

The Enchanted Night – Chapter: 151

With You By My Side

In wine, there is truth. Through an intoxicated haze, Lionel recalled the first time he laid eyes on Cassandra.

The Qin family was the one who reached out to the Tang family for the proposed marriage. Still, Cassandra behaved like an arrogant and proud princess. She didn't even look him in the eye.

Lionel grew annoyed at that time. 'Who do you think you are giving me that look! I don't want to marry you either!' he thought. Both of them looked down upon each other.

The Tang family entertained Cassandra and her parents to dinner. When a waitress served the meal, she accidentally knocked over a plate. Horace became very unhappy and was about to lose his temper to yell at the waitress with his face darkened. But Cassandra did something surprising.

She walked straight to the waitress and asked her if she was hurt or burnt. Then she accompanied her out of the room to get some medicine for her wound. The waitress escaped from a disaster.

It seemed like her attitude towards this waitress was completely different from the one towards him. Lionel felt extremely curious so he found an excuse to follow her outside.

Cassandra was whispering something in the waitress's ears. She told her to be careful later. Tears could be seen rolling down the waitress's cheeks. It was clear that she was touched and appreciated Cassandra's concern.

‘Just don’t be so careless next time. Go and get some medicine now,’ Cassandra said softly to her.

The waitress was grateful. She then walked away, leaving Cassandra standing in the corridor with her back leaning against the wall.

The corridor was dim and her tiny figure looked so lonely standing there.

It was just a small incident. Cassandra was very young at that time. The waitress looked to be the same age as her so maybe Cassandra felt pity for her because of that.

However, Lionel continued to remember the image of that lonely figure in the corridor. How he wished he could have asked Cassandra, who was defensive against him at that time, whether they could just get along!

But, the truth was cruel. They had no feelings for each other and there was nothing but pain throughout their marriage. Ivy almost lost her life in a car accident and Lionel assumed Cassandra was at fault.

Why was she so arrogant? Why did she look down at him? Anger suddenly replaced the curiosity to discover more about her in his heart.

Lionel felt guilty towards Ivy. So he did whatever she asked of him later. Ivy became totally a different woman. She was no longer the obsequious girl but rather a tough and strong woman.

Lionel, on the other hand, was not as faithful as when he was younger. He started to go around and went out with different women. Even with that, he kept his love for his first girlfriend, Ivy.

After all these years, however, his love for Ivy seemed to fade as he became more and more interested in Cassandra but he couldn’t seem to win her heart.

The very drunk Lionel had no idea that the woman lying beside him was not Cassandra, but Ivy.

Jean Wen sacrificed herself for family interests. Before her husband divorced her, she made every effort to please him.

‘You are inexperienced in bed,’ he said coldly.

‘You! Give that land to my family, or I won’t agree to divorce,’ Jean replied furiously.

‘Fine. It is exactly what I am thinking about,’ he sneered.

or the rest of her life! Staying with him made her feel that she had a home. He made her feel like family.

All of a sudden, the tender moment was disturbed as the bell rang. Rufus frowned and walked towards the door to check the monitor. He was completely annoyed at whoever rang.

Both Jasper and Michelle were standing outside, waving and smiling at him.

Rufus opened the door to let the two of them in. Cassandra got up in surprise to see them here.

‘Michelle, what are you doing here!?’

‘It is New Year’s Eve. Why isn’t she celebrating with her family, but instead, she came here, to Rufus’s home?’ Cassandra wondered.

Michelle blinked her eyes a few times and then she understood that Rufus had never told Cassandra about her real identity.

‘I’m Rufus’s aunt. This is my husband, Jasper. Obviously, we’re here to spend the night with my dear nephew because we’re family,’

Just as she said that, Michelle tossed the big bag filled with snacks straight on the table. Cassandra opened her eyes wide in surprise. Wasn’t that too many snacks!

But, what was more shocking was that Michelle was Rufus’s aunt! Rufus had never said anything about it before. He had kept his lips sealed and never even gave a hint about her real identity. Now it was all clear how he could make a reservation for Michelle’s custom-made dress.

And about her husband...

Cassandra looked at Jasper from head to toe secretly. There were some gray hairs on his head, which actually made him look more mature and charming. He had an impressive appearance and an extraordinary temperament. Who was he? What did he do?

‘They came without any invitation. Well, I’m afraid you won’t be able to finish the gala tonight,’

Rufus said in a seemingly helpless voice. A smile crept on his face.

The beautiful fireworks lit up the night sky. It was loud and pretty outside.

It was time to ring out the old year and ring in the new! Cassandra prayed in her heart, ‘I hope Rufus will be by my side every year starting today.’

Cassandra was starting to get busy as the new year starts.

First order of business was to go to the North District office of Qin Group to end the current lease for the office space. She then started to dismiss employees with recurring poor performances. Last, she had a meeting with the hard-working people of the company.

‘Currently, our finances at Qin Group are not looking very good. But, I believe we can turn this around. With you guys who remain, you are the new backbone. And I know you will drive this company to a new and brighter future. I hope each and everyone of you take this opportunity and work harder. I promise, your hardwork will be generously rewarded.’

The staff she retained did not have a lot of experience, but Cassandra preferred their youthful energy and good work ethic.

However, finding a new office space was proving to be a different challenge. It was difficult nowadays to find a good office location at an affordable price.

Although Cassandra was a local of G City, she had stayed with the Tang Group as a designer ever since she graduated. She knew very little people outside of the organization. Where could she start to look for someone who could help her?

After coming out of another real estate agency without closing a deal, she felt like giving up already. None of them could offer her any reasonably priced office spaces. She started worrying that she would never find the right one.

She was only starting and already found herself facing with such a huge obstacle. It was disheartening the young entrepreneur.

But she couldn't give up. She knew that. So Cassandra looked at her notes to see which agency to visit next. This one was not far from where she was now so she walked towards their office.

Although it was spring now, the wind was still cold.

This was the last agency on her list. If they still couldn't come to terms for an office, she would have to go back to the drawing board and do more research.

Surprisingly, she was offered a really good deal at one of the city's most luxurious office buildings.

It was spacious and bright on the third floor of the office building, but even more surprising was that the price was affordable.

Cassandra immediately signed the lease. After getting the key, she looked at the empty office and planned how to arrange the departments for the future.

Suddenly she heard a loud commotion downstairs. Cassandra looked through the window and saw a large group of reporters and cameramen by the flower beds surrounding a woman.

People kept pushing over each other in an attempt to interview this woman. 'What a scene!' Cassandra thought to herself. She couldn't help herself but watch the rare scene unfold before her.

Although she was too far away to hear anything, the woman in the middle of all the chaos actually looked familiar to Cassandra.

The reporters kept taking

The Mighty Soldier King is back!

With the original intention to protect his beautiful boss, he accidentally gets involved in dangerous adventures and trouble.

Will our Mighty Soldier King be defeated? Or will he sweep away all obstacles?

, she got the script rewritten and now has as many lines as I have! I hate sneaky bitches like this!

Cassandra had an idea about Lyndsy's rise to fame. Her acting skills had always been superb and she had been in a lot of big-name directors' films. She would also get top billing in all of them and each one soared at the box office.

Basically, having Lyndsy as the face of a movie was a guarantee of the box office. Why would anyone try to offend her?

'Didn't your agency set everything up for you?'

Cassandra asked in deep wonderment. Generally speaking, the agency should be very protective of a big star like Lyndsy and should have negotiated with the film producers about a matter like this.

Unexpectedly, Lyndsy snorted while rolling her eyes.

'It was the agency that actually pursued a script rewrite. They just signed this new actress and probably wanted to give her a start. But how dared they use me as a stepping stone! If They had discussed it with me when I signed the contract, I would not be as angry as I am now!'

Hearing her words, Cassandra realized that Lyndsy was very straight forward and would probably offend a lot of people because of that. Could the agency considered her as a difficult star to manage so they were looking for a fresh, new star?

‘By the way, I want to get out right now. Would you know if this building has any hidden exits or a backdoor perhaps? Since the news that there would be two heroines in this film broke out already, I have been followed everywhere by those damned reporters downstairs!’

The problem was that this was Cassandra’s first time in the building as well! She wouldn’t know where the other exits were.

But those reporters were really persistent. They were still waiting downstairs and showed no signs of any intention to leave.

Cassandra looked at Lyndsy and suddenly got an idea. She grabbed Lyndsy’s hand and said, ‘Quick, come with me!’

The Real Boss

The lobby was full of commotion as anxious journalists were waiting. They were chatting and cleaning their equipment waiting for their target to appear. All of a sudden, a person wearing the same outfit as Lyndsy’s came out of the building.

‘Lyndsy... Lyndsy is here!’

Somebody from the crowd spotted the figure and screamed her name out of surprise and excitement.

In an instant, everyone turned their heads and rushed forward following the figure with their cameras.

The figure ran out of the office building and came to a halt about 200 meters away from it. Photographers and cameramen surged forward.

Zooming and clicking on their devices to capture the figure's reaction as they began asking her questions.

'Lyndsy, what's your opinion about having two heroines in this movie?'

'Lyndsy, it's said you want to break up with the company. Is that true?'

'Lyndsy, you...'

Everyone was stunned when suddenly, the figure at the center of the crowd took off her mask with a grin.

'Have you guys mistaken me for someone else?'

Silence fell upon the group, those who bombarded the fake Lyndsy with questions stared at the petite girl, dumbfounded. They examined her features from head to foot, she was not Lyndsy.

'But the clothes...' a journalist exclaimed in disbelief.

'Please, could you excuse me?'

Cassandra elbowed her way through the crowd and hailed a taxi, swirling the mask by her finger.

It was not until the cab sped off did these gossip-providers understand what was going on.

'We have been fooled!'

Someone blurted it out and everyone present began to regret their carelessness. With their shoulders in a shudder and their heads low, the crowd dispersed gradually one by one.

Cassandra looked back in the cab and smiled as the crowd scattered.

Enjoying her victory, Cassandra was surprised that such a simple trick could fool the journalists. It seemed that they were so desperate to interview Lyndsy that they didn't notice the woman in Lyndsy's clothes was way shorter than her.

On the back of her mind, she recalled the moment when she pulled Lyndsy to the ladies' room with her. She suggested that they should exchange outfits.

Cassandra pointed at Lyndsy's coat and motioned her to take it off and give it to her so they could switch over.

'Your clothes are too brightly colored. They are too eye-catching.'

Lyndsy began to inspect her clothes in the mirror. She was wearing a light blue dress matched with a rose red coat. The colors were both bright and in sharp contrast. While Cassandra was in a plain grey coat and a large scarf covered half of her face. It was easy to keep a low profile in Cassandra's outfit.

'But we are of different figures...'

Lyndsy was tall and willowy while Cassandra was petite. It was easy to tell the difference.

'It's okay. Don't worry. I will rush out to attract their attention. They will follow me as long as they see your clothes. When there's no one around, just go ahead and run away!'

Cassandra took off her scarf and placed it around Lyndsy's neck. She made several loops around her face until only her eyes were exposed.

Lyndsy checked herself out in the mirror. Indeed, no one could

When her boyfriend betrayed her, all light and joy was gone from Cherry's life. Deserted, bereft of hope, she married a man that she had barely met, but she had never expected him to be her ex-boyfriend's uncle.

Cherry thought that she had finally found her happiness, but she had no idea about the dark secrets that were bound to unfold and haunt her forever...

Jasper heaved a sigh as the memory of his tough days came flashing back his mind.

'But, hey, cheer up. I could offer you a piece of advice,'

Jasper uttered mysteriously. He cocked one of his eyebrows towards Rufus, waiting for the cold man to ask him what it was.

Rufus glanced at the excited man in smug satisfaction but didn't say anything. He knew Jasper was the kind of man who couldn't stand holding the excitement back to himself.

As expected, Jasper pulled a long face a minute later as there was no response from Rufus.

'You know what? If it were not for your aunt, I would keep away from your matter, as far as I can! I hate your ice-like face!'

Rufus snorted. With a slight grin on his face, Rufus's face melted and his eyes gave him away, shining with satisfaction.

'What it is?'

Under the eager gaze of Jasper, Rufus had no other choice but to speak out the question.

‘Ask her to marry you! It was not until your aunt married me did she began to pay more attention to me,’

Jasper whispered to Rufus’s ear with a wicked smile on his face.

‘When you two finally get married, she will definitely turn close to you. And, by that time when you help her, the assistance will be from a family. She has no reason to turn you down anymore!’

Jasper suggested, full of confidence, advising Rufus based on his own experience.

Rufus’s cold eyes brightened up. He was imagining how he would propose to Cassandra.

It never occurred to Rufus that it was a way in. Jasper’s advice sounded somewhat practical.

Cassandra was so tough because no one cared for her during her childhood. But as long as they got married and he became her husband, Rufus believed he could melt her aloofness away by the care and warmth from the family they made.

‘I see she has been hanging around out there for a while and hasn’t gotten what she wanted. How about I going down and helping her?’

Jasper looked at Cassandra who was sitting on a bench and bending over to pound her legs as in massage. She looked terribly exhausted.

‘Don’t worry. I won’t let her know you are the real boss here,’ Jasper teased Rufus.

Cassandra felt a dull pain stabbing at her back and waist. Sighing out loud, she could feel tight knots in her muscles. It was indeed not an easy job to manage a business.

‘Cassandra ?’

A familiar voice called out to her. She looked up and met a man’s concerned gaze. He seemed very familiar, and it took Cassandra a moment to recognize him.

‘Oh, Uncle... Uncle Jasper!’

She hesitated on using the honorific, unsure of how to address him. Calling him ‘Uncle-In-Law’ did not seem very appropriate as she hadn’t married into Rufus’s family yet. At the same time, ‘Brother’ would sound too intimate, and so she settled for ‘Uncle’... The only problem was that Jasper looked too young to be addressed as such.

Sure enough, he gave her an awkward look upon her greeting. He signed inwardly, ‘Am I that old?’

At this moment, a man in a suit strode to his direction and bowed before him respectfully.

‘President Li, we didn’t expect that you would be coming today. Is there anything I could do for you?’

Cassandra peeked at the name tag on his chest. It bore the title ‘Supervisor’.

But her thoughts were elsewhere instantly. 'What? President Li?' Cassandra tried to hide her surprise upon hearing the man call Jasper 'President'.

'I have checked the reports. Good work,'

Jasper said to him, with calm and formal air. It was as if a different person was standing in front of her. She failed to find any trace of the laughter and playfulness he had on the night of New Year's Eve.

The man visibly brightened at the president's acknowledgement.

Then, Jasper turned to Cassandra and asked her softly, 'Are you here to shop for anything?'

His voice pulled Cassandra from her thoughts and back to reality. 'Oh, I'm here to pick up some supplies,' she managed to reply.

Jasper waved a hand at the supervisor, and in an instant he was at his side, wearing a big smile.

'Give Miss Qin the cost price of all the products. Charge the remaining balance cost to my account,'

he instructed. The supervisor nodded repeatedly.

'Well, thank you so much for your help, President Li,' Cassandra uttered with gratitude, stunned by his generosity.

Not once had it crossed Cassandra's mind that Jasper would be the president of this huge mall.

From what she knew, this mall was owned by the TY Group, an international business which had engaged in industries of all aspects. If

that was the case...she turned to Jasper with wide eyes. That must mean that Jasper was the president of TY Group. Cassandra almost reeled from the realization.

She recalled how she addressed him as 'Uncle' earlier, as if she was related to him. Somehow, she felt awkward when she thought about how it might have seemed to others.

The two of them exchanged small talk and Cassandra made sure to address him as 'President Li, ' this time, even as she stumbled over her words. Jasper felt even more uncomfortable at the sudden show of formality. 'So Uncle sounds better...' he thought to himself.

The supervisor personally showed Cassandra around and enthusiastically gave recommendations about which brands were best for the designs she had in mind. In reality, Cassandra already had a clear picture in her head of what she wanted, but she hesitated. She had a limited budget, and she had to think well and make adjustments if necessary.

But with Jasper's help, all she needed were offered to her at an unbelievably low price. She silently thanked him for his graciousness. Now, she could get the things she needed without too much worrying.

Cassandra's steps were light as she walked out of the mall. It was a good day and she felt very pleasant as she bounced on her feet and wore a smile on her face. Today seemed like her lucky d

'You're my wife in name only, on paper only. My heart and love will never be yours.'

Edward made it clear to Daisy that she was nothing to him. They were both victims of family greed -- the marriage was arranged for them.

Six years passed. She remained quiet, gaining a reputation in the army as a tough-as-nails colonel. When she walked into his life again, Edward fell in love with this woman...

d on the sheet music, and Rufus felt as if his heartbeat fell in time with the flutter of her eyelids. Long, fair, fingers danced on the black and white keys, and the beautiful sound filled every corner of the room.

In that dazzling light, she looked like a fairy that had descended to the world of mortals.

It was love at first sight.

He found out later that she was Charlie's daughter, and he was courteous and respectful to her at all times.

Unbeknownst to him, Amanda also felt the same way for him; and she found every possible excuse to go to the training camp to see him.

It was only a matter of time until their feelings reached the peak. They were each other's first love.

Rufus was in the darkest days of his life at that time. His mother was lying in the hospital in vegetative states, wasting away. He burned the memory of her in her deathbed, vowing that one day he would return to the Tang Group to get revenge. Horace would suffer the same agony they felt.

His feelings for Amanda ran deep, but his inexperience had gotten the better of him. Despite being one of the best students, he was clueless when it came to matters of love.

Other men would woo women with romantic gestures, flowers, and gifts, but Rufus seemed to have no clue of any of these. And despite favoring him as a student, Charlie was against their relationship.

In Charlie's eyes, Rufus was no doubt among the most talented of his students, but him being his son-in-law was an entirely different matter. He was young, and had nothing to his name.

He came between them and forced her daughter to leave Rufus.

Their love came to a tragic end; and Rufus found himself alone with his own despair.

Feelings of the past came back to him. The day Amanda left, he vowed to do everything he can to be successful. Amanda would regret not choosing him, and Charlie, for tearing them apart.

Now, he had stayed true to a part of that promise. He was at the top, but he found himself unable to recall the pain and the hatred that came with thoughts of her. It seemed as if everything had been wiped away.

He didn't care in the slightest whether she regretted or not. It did not matter to him any more. He had carved out his career and built up his name. Later on, he found that he no longer felt pain at the sound of her name; and his memories of her grew dimmer and dimmer each passing day.

His first love had ended, and it had stayed buried in a past that had gone by without a trace.

When Amanda finished, the audience roared with a thunderous applause.

She stood up, bowed to show her appreciation; and then her eyes scanned the crowd for Rufus. Finally, they settled on him and happiness reeked through her body.

Rufus noticed the way she looked at him. When he met her gaze, he promptly moved his eyes away.

But Amanda wasn't upset. Just one look which had lasted only for a few seconds filled her with contentment.

Nothing could spoil her mood today. The admiration she felt for him explained the extra piece which was not listed on the program. It was exclusively for Rufus.

When she gave Lionel the admission ticket, she also saved one for Rufus. Instead of giving it to him by herself, she handed it over to his assistant. In spite of this, she highly doubted he would show up. She vividly remembered what happened the last time—she had given him two tickets for the concert but instead of Rufus, an unknown man and woman showed up.

'But today he came!' her heart wanted to scream again and again. When she first spotted Rufus on a VIP seat, her mouth was agape with surprise.

Once the information finally sank in, she looked around and spotted Lionel. He was sitting with an old man who wore a stern look.

Out of excitement, she decided to continue with another piece soon after her half-time break.

Secretly, she hoped the piece would strike a chord in Rufus's heart. Her intention was to revive his memories. She wanted him to recollect their past and feel nostalgic.

A sly smile crept on her face when she realized this was their little secret. Nobody else in the audience had any idea about her intention. They presumed Amanda had played an extra piece as a bonus. Artists often rewarded their fans with an extra piece so nobody found this to be unusual.

Amanda continued to communicate with the audience using her music. It left everyone intoxicated.

No one could have guessed what would happen next.

When the second half ended, everyone stood up to applaud. Amanda once again bowed and showed her gratitude.

For the hundredth time, her eyes drifted and landed on Rufus. But this time, she didn't look away. In an emotional tone, she began speaking, 'There was a time when I thought my music was only recognized overseas. Due to this, I pushed myself to make a mark there. But gradually I have come to learn that music has no boundary. Due to my Chinese ancestry, I find myself getting more and more drawn towards the music industry of China. After giving it a lot of thought, my studio and I have come up with a solution. We have decided to shift the focus from overseas to home. Yes guys, you heard me right! My new studio is going to be located here in G City!'

It took a few seconds for the audience to realize their ears weren't playing tricks on them. To confirm their doubts, they started whispering to one another. There was a part of them that still couldn't believe what

they heard. They didn't understand why Amanda would choose G City for her future development.

Seeing their confusion, Amanda added, 'I understand why you all look so surprised. You must be wondering why I picked G city out of all the places. You might want to know why I didn't choose Beijing which is the capital of culture. Also there is Shanghai which is the capital of prosperity. I completely get your concern and won't hesitate before coming clean to you people. To be honest, I admire the vitality of G City, but that's not the sole reason for shifting here. The truth is the person I care about is living in this city.'

In her gentle voice, she went about and filled the audience with truth. There w

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she bravely made this announcement, she was positive that Rufus would do her this favor for the old time's sake.

Besides, Rufus was now the president of Tang Group. He had to consider the benefit of the group. This music school was a project that would promise them a good name. Overall, it was a great opportunity for them to be in the public eye. She didn't think there would be any reason for him to reject it.

But Rufus still didn't move. No one knew what was going on in his mind.

Amanda stared at Rufus. Their past was like a constant wind which whooshed in front of her.

Ever since she met Rufus, she had immediately fallen for him. Even the small qualities like the fact he smiled less and talked less didn't bother her.

What she liked the best was that he always came straight to the point without the slightest hesitation. His words were usually short but it always conveyed what was required.

When he had dinner with Amanda's family, he talked a lot with her father, Charlie. They talked about everything from astronomy to geography, from humanity to military. She sat looking fascinated when she watched him speak.

Since that day Rufus had begun to occupy her mind. Piano and Rufus were the two things that she was most passionate about.

He didn't like to talk much so she would be the talker when they were together.

When they went outside, he was a little shy to hold her hand so she would be the one who did it without any hesitation.

Also, he was scared to make the first move to kiss her, so she became the one who initiated it.

She almost gave all of her girlhood passion to Rufus. Yet it didn't budge or change his stern look.

Even now she had prepared the stairs, the red carpet, for him to walk on, but he was reluctant.

No matter what she did, her hard work would fall short.

Now watching the audience, she felt embarrassed. Her expression became rigid. If she didn't get a signed contract, she wouldn't be able to continue with her plan. All her efforts would go in vain. Everything was prepared in such a short period of time because she was excited to have it done.

Time continued ticking away and everyone was still looking at Rufus.

Just when she was about to leave the stage, a voice spoke in the hall with an echo.

'Thank you Miss Ke. Thank you for your great kindness. Tang Group is honored to receive this proposal. We are looking forward to our cooperation!'

Leave Me Alone

All eyes turned to the lone figure who spoke. Lionel stood up with a smile and an air of confidence.

He started for the stage as soon as the words left his lips and stopped right beside Amanda.

Amanda was disappointed at Rufus's reaction and expected that he wouldn't do anything more today. She thought she was going to be stuck in this awkward situation. Surprisingly, Lionel was the one who rescued her. She felt grateful.

She didn't let this opportunity pass and immediately took advantage when Lionel made the offer. They signed the contract on the spot. The thunderous applause sounded soon after.

Horace, who was on the edge of his seat, secretly sighed in relief. Fortunately, Lionel came forward with a solution with to tricky problem. Otherwise, he could already see the headlines for tomorrow's paper—Tang Group, too arrogant?

'What's wrong with you, Rufus? It's an honor to be invited by Miss Ke. Why didn't you take the chance?'

He asked Rufus with an unpleasant tone. His eyebrows were furrowed.

This was the perfect chance for Tang Group to make its mark in history. What on earth was Rufus thinking by not making a move?

Rufus just stayed silent and observed the jubilant Amanda and Lionel shaking hands onstage.

He didn't like this form of coercion. Amanda attempted to force him into making some kind of response. He hated being forced most of all.

After signing the contract, Lionel went back to his seat. Amanda bowed deeply and ended the concert right there. She proceeded backstage amidst the deafening applause.

Rufus had planned to leave wordlessly, but Horace stopped him by placing his hand on his shoulder.

'Where are you going in such a hurry, Rufus?'

Horace asked suspiciously. He was visibly angry at Rufus.

Rufus did not fear him. He merely turned around and asked in return, 'Father, don't you think the contract signing was a hasty move?'

He frankly spoke his mind.

Lionel, who was standing beside them, frowned at what he said. Rufus was clearly implying that his decision was too hasty.

'What? I don't see it like that. What I saw is that you refused to make the right decision at such a critical time. You disappoint me!'

Horace was quite livid whenever he remembered the crucial moment. He had always believed Rufus to be a reliable man who would always make the right decision; but today, he decided to close his eyes to the situation when it came to Amanda.

'Even if you didn't want the contract signed, you could have said something. How could you leave her hanging onstage like a fool?'

Horace was still blaming Rufus while Lionel jibed with his father's words.

'Father's right, Rufus. Miss Ke invited us in her kindness. You could have at least said something. She is the official spokesperson for the Department of Tourism. She is endorsed by the government itself. You'd better not offend her.'

Lionel certainly didn't pass up

'Let's go and register our marriage on your birthday!'

Marrying Daniel should have been her best birthday gift, but everything was ruined the moment when she caught him sleeping with another woman on the day before her birthday.

‘He’s going to marry that woman! She... was my best friend!’

Lionel, let’s head home!’

Horace trusted Rufus had a good reason for speeding away like that. So he took Lionel and asked the driver to head home directly.

Lionel went straight to his room the moment they arrived. He removed his clothes to run a bath. After washing, he lay on his bed, ready to sleep.

He was still angry about what happened today. Somehow he felt that Rufus set this trap for him.

After Amanda made her proposal known, Rufus remained passive and glued to his seat for at least a minute or two. He didn’t do anything even when everyone had all eyes on him.

If he really knew that Amanda’s school wasn’t permitted yet by the government, he would have stood up immediately for a reply. He was that capable.

But then, he merely stayed silent. The only explanation he could find was that Rufus was waiting for him to stand up and say something.

Lionel had always longed for his father’s approval and praise. Before Rufus took over Tang Group, Lionel was the president of the company. He managed everything! But now, he was replaced so easily by Rufus. He just couldn’t reconcile with this fact.

Now there came a chance to turn the tables. He broke the ice with the act of saving Amanda. And at the same time, people would realize who was actually in charge. He could also show off his good manners. He was killing three birds with one stone!

What a perfect opportunity! How could Lionel pass up?

Thinking more on this, Lionel grew more upset. He twisted and turned in bed, just was unable to fall asleep.

A pair of soft hands, with stark white skin and shiny red nails hugged Lionel from behind.

Lionel felt that Ivy's burning body pressed onto him. However, he was too bothered by his thoughts to do something. He took her hands and pushed them off his body.

'What do you think you're doing? Leave me alone. It's late. I'm tired and I had a bad day. Just go to sleep!' Lionel said in an annoyed tone.

A Firework Display For Cassandra

Ivy was astonished at what Lionel said just now. She froze in place. It was as if someone threw a bucket of ice water on her, which instantly doused the burning desire she had for him.

'When it comes to our sexual life, Lionel has always been so active for so many years. He has never, ever refused me like he just did today. What is wrong with him?' She thought to herself.

After she finished that trail of thought, she felt even colder than the moonlight outside the window.

It was the fifteenth day of the Lunar New Year, which was also known as the Lantern Festival. Horace, Lionel, and Rufus went out to the concert so it was only Jill and Ivy at home.

The two women spent the night talking, where Jill mostly comforted Ivy and told her to take better care of herself. She also mentioned that the Tang family was prepared to compensate her abortion that was caused by Cassandra.

Even though deep inside she was still very anxious, Ivy was trying her best to stay behaved and sensible. She simply nodded along and agreed with what Jill said.

‘I love Lionel. Nothing else matters,’ Ivy said sincerely.

‘I know that Jill loves Lionel best among her family. For as long as I can show her that there is nothing more important to me than Lionel, she would definitely see me as the most suitable wife for her son,’ Ivy thought.

Since she came back from the hospital, Ivy felt that everyone in the Tang family had changed their attitudes towards her. Though it was not obvious, she could feel it.

Ivy never hesitated to go after Lionel after he divorced Cassandra. However, it felt strange that she seemed to have to walk on eggshells with the Tang family.

It was common for someone who had nothing to lose to dare to do anything. Ivy was like that. Since day one, she had nothing but the baby in her womb. She had no choice but to frame Cassandra in causing the abortion. If she failed, she would rather die and took Cassandra down.

But, this was the opportunity she had been waiting for. Cassandra had divorced Lionel and left the Tang family. ‘My long-cherished desire for many years is about to be fulfilled. This is my chance. I must seize this chance to get what I want,’ Ivy thought. ‘But somehow, it feels like it is much more difficult than I’ve imagined.’

Originally, Lionel was the President of the Tang Group, and he was being groomed to be the successor of the company. However, the position was now occupied by Rufus and it seemed that he had taken Lionel's place.

When Lionel and Cassandra were still married, Horace actually appreciated his daughter-in-law. Rumors had it that the father and son actually argued about the divorce. Lionel took the divorce settlement to Cassandra and asked her to sign her name on the contract. He did it behind his father's back so that the divorce went through in the end. Horace found out after it was already done.

There was no use for Horace to stop the divorce. He knew his words would no longer sway them so he turned a blind eye.

Then, Ivy had moved in with the Tang family since she became pregnant with

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indow? It's not stuffy in here anyway.'

'Face the window and close your eyes. I have a gift for you,' he requested with excitement in his voice.

Rufus raised his lips as he stared at her waiting for her response.

‘A gift? What gift?’ Cassandra asked.

Her face was filled with confusion and it actually looked pretty cute. Seeing this, Rufus couldn’t resist the temptation to kiss her. But he refrained from doing so.

‘Honey, don’t ask anymore questions, okay? Just close your eyes and you will soon find out,’ he answered.

Standing by her side, he pulled her head against his chest, put his hand over her ear and covered her eyes with his other hand.

‘What are you doing? Why are you being so mysterious?’ she asked.

Cassandra then pouted her lips with a look of discontent.

Leaning against him, she felt his heart beating faster and faster. The anticipation was building inside him and now it seemed like it was transferred to her. She started to hear his heartbeat again, which was different from her own.

His was so strong and powerful and pulsed with great vitality.

‘I’m going to count down now. Open your eyes as soon as I hit one. Do you understand?’ Rufus asked her.

He bowed his head and gave her a quick kiss on the top of her head as a sign of comfort.

Hearing what he said, Cassandra felt more curious and excited so she hurriedly agreed to it.

Rufus then narrowed his black eyes as he turned to look out the window.

He then checked the indicator of his wristwatch and began to count down accurately, 'Five, four, three, two, one...'

As he counted to one, Rufus quickly moved his hand from her eyes to cover her ears to protect them from the loud sound.

Her beautiful eyelashes fluttered like the wings on a butterfly as she opened her eyes.

A deafening sound suddenly came from outside the window. Fortunately, her ears were covered by his hands. Otherwise, it would have hurt her ears.

Looking up, Cassandra watched a wonderful display of colorful fireworks lighting up the beautiful night sky.

The Fireworks

Cassandra's eyes were wide open, astonishment covering her face.

Fireworks lit up the sky in a dazzling array of pattern after pattern.

Some were green, the sparks raining down like a meteor shower.

Some were purple, glowing like smiling faces.

Some were gold, blossoming out like wild flowers.

And then there were the red, holding their shapes in burning hearts as the entire sky was painted bright with the color of romance.

As each explosion lit up the sky and scattered like falling flower pedals, the dark night shone as bright as day. Cassandra was enchanted.

She couldn't keep her eyes from the sky. Her astonishment slowly turned into jubilation and she couldn't wipe the smile off her face.

The burst of each firework reflected in her eyes and Rufus gazed as each color lit up her shining eyes.

'Like it?'

His voice was so soft and warm that even with two simple words, Cassandra could feel her knees buckle.

'A lot! It's so beautiful. Thank you.'

She felt her voice choke, her eyes starting to well up a little bit as the gratitude spilled out of her.

Rufus smiled, instinctively leaning over and leaving a soft kiss on her forehead.

'I'm glad you like it.'

He'd shipped the entire set of fireworks equipment along with all the fireworks from overseas but had thought little of the cost. All he could think of was making sure Cassandra liked it.

For Cassandra, the fireworks painted the most picturesque scene into the night sky. But for Rufus, the real beauty was in her eyes.

In her pure eyes, the fireworks bloomed. These were the clearest eyes he'd ever seen in his entire life.

As the fireworks faded into the night sky and the sounds of the explosions slowly drifted away, a sense of peace fell over their night.

Rufus removed his hands from covering Cassandra's ears, making their way down to cup her cheeks. He gently lifted her face, his eyes never wavering from hers, full to the brim with love.

'So, how are you going to thank me, huh?' he asked, a mischievous smile creeping onto his face.

His hands felt as hot as magma but his movements were soft as a feather; as if he was handling an invaluable piece of treasure.

His fiery eyes seemed to burn through her and Cassandra couldn't help but feel a little unsettled. She could never really behave calmly in front of him, especially when he spoke with such an irresistible tone and looked at her with such passion in his eyes. She felt as though she might fall down at any time, melting into a pool of liquid at his feet.

'Rufus, I... I... How do you want me to thank you?' she stammered with a bashful look.

This was nothing like her normal, articulate self. Within seconds, she'd been transformed into this shy, stammering girl. The last few words came out as soft as a murmur, barely audible if he had not been so close to her.

A wicked smile crept across his face and just like that, his lips were pressed fiercely against hers.

He closed his eyes, relishing the taste of this woman. A feeling of contentment filled his body.

Cassandra, on the other hand, was caught off-guard by the impromptu kiss. Her eyes stayed wide open in disbelief, and she could see nothing but the thick eyelashes of this man.

Though he kept his eyes closed, he could feel that her mind was elsewhere from the kiss so he naughtily bit her lip.

‘I don’t have anything

The Mighty Soldier King is back!

With the original intention to protect his beautiful boss, he accidentally gets involved in dangerous adventures and trouble.

Will our Mighty Soldier King be defeated? Or will he sweep away all obstacles?

side rolling out.

The horn of the unicorn crashed onto the floor below the seat, the figure cracking with as much ferocity as the breaking of her heart.

Amanda was used to having all her wishes come true. But this was the one that evaded her. She had tried and failed so many times with Rufus. She had spent hours crying over him, hurting over him, confronting her father for him. Even more, she had thrown the opportunity to perform overseas away just to come here, to his city.

‘I did all this for you, Rufus, ’ she lamented.

‘You know that. You know my heart is with you. But you’ve trampled over it again and again.

When you heard that Cassandra was gone, you pulled me out and asked Victor to take care of me as you rushed off to find her. This time, you drove off immediately after the concert, again just for her. You couldn’t even stay for just one second for me. And here you are, enjoying the fireworks with her.

Where did you learn this romance from? When we were together, you were as dumb as a stone. You didn't even dare come close to me. Anytime I wanted to touch you, you instinctively moved away, keeping a safe distance between us. Was it because you were afraid? Was it because you'd been hurt by a loved one before? I've tried so hard to be close to you...

But what about now? What changed? You hold her in your embrace. You kiss her. You look at her with such burning desire as if you are going to melt her!

Amanda couldn't contain her overwhelming sorrow any longer. She grovelled on her steering wheel, a wail of grief escaping from her lips.

'What's so good about Cassandra anyways? She was married to someone before! She flirted with other men when she still had a husband waiting for her back home. Why would you choose her, Rufus?' Jealousy roared inside of her.

But her undeniable pride held the tears in her eyes.

'No, stop it, Amanda. Are you going to give up now?' she berated herself. 'How can you give up!'

She had never got over the mistake she made last time. And this time, she was determined to get what she wanted, no matter the cost.

'I want Rufus back at my side. I want Rufus to only have eyes for me.

I am the only one who truly loves him,' she thought, with newfound conviction.

It was already the start of spring when Cassandra finally put up the signboard of her company outside the office building.

The peach flowers were budding wildly; the grasses sprouted vigorously; and the orioles were singing among the leaves of the willow trees. Even the air had started to smell sweet. A perfect welcome of the early spring.

Rufus would usually stay inside the Tang House most of the time, but he tried to make a point to go out and spend time with Cassandra. It was good for them both; the time they spent together was the most relaxing time of their week. It was even more comfortable when they were in each other's arms. The fragrance of her body made Cassandra all the more irresistible.

Cloris had gone abroad to study and Edith lived alone in their old house. Cassandra would give her a call once a week, just to update her about the company, but not much else, especially not her personal life.

Rufus was a forbidden topic between the mother and daughter; and even though Cassandra was still sulking about it, she was unable to say anything else. Her mother wouldn't be able to accept their relationship yet and she wasn't the one to press the issue any longer.

The Qin Group had just started over in G City and Cassandra was running around to get more business opportunities every day. Regardless of how tired she was, however, she would always clean up the villa herself each day.

In her heart, she saw the villa as her home with Rufus, and she was trying her best to keep it warm and comfortable.

Cassandra also tried to make the company feel homely to her employees. She hired highly skilled chefs to cook nutritious work lunches for them and allowed employees to take paid vacations. As time passed by, all of them had learned what kind of boss she was and plenty of her workers were thankful to her. There were also a lot more people who wanted to work for her.

For the sake of her employees' well-being, Cassandra also made sure to have regular medical exams for them, bringing them to Jenks's hospital.

While the employees were waiting in line at the physical examination center, the young people were busy laughing and joking around one another as Cassandra was calling one of her clients outside the door.

'Yes, Mr. Wang! We've completed the design you requested. A member of our team will bring it to you personally this afternoon, but if there's any other inquiry or question, please let me know!' Cassandra spoke eagerly over the phone, before hanging up.

She cherished every client she had and sincerely hoped to develop a long-term relationship with them. All the work that her company did was treated with great care, no matter how small or trivial it was.

While she was talking, a young man in white uniform passed by but he stopped as he turned towards Cassandra's frame.

'Cassandra? Is that you? What are you doing here? Are you sick?' he asked, worry in his eyes.

It was Dylan. He looked as handsome just as he always had been in the past, looking at Cassandra with a concerned expression on his face.

Cassandra laughed. 'No, don't worry. I'm not sick. My workers are having their routine physical examinations here,' she explained.

She glanced over towards the small crowd in the hallway to stress her point.

Dylon had recently learned of her divorce with Lionel and felt sorry for her, which was only further emphasized when he saw her contorted face before

‘Who does she think she is? I won’t marry her even if she is the last woman on earth,’ said Hiram Rong.

‘Marry into a family with tens of billions of assets? How lucky I am! I won’t be so foolish as to break off the engagement. At worst, I can receive money as part of the divorce settlement,’ said Rachel Ruan.

Their great-grandfathers made a pact about their engagement a hundred years ago...

of them ate cheerfully.

‘Ah, I almost forgot! Thank you for helping me out last time. I still have your dress in my place. Don’t worry, it’s dry cleaned! I can have it sent to you later,’ Lyndsy said in between bites.

Her cheeks were burning from the heat and her eyes crinkled in gratitude.

‘Don’t mention it! I still have your dress too, so it’s really nothing to worry about. Maybe we could just find another time to exchange them? By the way, you need to tell me about your new movie! Have you started shooting?’

She remembered that Lyndsy had told her that she was just about to start on her new project.

Lyndsy’s smile slowly faded and she looked away.

‘I-I’ve decided to terminate my contract with the movie. I’m also going to leave my agency soon. Actually I’m planning to start my own studio. You see, it’s better to depend on myself and not someone else I don’t trust,’ Lyndsy explained.

Cassandra wanted to hug her tight. Lyndsy was such a kind soul who never deserved to look so sad. Lyndsy was pure, authentic, and honest, but because she became a star at such a young age, there could have been a disagreement between her and her agency. She tried not to press about her decision, and instead, focused on her plans for the future.

‘What about the damages? Would you be able to afford it?’ Cassandra asked worriedly.

She knew about the liquidated damages that movie stars tended to face whenever they terminated their agreements. Whenever news broke out about actors terminating their contracts with their firms, they were often considered as incredibly large scandals.

‘Hmph. They violated the agreement first. The director of the movie switched the leading female role without consulting me. You can’t even imagine how sketchy they all are, and I wouldn’t want to bother you with the toxicity. The movie producer’s so, so stupid. The entire film production is such a mess. Nothing like my last few movies,’ Lyndsy sighed irritably.

Her face was contorted in irritation.

‘Anyway, TY Group is actually pretty reliable and capable. They bring out the most brilliant scripts; they hire really talented directors; and their movies are always well-reviewed. I worked with them in that particular movie that won me the Best Actress Award!’ Lyndsy said.

‘The TY Group seems to have a wide range of businesses; their interests in entertainment and other fields are remarkable. In fact, I’ve bought some decoration materials in one of their malls last time,’ Cassandra relayed.

She was bursting with curiosity as the TY Group was mentioned in the conversation.

‘Indeed. They started off with securities and finance, and they are very famous abroad too. Now they prefer doing business at home. They kicked off with investments and are now eagerly engaged in all kinds of industries. Moreover, in its efforts to seek higher grounds, the TY Group is now paying attention to the entertainment industry. You know what? The films they had invested in the past two years had hit huge box-office successes. Now they have set up their own film company and will make and sell their own films in the future.’

Lyndsy’s eyes widened at her description of the TY Group. Her metaphors were so detailed that it was as if she were enumerating the heirlooms of her own family. Cassandra was enthralled by her words and couldn’t take her eyes off her as she spoke.

‘Why don’t you join TY Entertainment as they are so strong? With a good platform and your respectable reputation, you will surely win more awards,’ Cassandra suggested.

Expressing deep concern about Lyndsy’s prospects, Cassandra was excited at the thought of seeing her succeed in the future.

‘Oh! TY Entertainment is a company after all. You know, I’ve got a fiery temper. In case I have trouble with the senior management, for sure they will keep me idle intentionally.’

Lyndsy knew her flaws well, but she also had her own ideas.

A crow is never the whiter for washing herself often. For Lyndsy, it was better to follow her heart than to fawn on others. It was hard to run her own studio, but she wouldn't need to restrain herself.

She had a strong character, and it was true that it would be more suitable for her to set up her own studio. In that way, nobody would interfere with her and no one would mess around her.

'Since you have the plans to set up a studio, won't your agency make things more difficult for you?'

Cassandra thought that if the agency knew that Lyndsy wanted to set up her own group, they would deliberately put obstacles in her way, so that her plans wouldn't be realized.

'They know nothing about this. I have secured the business license. Then I will submit a case to the court, claiming that the contract they signed for me is at variance with the facts. Surely, I will have to pay the liquidated damages which shouldn't be too much since the agency is the guilty party.'

Lyndsy trusted Cassandra completely, so she always confided things to Cassandra.

They chatted while eating, from work to skin care products and many other topics women liked to talk about.

On the other hand, Dylan just kept his silence. Being a man as he was, he couldn't get a word in the girls' talk.

Lyndsy stole a curious glance at Dylan from time to time. She thought t

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left out as he stayed alone in the villa.

'I had dinner with my friends, so I came back late. Why, did you wait long?'

Cassandra sat beside Rufus, curled up and snuggled herself into his chest, feeling his heartbeat.

Rufus subconsciously reached out to fondle her hair, but soon went rigid, remembering that he was still upset with her.

He wanted to ask her so many questions, but his heart was softened as she acted pettishly. He didn't know how to deal with this woman every time she acted so child-like.

'And who are these friends you stayed with so late?'

Rufus tried his best to make his tone natural, but it was still strained.

'Just some acquaintances.'

Cassandra did not want to mention that she met Lyndsy tonight. After all, only a number of people knew that Lyndsy wanted to terminate the contract. She trusted Cassandra, so she told Cassandra about her plans. Cassandra did not want to betray her confidence.

Rufus's grief came in waves, slowly devouring him. He had seen Dylan's car in the monitor and Cassandra got off his car, but she didn't mention Dylan's name.

'Is there something between them? Does Cassandra try to hide something from me?' Rufus thought silently.

Cassandra moved closer to Rufus and murmured in his ears, 'Rufus, you're rarely visiting me here. I feel so lonely. Every time you come, I'm so glad as if I'm celebrating the holidays.'

Her voice was nasal. Rufus put out his hand to gently stroke her face, and he felt the brewing tears in her eyes.

Cassandra moved away to dodge Rufus's hand. She felt very humiliated. Her joy was immense when she saw Rufus waiting for her in the hall, but she dared not show her excitement.

She wished she could see Rufus when she came home every day, but she knew it was too much to hope for.

Rufus's lips hardened and an angry mask shadowed his face at Cassandra. His moves were rough like he wanted to give full vent to his anger on top the little woman. 'Why is she hiding that from me?'