights, but the light was barely enough to brighten up the streets.

The chauffeur held a torchlight in his hand to go from door to door for the right house number.

Mu Zhi followed suit.

Finally, they located number seventeen of Xingxing Street.

Mu Zhi pointed at the number, heaved a sigh of relief, and planned to set off into the house.

The door was obsolete, but she could see the light seeping through the window of the house. Mu Zhi peered at the light and reluctantly struck the door knocker fitted to the door.

But nobody answered the door.

Mu Zhi called out a few times before a grumpy, hoarse voice came out from the house, "Who is it?!"

The voice was laced with anger and malice and easily related to the ghosts when heard at night.

Mu Zhi trembled at the sound of it.

The chauffeur promptly stepped forward to hide Mu Zhi behind him, then said, "Old man, we are here to look for someone, has anyone by the name of Mu Xue lived here before?"

"Scram!"

The old man was at his doorstep with a kerosene lamp. He bellowed as soon as he heard the mention of Mu Xue's name.

Mu Zhi stood rooted to the ground, not knowing what to do.

"Piss off now, what are you waiting for?!"

Nobody by the name of Mu Xue stays here. Mu Xue is dead!"

"The house originally belonged to Mu Xue. May I know how you are related to her?"

The chauffeur was in his early forties. He managed to keep his composure when dealing with the old man, perhaps learning a thing or two from Lu Jinye after all the years working for him.

His tender voice managed to calm the old man a little.

The man snorted through the door gap. "Would you believe if I say that I'm not related to Mu Xue at all?!"

He suddenly pulled the main entrance doors open to reveal himself to Mu Zhi and the chauffeur in between his words.

The kerosene lamp shone on half of his face.

Strange enough, although it was the outback, he shouldn't go as far as to use a kerosene lamp.

The chauffeur swept his torchlight across to reveal the rest of the man's face.

Upon taking a glance, Mu Zhi immediately shuffled backward nervously.

The chauffeur swiftly shielded Mu Zhi behind him once more.

It was difficult to describe the man's face because there was not an inch of undamaged skin on his face. All of his skin seemed to have been burned by fire. His hair was unkempt, and the foul odor from his body smelled like he had not taken a shower in years. He looked like nothing but a walking dead!

In summary, he was terrifying!

Upon taking a closer look at the man, the chauffeur could not help but gulp.

On the other hand, the man casually caught a glimpse of Mu Zhi and the chauffeur. Looking at the petrified looks and body language, he chuckled scornfully, then turned back into his yard, locked the main doors, and gradually headed back into the house with the kerosene lamp.

While trudging into the house, he mumbled to himself, "Disgusting bitch!"

"Madam, I suggest... To stay at a hotel tonight."

The chauffeur turned to Mu Zhi, who was still scared witless in this instance, and said.

Mu Zhi was forced to steady herself and nodded to him, "Sure!"

They were not unfamiliar with the village, but without a better choice, they resorted to search for a hotel in the dark.

Fortunately... It did not take them long before finding a motel. Despite its rustic simplicity, the rooms were clean enough to stay.

Mu Zhi and the chauffeur settled into the motel. Listening to the violent night winds of the mountain, she could hardly sleep.

It took her some moments to fall asleep.

The second day, she woke up at dawn to realize that the chauffeur woke up earlier than her.

## **Falling for the Contract Bride Chapter 235**



## Chapter 235 I Hope You Could Get More Love

The chauffeur bought breakfast for Mu Zhi. It was youtiao and soybean curd. “The motel doesn’t provide breakfast, I bought these from the village. I chose the cleanest one I could find, I hope it doesn’t bother you, madam.”

“I’m fine, thanks.”

Mu Zhi expressed her gratitude. She sat in the yard to enjoy breakfast with the chauffeur when he said casually, “In case you get frightened again, I’ve spoken to some of the villagers. Some of the older folks have heard of the name Mu Xue. I’ve also asked about your father, Mu Xianyong. Both of your parents left the village a long time ago, so I couldn’t find much information about them.”

Taking a bite at the youtiao, Mu Zhi was disheartened to hear the news.

“Has anyone seen how my father looks like?”

The chauffeur shook his head.

“This is a rural village. I heard that the only doctor who worked here got leprosy. None of the students who left for university studies was willing to return to this village, and as a result, the average age in the village is much older than the city.”

More From The Web



By the sound of his words, it was almost impossible to find any clue at all.

All Mu Zhi could confirm was that there was a Mu Xianyong and some information that matched what Mu Xianyong had told her.

Even in that case, Mu Zhi felt that was good enough.

When they set off for the city, they passed by her mother’s home. The strange man was painting the door in bright red. It was an overbearing shade of red.

After completing the repainting, the man added a word in white, ‘Death!’

That sent a shiver down Mu Zhi’s spine.

She hesitated for a while but did not dare to approach the man to ask him about his actions.

She exchanged glances with the chauffeur as they slowly headed towards their car on feet.

The chauffeur was guarding her from behind.

Their journey out of the village was faster than when they came in because the road was much clearer during the day. They managed to arrive at City A before sunset, and as soon as they did, Mu Zhi received a phone call.

The call was from her father, Mu Xianyong.

“Did you visit our hometown?” He asked the moment the call was picked up.

Mu Zhi was stunned briefly. “How did you know?”

“One of our distant relatives in the hometown saw you when you left. He mistook you as your mother, so he gave me a call.”

“My first guess was that the woman was you.”

Since Mu Xianyong made it clear, Mu Zhi did not see the reason to hide the truth.

“Yes, I went back.” She admitted.

Unexpectedly, Mu Xianyong responded bluntly. “It’s normal that you want to go back to look into me. After all, nobody could accept a father that came out of the blue. It doesn’t matter to me if you don’t accept me. All I need to know is that you’re leading a happy life.”

Mu Zhi could not gather a proper reply in response to his bluntness and gentleness.

She bit her lips and said, “Mom would never mention a single word about dad when she was alive.”

“I know. She must be angry at me.”

Mu Xianyong sounded grim. “Your mom had always had a strong character. She was a fine-looking woman, always curious about things around her. But due to some misfortunes I ran into in the early years, she had to suffer as a consequence. I was too fixated on making a career, and I would fail numerous times. In the end, your mom fled with you in the middle of the night. So... I expect her to be angry at me.”

Mu Xianyong paused at this point. It felt like he was immersed in deep sorrow.

Mu Zhi had no idea what to say.

All she could put together was, "If mom is still alive, she'd be glad to see you. If she did hate you, it meant that she loved you too much."

There was nothing else to say at this time.

"You must be exhausted since you've just come out from the village. Take a good rest. Can I invite you for dinner tonight?" Mu Xianyong seemed to care a lot about Mu Zhi's wellbeing.

Mu Zhi was startled at first. She wanted to refuse him.

But the man added, today is the anniversary of the first time your mom and I met each other. It is a meaningful event to me. I've booked a table at the Yinlin Restaurant."

Yinlin Restaurant was located in the most crowded part of City A.

Mu Zhi figured that getting dinner with Mu Xianyong wouldn't be too awkward with the crowd.

Besides, seeing as how zealous he was, Mu Zhi could not bear to refuse him.

Thus, she obliged, "Sure."

And instantly, she could hear the initially-dull voice sprang back into life, "Great! Go ahead and take a rest for now."

Mu Xianyong hung up when he was done.

After that, Mu Zhi took a quick nap.

She woke up moments later to find out she missed a few calls from Lu Jinye.

She promptly returned his call.

It was late at night in where Lu Jinye was, but he answered her call within fractions of a second.

"You're not asleep?"

Mu Zhi was surprised.

Lu Jinye's voice was hoarse and deep. "The chauffeur told me about the trip, so I thought it would be good to talk to you."

“Yeah, I went to the hometown because a man reached out to me the other day and called himself my father.”

Mu Zhi did not hide anything from Lu Jinye.

Lu Jinye did not ask her why she wanted to visit her hometown, but she believed that Lu Jinye would be glad to catch up on what happened to her.

She also needed his opinion.

“What does the man look like?”

Mu Zhi described what Mu Xianyong was like from their interactions. Following that, Lu Jinye pondered for a long while before saying, “So, your intuition tells you to acknowledge this man, right?”

Mu Zhi did not tell him of her plan initially, but he had guessed it with ease.

She bit her lips and answered him, “Yeah.”

Similarly, she did not feel the need to lie.

“Mu Zhi, I’ll send my men to look into this guy’s past, then tell you afterward. And in the meantime, you can continue interacting with him, but keep a safe distance.”

Mu Zhi thought Lu Jinye would exhort her otherwise.

After all, at her age, the role of a father no longer meant anything to her. Besides, she should have accepted the fact that she had missed out on a fatherly figure throughout her upbringing. There was no reason to acknowledge him at this stage.

A father was a key only to the development of children when they were little, which did not apply to Mu Zhi anymore.

It was what Mu Zhi had been telling herself. Thus, she was surprised that Lu Jinye allowed her to interact with Mu Xianyong.

“Why?”

“Lu Jinye, I’m an adult now, having a father change anything to me at this point in my life.”

Mu Zhi presented the question to Lu Jinye to show him that she did not need a father.

But Lu Jinye responded unexpectedly, “Yeah, in theory. But I hope that he’s your birth father. In that case, you’ll have one more person to love you in this world.”

“Mu Zhi, I hope you could be happy, and I hope you could get more love.”