

## The Enchanted Night – Chapter: 231

Who Harmed Rufus Part One

Cassandra had been unfocused and absent-minded all day at work. When her assistant spoke to her, she would lose concentration and ask the assistant to repeat the whole lot all over again. She was also slow to react that she would ask the same question three times after the assistant had already answered it.

‘Manager Qin ? Are you okay ?’

Seeing Cassandra in such a state, the assistant was extremely concerned. Her boss had never been in such a mind state before. Lionel, her ex-husband used to verbally abuse her and embarrass her, but through it all, she kept focus and composed. Cassandra was so intelligent and capable that her assistant aspired to be her. Dreaming of the day she would look and react as her boss did. However, today would not be one of those days. It was as though aliens abducted her and left their replacement instead.

‘Yes, thanks, I’m fine...well go on,’ said Cassandra robotically.

Cassandra motioned her assistant to continue. She, however, was still thinking about Rufus who left the hospital for the meeting at the Tang Group.

Earlier in the hospital, Rufus had demanded to be discharged. The doctor finally resigned himself to allow him to fill out a release agreement as he would be going on his own liability. She wondered what was so important that Rufus would risk his health for ? What was he doing now ?

He was determined and had more stamina than any man she knew. This would overpower his pain and drive him to complete what he needed to.

Coming in and out of her thoughts, Cassandra was only to casually reply to her assistant.

Cassandra was very worried about his health, but she had no way of convincing him. When he put his mind to do something, Rufus would never surrender his stance, and not even if hell snowed over.

Rufus gave her a smile as he saw the concern on her beautiful face and said to her in an affirmative tone, 'I'm fine. Don't worry about me. I'll go back to the hospital after the meeting. Don't think much about it, okay?'

He stretched his hands out of his car, grasping her hands. He he

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When Brian learns the truth, there is no chance for Hannah to win his heart.

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!' stated Lionel defiantly.

Suddenly a voice broke the silence. All eyes turned to look at the speaker. Lionel was standing up with an angry look on his face.

'I don't think this kind of military style of management is suitable for our company. Everyone makes mistakes sometimes. Besides, these rules are

far too severe. This will break down the team building and the harmony that has taken us so long to establish,' Lionel spoke confidently.

He frowned, looking very discontented with this decision.

The proposal announced was on the new management plan they had discussed before. The responsibility system was about to be implemented in Tang Group. To be more exact, if one employee made a mistake, he was to accept the corresponding punishment, including deducting bonuses, and cancelling vacations for less serious offences; if far more serious occurrences took place, they could even be dismissed by the company.

Lionel thought, 'I'm busy talking business with clients, but unfortunately I can't establish business relationships or clinch any deals. I don't take some matters to be serious as I will sometimes bend the rules. If one day I were to make a mistake in any aspects, someone would take it as a handle against me. I will be dismissed by the company under the new system. At that time, I will suffer. So I must stop such matters from being passed.'

Who Harmed Rufus Part Two

'It seems that Mr. Tang is very considerate towards the company's employees. The Tang Group is facing a changeable market, so no one knows what kind of troubles the company will run into if the belt isn't being tightened. If there isn't a strong management system to discipline employees, I'm afraid our company will meet many unnecessary problems,' Rufus replied.

He and all the board members knew why Lionel opposed this proposal. It was because he had made more mistakes than anyone else present. Naturally, he was not willing to accept the consequence of this proposal.

Being the senior executive in Tang Group, no one dared to oppose Lionel and dictated the company's regulations. However, once this new rule was implemented, both high executives and employees must abide by it. Lionel was usually late for work and always left early. But with the new system, he couldn't do this anymore.

'I agree with Mr. Luo. Now it is important for our company to create a stronger leadership. The rules stipulated by Mr. Luo are not rigid. They are only common regulations and rules that every company abides by. So there is no need for us to worry about these rules, as we don't break them,'

one of the directors expressed his support for Rufus. Seeing this director's response, other directors also showed their standpoints for the proposal one after another.

'It certainly does. Besides, the regulation is also reasonable, which can manage our company's better.'

'You are right. This regulation will also strengthen the self-discipline of our employees.'

...

All the directors supported Rufus. Seeing this, Lionel went purple with rage, realising how unpopular he was.

Rufus had expected such a scene, so he was not surprised at all.

If Lionel was a good manager and Tang Group developed well under his leadership, he would certainly get the support of all, including directors and employees. However, Lionel was unwilling to waste huge amounts of energy and time on the business—he was only interested in the finances and pocketing them. He was inevitably giving rise to complaints from those lower executives and employees.

‘Let’s vote on the proposal,’ Rufus suggested.

Sitting as president, he waved. ‘Everyone for?...everyone against?’ Although his legs were severely injured, Rufus still insisted on presiding over the meeting. The directors esteemed hi

It all starts on that fateful night.

When Ella, who is the dear sister of Samuel’s best buddy, sneaks into the hotel where the drunken Samuel resides and gets pregnant...

‘I don’t want a divorce!’

‘I don’t want a divorce!’

‘I did no such thing!’

Ella jumped on the bed and cried out. ‘I don’t want a scheming woman as my wife. Just sign the paper...

accident should never happen to me. I have been driving so many years, and I have massive amount of experience in handling stressful situation. There is something wrong with this, ’ he thought.

The real reason for the accident was a car suddenly came out from his side, at the intersection. His first reaction was to turn the steering wheel to avoid the car, thus hitting a nearby stone wall.

This vehicle involved in this accident quickly disappeared from sight before Rufus could even catch a glimpse of the model of the car.

After the accident, he went into a coma. He always felt something was amiss. 'Why didn't the traffic police who were in charge of this accident tell me about the suspicious facts? In addition, the accident reports which the traffic police filled out stated I drove recklessly. Nothing was there about another driver, Why?

But now there is no evidence that someone deliberately crashed my car. I have to slowly collect evidences by myself. I must find out who did it,' he thought.

However, Rufus felt a little puzzled in his mind. He was sure that it was definitely not an ordinary car accident. That car was gone as if it had never appeared. How strange it was!

'Please continue to investigate the accident. Search for the surveillance videos of those intersections and streets connecting to the Garden Road. Be sure to find a red car. Someone must know something,'

Rufus gave his order to Victor who wore a serene look and nodded in understanding.

Lost in his own thoughts again, Rufus wondered, 'Who on earth would want to harm me?'

It had been a month since Rufus finally got discharged from the hospital. His injuries had surprisingly recovered faster than what was usual. Even the doctors were impressed by how fast he recovered.

The entire month, Cassandra had stayed in Garden Villa to take care of him. No one from the Tang family cared enough to check up on him. They didn't even know he was discharged and back to the villa. Sometimes, Horace would call him to ask him whether he could visit him. However, Rufus always refused, saying he didn't want anyone to bother him in the hospital.

'Why don't you bring back all your stuff here?'

Rufus furrowed his eyebrows and looked at Cassandra. She had only gotten some change clothes back to the villa.

'These clothes are enough. I will bring back other stuff later.'

Considering Rufus was still recovering, Cassandra didn't want to risk annoying him. Actually, she had no intention of coming back to Garden Villa.

They could live together for the time being, but moving back here would mean accepting Rufus's proposal. And she didn't want to be in a marriage that wasn't blessed.

She could accept the wedding celebration to be low-key but it still had to be warm and sweet. How could she marry him without the blessings and support of their families?

'If you think moving back would be inconvenient and tiring, I can ask someone to help you,'

Rufus said. He was confused as to why she was putting it off further.

‘It’s fine. Let’s wait until you completely recover.’

Cassandra had decided to put her cards on the table and speak with complete honesty only after he got better.

Rufus, however, had mixed feelings about what was on Cassandra’s mind. On one hand, she took so much care of him and did all the housework, and on the other, she rejected him.

And yet, Rufus could do nothing about it.

Wasn’t it fascinating? The day had finally come. A man like Rufus didn’t know how to handle a woman, anymore. He had never imagined there would come a day when he would feel so helpless.

‘I heard you joined the Union of Real Estate?’

Victor had told Rufus about it. He was slightly hurt, since he had gotten to know this from someone other than her. She used to share everything with him.

The contract Cassandra signed to join the Union was drafted by Arthur. Even Arthur got to know it before Rufus. He felt disappointed and betrayed.

‘Uh-huh. I hope Qin Group can have a brighter future.’

Cassandra hadn’t expected Rufus to bring this up. She found it strange and kept looking at him with a sheepish, confused smile.



Rufus remained quiet for a while, wondering whether he should confront her or not. 'Why didn't you tell me?' he asked, finally.

He hated that he had to act like a gossipy woman, asking for all the trivial details of her life. But Cassan

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s going to be sick.'

Cassandra turned around, ready to leave; Rufus grabbed her arm, pulling her into the bed.

'Please don't leave.'

The bedroom he was staying in now used to be a study. It didn't have a lot of space. A single bed was all they could fit in there. Cassandra would sleep in the bedroom on the second floor. They hadn't slept together for a long, long time.

Presently, she could feel the warmth emanating from Rufus's hand. Her heart started to beat faster as she tried to pull her hand out of his grip, failing.

'Rufus, you haven't recovered...'

Of course, Cassandra knew what Rufus was thinking. Thinking about his injured leg, she rejected the idea.

‘Oh no, no. You misunderstand me. I just want you to massage my back. I feel some pain between my shoulders and my waist,’

Rufus suppressed what he actually wanted and teased Cassandra. Her face instantly turned redder.

She felt so embarrassed, blaming herself for thinking the other way. Poor Rufus had been sleeping in the same position for days due to the injury. He couldn’t turn over in the bed at will. Obviously, he was in no position to have sex with her. Why would she even think about it?

Plus, the doctor had told Cassandra to massage his back as much as possible. She had completely forgotten!

‘Oh...let me help you turn over.’

Feeling guilty, Cassandra bent down and held up Rufus.

By the time she turned him, she had already broken into a sweat. Still, she massaged his back, all the way from his shoulders to the end of his spine.

The muscles on Rufus’s shoulders were so strong and her hands started to cramp just after a few minutes.

Rufus could tell Cassandra was tired. He smiled playfully at her and said, ‘Why don’t you sit on my back? That way, I’ll feel more comfortable and you won’t get tired.’

Also, If you massage well, you will get a reward!’

‘What kind of reward?’

Cassandra asked casually, all the while working with her hands.

Rufus’s sculpted body and smooth skin glowed in the sunlight. While he was basking in his radiance, Cassandra tried hard to keep still and not to lose herself in his aura.

‘Hmm... Well, the reward... is me.’

Rufus swiftly turned and effectively pinned her down. The little woman couldn’t move at all.

‘Please let me go...’

‘Now be a good girl and take a nap with me.’

‘But..but the bed is way too small for the two of us. I’ll go upstairs and sleep there...’

Cassandra was caught in a dilemma, a hot one at that. She wasn’t sure what to do.

The bed wasn’t designed to fit two people. It was impossible for them to sleep beside each other; what Rufus meant was that she could lie down on his chest. But what if she accidentally hurt his injured leg?

His injuries hadn’t fully healed yet. The thought of him still needing her for support when walking filled her with worry.

Rufus quickly realized that her hesitation stemmed from his injuries. But... Despite his broken leg, he had his ways.

Light streamed through the satin curtains and shed its radiance on the pair tangled on the bed. A golden mist surrounded the couple as the sunshine refracted.

‘Your leg...’

Cassandra was about to go on a tirade about his injuries, but was rudely interrupted by his lips—effectively sealing her mouth, yet passionately.

They were everything that a couple was. They were, however, oblivious of the nearby voyeur who dilligently monitored all their actions...

Cassandra was more lively these days. All the employees in the company could attest to her glow.

Women in love were bound to change something in their lives, one way or another. Cassandra was proof of that. She had become even more attractive. Her look seemed more mature, and being in love had done wonders for her beauty.

Her office door swung open and her assistant peeked in and reported, ‘Manager Qin, someone by the name of Ling is looking for you.’

The assistant beamed with a big smile at Cassandra, full of admiration. This was the first time she ever saw Michelle in person. ‘So that is Michelle Lin, the well-known dress designer!’ she exclaimed inwardly. ‘God, I cannot believe I see her here in the Qin Group!’

‘Well, invite her in!’

Caught off-guard by Michelle's sudden visit, Cassandra quickly groomed herself to get ready for the meeting.

Michelle was Rufus's aunt. When Rufus was still in physical therapy, Jasper and she visited him several ti

Falling from nobility, Zen Luo became a humble slave and served as a human punchbag for his former cousins. Inadvertently, he found a way to refine himself into a weapon and a legend started because of that. With a strong belief in never surrender, he strove for revenges and pursued big dreams. Warriors from various clans contended for hegemony and the world was stirred. Relying on the body that was comparable to a powerful weapon, Zen beat his numerous enemies on his way to the immortality. Would he succeed eventually?

hermore, the Tang Family had no idea that Rufus owned TY Group.

The very reason he chose to stay with the Tang Group, at least from what Michelle understood, was to help the company get through the rough times. It was unacceptable to Michelle if Rufus failed to meet his goal because of Cassandra.

However, little did Michelle know about the true intention of Rufus as to why he remained in the Tang Family. She foolishly believed that the conflict derived solely from Cassandra.

'Michelle, I'd like to take this chance to tell you that I'm really not the reason for their rivalry. They're competing based on their business acumen. Surely I can persuade him to get off his brother's case, and even try to get along with the Tang Family. But, just how can I do that if you're asking me to end things with him?'

As she spoke, her eyes welled up.

It wasn't an easy thing to separate two people deeply in love. They were each other's home. No matter how carefully they separated from each other, they were bound to feel intense pain.

'Cassandra, just tell me already. What would it take for you to agree to leave Rufus?'

Michelle sneered Cassandra after being so blunt.

'Both you and I know how much Rufus is worth and how rich he is. Just give me a number. I'll write a cheque this instant!'

Her brows darted up and her nostrils flared. Michelle glared at the little woman, believing that money was the driving force of Cassandra's resolve for keeping their relationship alive.

'You've got it all wrong. If I truly wanted money, I wouldn't have divorced Lionel, and I definitely wouldn't have taken up the mantle in the Qin Group as well!' Cassandra exclaimed breathlessly.

Please Respect Us Part One

It took a few moments for Michelle to register Cassandra's words. 'What did she mean by that? Hadn't Rufus told her about his real identity yet? How is this possible?' wondered Michelle. 'Why wouldn't he tell Cassandra how prosperous and rich he actually is?

Or could it be that Cassandra wants to conceal her knowledge from me?' she guessed confusedly.

Michelle wasn't sure which one was the truth. Anyway, she shrugged off these thoughts and came back to the matter. She was determined to end Rufus and Cassandra's relationship once and for all.

'I don't know if you are pretending or not, Cassandra. To be honest, I don't care. I know that you are a lovely girl and you deserve love. In fact, I believe everyone deserves love. But as for me, my biggest concern is Rufus's reputation and his future. So I can't allow the two of you to be together anymore. I know this must be hard for you. But try to accept this and leave him alone,'

Michelle warned harshly. As she declared this, she stared into Cassandra's eyes with a piercing look. There was a note of finality in her tone and Cassandra felt it too. 'I can't let her sabotage Rufus's reputation. His career is his number one priority. No matter how much he loves her, I can't watch his career perish,' thought Michelle with a sigh. She felt relieved after speaking out her heart.

Deep down, Michelle knew that Cassandra was a compassionate and kind girl. She had nothing against her nor did she dislike her. But rumors were insidious and cruel hence she concluded that they were by no means good for both of their reputations. So when it came to this, Michelle wanted to ensure Rufus's reputation was untarnished. Her concern for Rufus was understandable. And she had no regrets for blurting out her true feelings.

'Michelle, I respect you very much. But what you want me to do is something I am not capable of doing. I want you to respect the decision Rufus and I have taken. We are together because we love each other dearly. And as a couple, we have been through a lot of hardships already. And I am fully aware that this journey won't be smooth. I am predicting many obstacles in the coming future. In spite of this, I am not willing to

give up on us. No matter what happens, we will fight the hurdles in life together. I really hope that we can get our families' blessing,'

Cassandra said in a very humble tone. She looked back at Michelle politely as she

'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!'

he got out of the building, she found Rufus waiting for her in his car.

'H-how are you...I thought your leg...' Cassandra's voice trailed off as she gaped at Rufus.

He was sitting on the driver's seat nonchalantly. Cassandra couldn't believe her own eyes. Yesterday, Rufus couldn't even walk without her assistance. It seemed impossible for him to get through the day without her support. But now he was gracefully driving the car. Cassandra's bewildered face depicted her shock.

'Hey Cassandra, I am perfectly fine so don't worry about it. Well, I just couldn't let my princess go to this big event in a taxi. Jump right in or else we will be late!' He came around and curtly pushed the car door open for her.

His eyes scrutinized Cassandra from head to toe. In this black dress, she looked ravishing.



The dress was simple but chic. After all, she was going to a charity event, not a fashion show. There was a flower shaped design right in front of her chest, making the outfit even more sophisticated. Rufus couldn't understand how she had managed to pick a dress that was both elegant and suitable for the occasion. There was something about the color black that made her skin look smoother and lovelier. All in all, Rufus found it hard to peel his eyes off her face. He had a sudden urge to embrace her, but somehow suppressed this desire.

Cassandra, on the other hand, was both stunned and touched by his gesture. Finally, she got inside the car. But Rufus didn't turn his face away from her. He continued to admire her beauty. Cassandra was oblivious of the effect she had on him.

'What's wrong?'

Please Respect Us Part Two

After a short moment's silence, Cassandra asked. For a second, she panicked thinking there must be something wrong with Rufus's leg. 'Maybe his leg hurts which is why he is unable to drive,' her anxious mind guessed. Immediately, she directed her eyes on his leg and got ready to bend forward in order to check on him.

Before she could move much, Rufus clutched her with his strong hand. He held her chin with his other hand. Slowly, he leaned forward and gave her a passionate kiss.

The street was filled with people. Even though the windows were up, Cassandra still felt very self conscious and shy.

‘Cassandra, right now I just had a taste of your lipstick. But tonight, I will be eating you completely,’ Rufus confessed with a smirk.

And his eyes were glinting with pleasure. His words and his actions brought a scarlet red tint to her cheeks. Gingerly, she pushed Rufus away and turned her face to the window. She couldn’t bear looking into his enticing eyes.

Seeing her cute reaction, Rufus chuckled. He finally withdrew his gaze from her and started the car. They slowly drove to the hotel that held the charity event.

When they arrived there, they noticed it was already packed with people. Since both of their names were on the invitation list, they were instantly allowed to enter inside.

Everyone present in the hall were dressed in black. It was their way of mourning and showing respect to those who lost their lives during the deadly earthquake.

Even the decoration of the hall was plain and simple. No gaudy colors were used for anything. ‘Whoever decorated this place did an amazing job,’ thought Cassandra. It was elegant yet it retained the gravity of the tragedy.

Rufus was dressed in a sleek black suit that made him look striking. Cassandra’s black dress complemented his outfit. Rufus was tall and collected whereas Cassandra was petite and soft. As soon as they walked inside, many pairs of eyes fell on them.

Cassandra caught a glimpse of some people looking towards her and whispering among their friends. And to be honest, it made her edgy and restless. She had no idea what they were talking about. But she knew it

couldn't be good. Gossips spread like a wildfire and Cassandra fell victim to it several times. Last time, she was ordained by Ivy to apologize in front of so many people. Even now her cheeks flushed with humiliation at the thought of this. She felt a sudden urge to leave and began to regret her decision to attend this event.

Rufus must have felt her hesitation and distress. He put his large hands on her, trying to silently comfort her.

'Don't worry. Nothing bad will happen to you while I am

When her sister ran away from the wedding, Autumn was forced to marry Charles.

His name had been linked to innumerable ladies.

He had different girlfriends for every day of a year.

Autumn had never thought that she would fall in love with him.

ake. I went there looking for the most valuable person of my life. But once I arrived there, I realized how indifferent I was towards other's misery. That's when it struck me how trivial my personal need was when compared to their sufferings. I felt a wave of guilt surge through my body. I realized how little I cared about others.'

While he spoke these words, Rufus relived that day. He remembered how overwhelmed he was when he first arrived at A City. It seemed like the manifestation of a nightmare. Everyone was scattered around crying for their loved ones. Suddenly, he found himself so small under the mother nature.

‘I was a volunteer there for some time. We donated as much as we could but it just wasn’t enough. The needs have always outweighed the resources. I remember how helpless I felt then. While I was there, I also got an opportunity to see how hard the rescue teams work to save people. And I have also witnessed the pain they go through when they watch lives being lost. I was there to hear people sob after they lost their dear ones. And I was also there to watch the tears of joy stream down the eyes of the family being reunited. And in that moment, I swore to myself that I would do something for them after I got back to G City.’

Suddenly, Rufus turned his eyes on Cassandra. She discerned a dazzling bright light shining in his eyes.

‘And while I had this experience, there was someone who was by my side. And her actions moved me deeply. No matter what difficulty she encountered, she never gave up. Her determination and enthusiasm to make a change was laudable. She helped the rescue team on saving lives by offering them her professional knowledge. And we are lucky to have her here with us tonight. She is none other than Cassandra Qin!’

**She Was Cassandra**

Cassandra hadn’t expected Rufus to mention her name in front of everyone. She was surprised to hear him talk about her, not knowing how to react.

Everyone around turned toward her, staring at her face, smiling. All of a sudden, she was the centre of attraction.

She looked up at Rufus, who gently smiled at her, encouraging her.

‘Cassandra is an excellent architectural designer. She has a great structural understanding of old, condemned buildings, which the rescue team benefited from immensely. It was because of her that they were able to locate the injured in such little time. I believe many of you have heard her story. We should be proud to have such a talented and conscientious designer in this industry!’

Rufus said and clapped, nodding his head. Everyone followed him and soon, the entire space reverberated with a loud applause.

People who were merely curious about who Cassandra was, now all stood admiring her.

Suddenly, Cassandra realized why Rufus had mentioned her. One, he was trying to raise funds for the revitalization of A City. Two, he wanted to seize this opportunity to make people more aware of Cassandra and what kind of person she really was, driving away all their misconceptions.

Rufus and Cassandra were the only two people from the Union who had gone to the earthquake-struck areas and taken part in the rescue work. Naturally, they were the only ones qualified to make a speech at the banquet.

Cassandra gazed at Rufus gratefully. The applause was so overwhelming. It made her blush.

‘I really hope everyone here would donate money generously to contribute to the post-earthquake reconstruction of A City. I vouch for Tang Group. We will donate a hundred million and also propose to build a new, earthquake-proof library for the citizens of A City;’

Rufus declared firmly. The very way with which he talked conveyed what an excellent leader he was. Everyone in the room respected him not just because he was their superior but also because he was extremely humble and intelligent.

Lionel was amazed! 100 million! Did Tang Group even have that much money? Plus, Lionel hadn't heard about the board's approval regarding this donation.

Rufus beamed at the cheering people and got off the stage, as the curtains opened slowly behind him. One by one, the performers and singers emerged, transforming the vibe of the place completely into a kind of grand celebration.

Rufus walked to make his way to Cassandra through the crowd. Every few steps, someone would stop him to shake his hand or give him a pat on the back. Yet, his eyes remained fixed on Cassandra, with a constantly smiling mouth.

'How did you like the surprise?'

Rufus asked, brushing her forearm slightly.

'Thank you, Rufus.'

She grabbed his hand and wrote on his palm with her finger.

Cassandra didn't utter a single word, instead kept staring at him lovingly. It was one of those moments when the silence spoke for itself.

Interrupting their dreamy exchange, Lionel emerged from behind Rufus, grabbing his shoulder.

‘Rufus! How could you make a declarati

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?

still looked like a beautiful princess, standing apart from everyone.

She held a mic in her hands and smiled sweetly at everyone with crinkling eyes.

‘Hello everyone! The song I just played is dedicated to all the kind businessmen out here! Without your help, the reconstruction of A City wouldn’t have started so smoothly. I am extremely grateful for your support and generosity.’

Her voice was as sweet as a nightingale. Mesmerized by her, people started to nod their heads, smiling back at her and raising their glasses, cheering.

‘Now, I’d like to have one of you to come to the stage and perform with me! Someone who can represent everyone and send our condolences and wishes to the disaster-struck area.’

People talked among each other, wondering who would be the lucky one.

Amanda’s face lit up as she finally spotted Rufus, standing far away in the back.

‘I would like to invite the organizer of tonight’s charity banquet, the president of Tang Group, Mr. Rufus Luo to perform a duet with me. Make some noise for Rufus, everyone!’

Amanda gestured Rufus to join her on the stage as an assistant swiftly placed another chair next to her own.

Everyone looked back at Rufus expectantly and waited for him to join Amanda, making way for him.

Rufus’s nostrils flared as he clenched his fists. The blue-green veins accentuated on his forehead.

He knew Amanda was doing all this on purpose.

He hadn’t arranged for Amanda to perform. Someone had changed the programme schedule without consulting him.

Rufus felt Lionel’s smug gaze upon him from the side. He smiled cunningly at Rufus, a look of accomplishment all over his face.

Rufus understood what had conspired. It was Lionel.

This seemed like one of his cheap tricks to embarrass him in public.

Just a while ago, Rufus had made the declaration about Cassandra and now, Lionel was making him perform alongside Amanda, his rumoured girlfriend.

What a vicious bastard! He knew Rufus wouldn’t ruin the banquet by denying. It was a trap Rufus had no way to come out of.



Rufus held Cassandra's hand and strode toward the stage, taking her along.

Looking at the two of them approaching, the crowd automatically cleared a path for them.

Amanda's face dulled, her lips pressed together. 'Why would Rufus bring Cassandra up here? What is he up to?' she wondered bitterly.

A hint of nervousness flashed through Lionel's eyes. Rufus's actions had perplexed him.

Cassandra, on the other hand, was in a daze. Even when they reached the stage, she still hadn't recollected her senses.

'Let Cassandra, Amanda and I perform together for this show!'

Rufus announced, taking the microphone. Then, he turned the speaker off and whispered to Cassandra, 'Sing something. Anything is fine. I'll play the accompaniment music for you.'

He turned the mic back on, fixing it on the stand and adjusting its height for Cassandra. He gave her an encouraging smile and a pat on her shoulder before he walked to the piano and took a seat.

Everyone in the room was shocked! The love triangle in the rumour was now on the stage, ready to perform together. What was this supposed to mean?

Some wondered if this was one of Rufus's business strategy to gain fame by becoming the hot topic all over the news.

Most of the crowd was curiously drawn to Cassandra, who, on the other hand, had no idea about what she was supposed to do. She had simply been dragged onto the stage, mindlessly, and then, asked to sing!

Even though part of her was pretty confident about her singing skills; truth was, she had never sung in front of so many people. The most she did was sometimes to hum and sing to herself in solitude.

Once, Rufus had joked saying she sang so well that she could even release an album of her own. Of course, she rejected the idea right away. She didn't want to become a publicly scrutinised singer. All she wanted was to work at her desk, drawing her sketches.

She found herself most relaxed working with the pen and the paper in silence, or making use of the design applications on the computer. It was almost meditative for her.

But in the moment, Cassandra had no chance to retreat. The mic was right in front of her, and hundreds of people were waiting for her to give them a performance. If she flinched, wouldn't she be viewed as a coward by the others in the industry?

What would they think of her—the head of the Qin Group wasn't even willing to sing a song at the charity dinner?

She couldn't let this happen!

'Never mind, just give it all!' she said to herself.

She closed her eyes and drew a deep breath, preparing herself.

The crowd went quiet, all their eyes fixed on Cassandra.

'In that misty morning when I saw your smiling face.

You only looked at me and I was yours.

But when I turned around, you were nowhere to be seen.

You had walked away and closed the door.

When will I see you again;

When will the sky start to rain;

When will the stars start to shine;

When will I know that you're mine...'

The song she sang was called 'Fairy Tale.' Her voice was smooth and clear, like a nightingale. Every note, every tune, every syllable came out perfectly. It was almost as if she was a professional vocalist.

There was no hints of forced fanciness in her voice, no impure sounds. One could confidently

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lly, and wanted to help her win the battle.

'Okay, go to the VIP room 6. I will tell Rufus to go there later. Cassandra is likely to follow.'

Michelle cocked her eyebrows conspicuously. She wasn't particularly fond of Amanda. All she wanted was to use Amanda to kick Cassandra out of the way.

Amanda didn't hesitate for a single second before agreeing to Michelle's plan. Heeding her instructions, she quickly headed toward the VIP room.

After settling the business with Amanda, Michelle arranged a reporter to conduct a personal interview with Cassandra. Like she had planned, the reporter pulled Cassandra away from the crowd to ask her some questions.

At the same time, when Rufus was nowhere around Cassandra, he was suddenly approached by someone.

'Mr. Luo, Miss Ke was in VIP room 6. She isn't feeling too well. Since you are the organiser of the event, would you like to visit her and see what's wrong?'

Rufus raised his eye brows, genuinely taken in by the information.

He recalled Amanda was actually sick. Despite that, she had come to perform. Indeed, her performance had turned out to be the selling point of the event.

Plus, the performance assessment was Lionel's work. He had invited Amanda and changed the programme. 'Perhaps, he was trying to use Amanda against me,' he thought.

'Alright, I will go see her. Thank you,' Rufus said, nodding.

He glanced at Cassandra from a distance, who was still being interviewed.

'Well, it won't take long. I'll be back quickly, ' he thought and finished his drink in a single go. Bearing that thought in mind, he strode toward the room Amanda was in.

Cassandra's interview ended at the same time. 'Miss Qin, thank you so much for this interview. I wish the best for Qin Group!'

The reported shook hands with Cassandra and left. She turned her head to look for Rufus, but couldn't find him.

She went to the spot where they had last talked and kept looking around. All she could see was some people clearing the stage and decorations in the hall. Rufus was no where to be seen.

'Miss Qin...' Someone approached her. 'Mr. Luo has gone to VIP room 6. He has asked you to see him there,' he continued.

*The Best Moments*

Rufus had hardly entered the room when Amanda suddenly threw herself against his chest, too impatient to wait.

'You're finally here, Rufus!' she exclaimed while hugging Rufus tightly, her eyes closed and mouth curled into a happy smile.

Her face was scarlet all over.

'What's wrong with you? Are you okay? Hold on, I'm calling a doctor for you!' Rufus added his eyebrows furrowed in concern.

He managed to grab Amanda's arms and pushed away a bit.

He noticed that there was something wrong with her, but couldn't find out exactly what.

As far as he observed, Amanda was standing right in front of him, alive and kicking, which was weird that she didn't feel very well at the same time.

'Rufus, my heart is hurting...it's broken...' Amanda murmured.

Her eyes started to tear up as she looked at him pleadingly.

Her heart was in pain as if a sword stabbed it, when she saw how Cassandra and Rufus looked at each other's eyes so lovingly moments ago.

'Stop this, Amanda. I love Cassandra and she loves me. We'll get married soon,' Rufus patiently explained.

The finality in his voice only added more pain to Amanda's wounded heart. She gasped to catch her breath.

'Why not me, Rufus? I don't see what's so special about her! It should've been me!'

Amanda refused to back down and accept his explanation. Tears were streaming down her cheeks at this point.

'She's so special to me, Amanda. You're a great girl, but I love her now and I just can't see a life without her. Don't you understand?'

Rufus knew that he needed to end this now, and if he showed the slightest note of hesitation, it would only make matters worse. Amanda

had to accept the truth, that Rufus had no spare love for any other woman, only Cassandra.

‘Rufus, I can’t bring myself to listen to you right now. You know I’m ailing right now. Can’t you at least pretend to make me feel better?’

Amanda raised her head a little to look into Rufus’s eyes. Her mouth forced a sad smile.

‘No, Amanda. This ends now. I won’t lie to you even if you’re sick,’

Rufus responded harshly. Deep in his heart, he was reluctant to admit the truth to her now, since she wasn’t all that well; however his mind told him that he’d better end her expectations for her to move forward.

At that same moment, along the corridor, Cassandra was walking towards the room where Rufus and Amanda were in, which was at the end of the hallway. The soft carpet on the floor absorbed the sounds of her footsteps.

She passed one room after another.

After a few minutes, the room was finally in front of her. She could hear a conversation on the other side.

Two people were talking, one was Rufus and the other was apparently Amanda.

‘Rufus, why are you doing this? You’re hurting me! I hate you!’ Amanda screamed.

She was wracked with sobs as she said the words, which was enough for Cassandra to shiver.

‘I’m sorry, Amanda. I’m sure you’ll find someone better in the future.’

Rufus had no idea how to calm a girl, especially if she was wailing right in front of him.

‘It really hurt me seeing you so close together. It’s killing me softly. How could you be so evil? What’s wrong with loving me?’ Amanda choked.

Cassandra stood incredibly still as their voice came through the crack of the slightly ajar door.

Rufus stood with his back

Falling from nobility, Zen Luo became a humble slave and served as a human punchbag for his former cousins. Inadvertently, he found a way to refine himself into a weapon and a legend started because of that. With a strong belief in never surrender, he strove for revenges and pursued big dreams. Warriors from various clans contended for hegemony and the world was stirred. Relying on the body that was comparable to a powerful weapon, Zen beat his numerous enemies on his way to the immortality. Would he succeed eventually?

‘Well, If he’s stubborn, I’m even more. You’ll see, Michelle. If only he didn’t have the car accident, I wouldn’t have stayed with him,’ Cassandra said, full of conviction.

If there hadn’t been an accident, and if he hadn’t pretended to be serious, she would have left him for good.

‘Are you sure? How about you? Can you move on?’

Michelle wanted to cover all the bases, since she was going abroad for an international competition as one of the judges. She were to be out of



town for a couple of days, and feared that Cassandra and Rufus would get together again.

‘No, Michelle. This time, I’m sure. We’ll break up, and maybe he will hate me for the rest of his life...’

Cassandra started formulating her plan. She knew that Rufus would lose it every time he saw her with another man.

Since she decided to break up with him, her heart was set in stone.

‘I hope you take what you said to heart. I wish you can find the man who you truly deserve,’ Michelle said quickly.

After their talk, she waved her hand and Jasper pulled over in front of them.

She opened the door and climbed inside. The car started to move away slowly.

Cassandra watched the car until it was a tiny speck in the horizon. She felt like her heart hitched a ride with the car. She felt so empty.

‘Why didn’t you wait inside? It’s freezing out here.’

A warm coat was put over Cassandra’s shoulders and she was immediately buried in a familiar scent.

It was him. It looked like he was done with Amanda and now it was her turn.

Cassandra wondered how it felt like to go between two women at the same time, and if he was proud of himself.

‘Come on! Let’s go home!’

Rufus wrapped his arm around her shoulders and led her to the car, but to his surprise, Cassandra wouldn’t budge.

‘What’s up? Something wrong?’ he asked.

His eyebrows furrowed and he looked at her with concern in his eyes. Cassandra thought that he was handsome even when he looked stressed.

‘No, it’s nothing. I just got an idea for a case. I need to get to the office right away, so I can put it in writing before I forget,’ she replied with a faint smile.

She looked into his eyes intently, which reminded him of a delicate flower.

Hatred And Desire Part One

‘It’s late. There is no need to rush into finishing the job. It can wait until tomorrow,’

Rufus spoke softly, coaxing Cassandra into giving up her idea. The bitterness in her smile escaped him.

‘Creative work needs inspiration, and an idea has just struck me. If I stop now, I might lose my momentum. It’ll be too late tomorrow,’

Cassandra argued. She did not want to stay with him longer than necessary.

The more she stayed with Rufus, the more difficult it got to rein her emotions. The air around them was becoming stifling even as she spoke, and all she wanted right now was a moment's peace from the turbulence inside her.

'Fine. I'll give you a ride,'

Rufus conceded, nodding his head thoughtfully to show understanding.

'Don't bother,' Cassandra answered back, a little too quickly. Rufus noticed it as well. His head shot up at her response. 'Your leg is fine now, and there is no need for me to take care of you. Go back to the Tang mansion tonight. You haven't met your family for a long time,' Cassandra continued, stubbornly refusing his offer.

She looked at Rufus with a steady gaze, her face impossible to read.

Rufus gave her a long look in return.

'Family?' he scoffed inwardly at the word. 'The Tang family never regarded me as one of them.' When his leg got hurt, Lionel made changes to the dinner party without consulting him. He knew what Lionel was doing when he deliberately let Amanda play the piano at the finale. Clearly, every step he took was to derail Rufus's plans.

Cassandra looked at him in silence, but he knew she had already made up her mind. He pressed her no longer.

To her, family was the most important anyway.

'All right. I'll drive you to your company and then go back. If it gets too late when you finish, don't go back to the villa. Go to the apartment.'

The apartment she rented was very close to Qin Group. If she stayed there, Rufus could feel more at ease.

‘Alright.’

Cassandra nodded and cast her eyes down. For a moment, a shadow seemed

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needs to be taken care of. I’m the only one who can do that for her.’

Rufus shook his head in bewilderment. He had never seen Cassandra so difficult.

She understood it when her own family decided to marry her off to save themselves. She forgave the Tang family, after all that they had put her through. Why was it that she was losing her cool when it came to Amanda?

‘Fine,’ Cassandra answered, her tone distant. She was opening the door as she continued to speak, ‘If she is so pitiful and helpless, then go and take care of her. Better yet, marry her, so you can keep doing that your whole life,’ she laughed bitterly, her voice thick with hurt.

She lingered for a moment, as if waiting for Rufus to speak. Then she slammed the door and walked into the direction of the building.

Left alone inside the car, Rufus felt as if his limbs had turned to stone. His frustration boiled inside him and he pounded the steering wheel with his fist.

Heaving a deep breath, he slammed the car into gear, the tires screaming as his foot jammed against the accelerator. The car headed straight to the hospital. The screeches of rubber on the pavement reached the building, and Cassandra gave a broken laugh when they reached her ears.

She sat slumped in the sofa in her office, as if in a trance for a long time. There was nothing but numbness.