

Destined To Be His wife by L.T. Marshall Chapter 2

One night of companionship, warmth, and being kissed for the very first time was enough to have made her hope for something more in life, raising her spirit and giving her heart wings. They had talked all night, danced, connected on a level that made her feel alive and seen. She had been moved to believe in insta-love for the first time in her life and thought what she felt could be exactly that. A stupid young girl pulled in by an older boy with fake promises and too much charm.

They had been inseparable even long after the bells chimed midnight. They had walked the streets, hand in hand. Giggled and ate street food before he snuck her home and helped her into the window of the hotel she was staying at with her class that night. It had been a school trip, a chance encounter in another city, a masked ball, and yet he had placed a scar on her heart that bled still.

Who knew he would then just forget her as quickly and leave her to weep her sorrows away in solitude when he never showed up at the bridge they arranged to reunite at the next day at noon. He had promised to meet her there and yet never showed.

They had stayed masked, finding it exciting, mysterious, and promised to unveil one another when the bells chimed twelve again. He had all but proclaimed his love to her, and she had confessed how unhappy and empty her life was with her family, laid her secrets bare, and told him how she planned to escape her life. The first time she had ever unburdened her truths to someone she didn't know. And yet, he hadn't made her feel gross, or unwanted, but kissed away her pain and called her his destiny. He had sworn to be her knight in shining armor and to help her escape the step dragon and the cruel gatekeeper of her personal prison. He had given her hope and made her feel seen for the first time. Worth something to another human.

She had waited for four hours for him to never show face the next day, until rain soaked her through, and tears got muddled up with the water running down her face. He taught her a great lesson in believing anything a man would say to get what he wanted. Weeping in agony before she was forced to leave, abandoning that stupid white lace mask on the that damned walkway and never looking back to allow herself to relive that humiliation until this moment. She could only be glad that she had never let intimacy happen between them and kissing was the only part he got to take.

With the heartache and pain fresh in her chest and mind's eye, she blinked at his image one more time, evaluating those familiar misty green eyes and that smile.... unsure if he could be the same person but yet, not convinced he wasn't. There weren't many Chinese men who had green eyes, and they didn't look like he wore contacts on any of the pictures online. They seemed real and natural, much like those of the boy that night who told her his name was Yoonie.

It just added again to the heaviness of her body, and she shook herself to bring her senses back to the present. A bitterness rising up once more that she had held down for

so many years, and the tears dried on her cheeks as her skin burned instead. Him or not, he was a player and not worth her residual pain of a nothing night. Maybe Yoonie was a nickname, or maybe it was a coincidence and green eyes on handsome men were more common than she thought. Not that it mattered as either way, she was now going to be tied to this man whether she agreed to it or not.

She knew she had no choice but to return home now, and if this was the same boy, then she wouldn't fall for his games or his coldness for a second time. She had learned her lesson when he ripped out her soul way back then and as she flicked her phone one more time, she fixated on the woman at his side. The same girl in every image, even when taken months apart and she clicked on one article from only a week ago with shocked wide-eyed disbelief. Curious that a playboy would frequent a single date.

“YuZhi Leng and long-term girlfriend Rhea Cheng”

TangShi read it twice more before clicking on another, and another, her irritation rising as she was faced with the same result. No matter what the girl's hair was like, her clothes, her make up, it was definitely the same woman in all of them and was still apparently current. It seemed she had been by his side for many years, and this was no news to the comments under the articles, praising them for being China's dream couple.

Not only would TangShi be forced to wed this young master, but it looked like he would be forced to push his love life to the past to fulfill his end of this bargain. He clearly had a lover, and she looked like someone who wouldn't let go easily. The name Cheng was a known name in that city, and TangShi wondered at why he wasn't already married to her if he loved her deeply enough to date for at least three years.

TangShi choked on her own saliva and coughed violently; a new sensation slicing her heart that wasn't quite like any pang she felt before and suddenly weird and angsty. Her eyes straying back to his hand in Rhea's and it almost suffocated her as she closed the webpage and tossed her cell aside. Refusing to acknowledge the rising hurt in her body.

She knew it was stupid to still harbor anything from five years ago, and the chances are it wasn't even him at all. She had only seen him wearing a black mask over a third of his face, she didn't know him at all. It was beyond stupid to feel jealousy, resentment or whatever this was.

And the only token of that night she still had was hidden deep in her box of keepsakes back home in Shanghai. A stupid pressed rose he had worn in his lapel, wrapped in a colored ribbon which was imprinted with some sort of crest all over in small repetition, she had never seen before.

Despite how much he had hurt her that night, her silly sentimental self had saved that stupid flower in the pages of a heavy book, and then later laminated it into a useable bookmark so it would never fall apart. She had no idea why she did it. Other than to serve as a reminder to never trust any man, not even one with pretty green eyes, a soft

smile, and a warm hand that made you feel like everything was going to be okay. Wolf in sheep's clothing. That's what he was, and she wouldn't forgive as long as she lived.

TangShi picked up her cell once more and opened her email app with the heaviest of moods. Her eyes swimming once more because she knew what she had to do now was inevitable. She pulled up her tutor's contact with slow motions. Her friend, her mentor, who had welcomed her so openly and made her feel like she was finally home when she arrived and began typing in the message she did not want to write. Her soul dying a little with every letter appearing on the screen.

She would have to forfeit her scholarship as she had no idea how long before her father let her go again and she knew that without a doubt, once married she would have no freedom for fear she would bring shame to his name. She would have to let go of the little dorm room that had become her haven, and return to a city she always felt like she never belonged in. To a life she was never part of and play the ruse of good daughter to a noble house.

She wouldn't be welcomed home with open arms, and she didn't expect it either, but at least she would be going back to where Linlin was, and that was the only positive.

She missed her childhood best friend when she moved out here. It had broken her heart to say goodbye at the airport to the only real family she had ever known and knew that if anything could keep her going, help her through this, then it was Linlin. She was loyal, and kind, and would never let her face any of this alone. She had held her up for so many years and been her rock for as long as she could remember.

Daughter of a notable family, a budding rising jewelry designer in her own right and always the life and soul of the party. Linlin would be the one thing that made going home not as devastating as it seemed. The diamond in her darkness!

She sighed as she finished typing her resignation email before sending it out into the web with a lost and desolate weight in her chest. She scrolled to her friend's number and started to compose the text that she knew would be the next step on returning home.