

I Want a Lifetime with You

Chapter 351

Pei Jingxiu?

Ning Xi's eyes softened for a moment, and she immediately backed away once Pei Jingxiu let go of her. "Sir!" she called out as the two calmly stared at each other.

Pei Jingxiu nodded. "Now that your identity's been confirmed, you can just call me Mr. Pei."

Ning Xi couldn't help but still her body for a moment, as though a thought had suddenly crossed her mind. Then, she nodded. "When will I be discharged?"

Pei Jingxiu raised an eyebrow but eventually let out a smirk. "What's wrong? You can't wait to return to the Ning family?"

Ning Xi pursed her lips, looking rather sullen. "You know I've never wanted to go back to them." It didn't matter if she was part of the Ning family; she was never brought up there, so they were nothing but strangers to her. She felt the same about Pei Jingxiu as well. It just so happened that Pei Jingxiu had helped her out of that abyss back then – she had nowhere else to go but to follow him.

Pei Jingxiu cast Ning Xi a glance. Sensing a murderous intent in her eyes, he immediately grabbed her by the hand. "You're no match for me. You know that."

Ning Xi pursed her lips. "Why did it have to be me?"

The woman wearing a pair of hospital sandals gazed up at him. She wasn't exactly short, but Pei Jingxiu still gave off an intimidating vibe, considering he was 187cm tall.

Her eyes were filled with reluctance.

Pei Jingxiu's lips curled slightly as he gazed back at her, seemingly different from his usual cold self. "There are many things in this world that can't be explained. If you insist on an answer, you shouldn't have bumped into me back then. Maybe that way, your fate could've turned out different... But that doesn't necessarily mean you'd be doing better than you are now, right?"

Pei Jingxiu lifted Ning Xi's chin. "Do you want to see those friends of yours from before?" Ning Xi's face paled at the sight of the man's devious smirk. "No. I'm not close to them."

With that, Pei Jingxiu let go of her chin before grabbing a tissue to wipe the sweat on her forehead. "Now that you've recovered, you should head back to Sheen City. That's where your home is, after all."

At this moment, the door was pushed open to reveal Li Heng and Pei Huan standing at the entrance.

Pei Huan rushed in when she saw Ning Xi standing on the ground with a pair of sandals on. "Why aren't you in bed, Ning Xi? You have just undergone surgery! Your body must be having a hard time right now."

Pei Huan had gone through the same surgery three years ago, so she knew how toilsome it was. Yet, Ning Xi didn't give her any response. "Ning Xi?"

Ning Xi steeled her gaze and smiled at Pei Huan calmly. "I'm fine now," she said before turning to Pei Jingxiu. "I just told Mr. Pei that I can be discharged."

"Discharged? Now? But it hasn't even been five hours since your surgery! Are you sure your body can take it, Ning Xi?" Pei Huan was still worried.

Ning Xi shook her head. "I'm really okay. By the way, has Aunt Ning Xin... woken up?"

"Not yet, but the doctor said my mother's no longer in danger. It's all thanks to you, Ning Xi!" Feeling extremely thankful, Pei Huan went to gently lay Ning Xi on the bed. "You should stay a few days longer and leave only when you're better. Don't you agree, Mr. Pei?"

Pei Jingxiu's gaze softened as he turned to Ning Xi. "That works too," he responded with a nod. "It's not like Sheen City will receive the news so quickly anyway."

Ning Xi turned silent upon hearing Pei Jingxiu's words. "What's wrong?" asked Pei Huan upon sensing that Ning Xi was slightly upset. "It's been confirmed that you're part of the Ning family, but why don't you seem happy at all?"

"That's not it!" Ning Xi shook her head and smiled faintly. "It's not that I'm not happy; I'm just not quite used to it."

"What's there not to get used to? I used to be unaware that I was part of the Fu family, but I'm doing pretty well now," Pei Huan replied with a chuckle. "I don't think there's anything you'll have to worry about. Besides, you'll have Mr. Pei!"

Ning Xi merely smiled as she looked up at Pei Jingxiu. "You're right." *I still have Pei Jingxiu.*

After Pei Huan and Li Heng left, Ning Xi and Pei Jingxiu fell into silence. In the end, it was Pei Jingxiu who spoke up. "If you really don't want to stay here, you can leave."

Pei Huan seemed to have something weighing on her mind after leaving Ning Xi's ward. Even Li Heng could sense it.

She's probably thinking about the virus. Li Heng patted her on the back.

“Aunt Zhang told me she cooked your favorite braised eggplant. I didn’t think you and Bao shared the same taste.”

Pei Huan’s mood brightened at the mention of Bao. “Yeah. Bao’s my son, so naturally, we have similar tastes in food.”

Li Heng smiled and caressed Pei Huan’s cheek. “Don’t worry. When I’m done taking care of things here, I’ll take you out of the country.”

“Out of the country?” Pei Huan was confused. “For what?”

“To meet someone.” *To meet someone who can cure you!*

Then, Li Heng held her by the waist. “It’ll just be the three of us. Together, we’ll make up for all the time we’ve lost as a family.”

Pei Huan was moved. “Heng,” she called out, pursing her lips.

“Hmm?” The man turned to her. “What is it?”

“I love you.” This was her first time saying such a thing.

Li Heng grinned. “I love you too.”

As the Li clan’s drama came to an end, word about Li Cenbei’s death quickly reached Li Xinzhi and Li Min. Thanks to the news, Li Xinzhi became paralyzed; he could no longer get out of bed. Meanwhile, Li Min went hysterical upon learning that Li Cenbei had caused Li Cendong’s death. Li Xufan sent her out of the Li Residence and had her relocated to one of his villas elsewhere.

With that, the mighty Li clan fell, leaving only Li Cennan’s family of three, as well as the Li clan’s butler and servants.

The change in Li Group's head led to its banishment by Prosperous Group. Li Heng then set up one of Prosperous Group's branches in Jiang City, which was where Li Group had initially been. Meanwhile, some of Li Heng's subordinates who used to work for Li Group slowly moved to Prosperous Group.

After taking care of everything, Li Heng left the Group in Li Xufan's and Li Cennan's hands, with Liang Lin aiding them from the shadows. Li Heng then took Pei Huan and Bao out of the country, calling their trip a honeymoon.

With the Li clan's affairs settled, Pei Jingxiu left Jiang City with Ning Xi. They went headed straight for the Ning family in Sheen City. Jiang City quieted down in the blink of an eye.

Shi Nuan trotted up the stairs at night. Hearing Fu Chengyan on the phone in the study room, she paused for a moment before opening the door.

Fu Chengyan smiled when he saw Shi Nuan enter. "Come on over," he said, waving at her.

After giving out a few more instructions on the phone, he turned to Shi Nuan. "What's up?"

Shi Nuan smiled. "There's been so much to do that I've forgotten it'll be my dad's birthday in two days. Even if I already know he's not my real father, I'm still part of the Shi family. Besides, Grandpa treats me really well. It wouldn't be reasonable if I don't show up."

Fu Chengyan nodded. "So?"

With a grin, Shi Nuan rushed over to him and wrapped her arms around his neck. "So... Will you be available that day?"

"Are you intending to let me meet your parents, Darling?" Fu Chengyan raised an eyebrow with a hint of amusement in his eyes. With Shi Nuan's arms wrapped around his neck, he gave her head a light tap and chuckled. "Hmm?"

“Yes, yes! Didn’t you use to complain about me keeping our relationship a secret? Are you still unhappy even though I’m finally agreeing to let you meet my family?”

Shi Nuan pretended to look displeased. “I’ll be mad if you don’t meet them!”

“You silly girl.” Seeing Shi Nuan wanting to walk away, Fu Chengyan pulled her by the arm, causing her to lose her balance and sit on his lap.

“Ahh!” Shi Nuan quickly looped her arms around Fu Chengyan’s neck in fright. “What are you doing? You scared me!”

With a smirk, Fu Chengyan leaned over and pressed his forehead against hers. “Are you that much of a scaredy-cat? How easily frightened can you be?”

Shi Nuan pursed her lips and glared at him. “I’ll be the one to frighten you next. I’m being serious here! Will you come with me or not?”

“Of course I’ll go. I’d never dare defy Mrs. Fu’s orders!” This was all Fu Chengyan could ever ask for.

“Good, then. I’ll shop for a gift after work tomorrow, and we’ll meet my family together the day after. You deserve to be known as my husband, considering how well you’ve been performing recently!”

Hearing that, Fu Chengyan couldn’t stop himself from pinching Shi Nuan’s nose.

The latter hurriedly slapped his hand away. “Don’t pinch my nose!” she demanded while proceeding to pinch and rub his nose and cheeks like a child playing with mud. “Why do you have such perfect skin, Yan?” the woman lamented.

Hearing that, Fu Chengyan shook his head in hopelessness. However, instead of stopping Shi Nuan from acting like a child, he gazed at her with such gentle eyes and let her do as she pleased.

Shi Jingzheng's birthday wasn't that big of a deal since there was still a more senior member in the family. Since Shi Yunsheng was still around, Shi Jingzheng's party would naturally be less extravagant. The Shi family couldn't compare to the Fu clan or Li clan from before, but they were still considered a fairly prominent family. On top of that, Shi Jingzheng and Jiang Yu had some plans of their own in mind. Hence, they took the opportunity to hold a party, hoping to establish some connections with others.

Jiang Yu didn't particularly like Shi Nuan, but since the woman was currently dating 'Su Bancheng', she naturally had to show up at the party with him. Shi Jingzheng and his wife were certainly playing their cards well.

However, they didn't expect that Shi Nuan was planning to drop by with her real husband, nor would they have expected that the legendary 'Su Bancheng' would come too.

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Shi Nuan picked an outfit that was suitable for a celebratory occasion. Then she waited for Fu Chengyan, who still hadn't come home because he had been busier these days. Yet, she received the man's phone call after waiting over an hour. "Sorry, May. I don't think I'll be able to attend the party with you."

Shi Nuan was taken aback. "What's wrong? Did something happen at work?" she asked instinctively. "No," Fu Chengyan replied. "Something came up at the Fu Residence. I'll have to head over."

"But... I promised Granddad that I'd take you to the party. My parents are also expecting you... Okay, then. It'll be fine if I show up a little late." Despite feeling a little dejected, Shi Nuan knew that Fu Chengyan was a man of his word; if he couldn't make it, there had to be something more important he needed to take care of. "I'll go on my own, then."

"Wait!" Fu Chengyan called out to her before pausing for a moment. "I'll get Shaoqing to go with you."

"T-That's not necessary!"

"I'm worried," Fu Chengyan responded with a sigh. "No one else in the Shi family aside from your granddad knows that we're married. They might give you a hard time if you don't head over with Shaoqing."

Shi Nuan pursed her lips as her gaze darkened. Eventually, she nodded. "Okay, then."

"May!" Fu Chengyan called out to her. "Come home earlier."

“You too,” Shi Nuan replied and hung up. She then remained seated for a while before pulling herself together and getting ready.

Su Shaoqing’s phone call came just as she left home. “Where are you now, Nuan?”

“I just left home.” Shi Nuan hopped into her car and buckled her seatbelt. “What about you?”

“I’m at the hospital. I’m gonna have to ask you to give me a ride!” Su Shaoqing answered with a smile. “I just finished up my work here.”

“Okay. Thanks for your help, Mr. Su!”

“Not at all!” Su Shaoqing chuckled, and his eyes gleamed as he hung up.

This is such an important moment, but he’s making me go there as an imposter instead of attending the party himself? Is this really appropriate?

Still, Su Shaoqing didn’t think too much about it. He headed into his office, removed his white coat, put on a clean suit, and left the hospital.

Shi Nuan’s car was parked right outside the hospital. Su Shaoqing had actually lost this eye-catching, red Ferrari to Fu Chengyan during a bet. He certainly didn’t expect Shi Nuan to be driving it now.

Shi Nuan wound down the window. “Over here, Mr. Su!”

In one smooth motion, Su Shaoqing strode over, opened the door, and hopped in.

With a twinkle in his eyes and a faint smile, he gazed at Shi Nuan. “You must be upset that Chengyan can’t come with you, Nuan.”

Shi Nuan shot Su Shaoqing a quick glance. “Your seatbelt, Mr. Su.”

Su Shaoqing shrugged and stopped talking. It was clear that Shi Nuan wasn't in a particularly good mood.

Shi Jingzheng's birthday party was being held at the Shi family's hillside villa. It wasn't a huge celebration, but there were still a fair number of attendees.

Shi Wei had specially taken a day off from set. The woman had been so busy filming *Beneath the Sky* that she hadn't appeared in the public eye for a while, so making an appearance at this time would certainly attract everyone's attention.

Shi Jingzheng and Jiang Yu had always treated her like a gem, so they brought her wherever they went, introducing her to all the business tycoons who had come. Following Shi Jingzheng around with a wineglass in her hand was a breeze for Shi Wei. She perfectly displayed the image of an elegant lady.

Fu Xicheng had come too. While they had gotten into a huge fight previously, it had been a long time since then. As the two finally reunited after several months, the flames of desire burned within them, and they spoke with each other amicably. Both families seemed happy to meet too.

Meanwhile, Jiang Yu was busy speaking with Liu Minjun. Despite being family, there was now an invisible barrier between the two women after clashing with each other in the past. The incident involving Shi Wei and Shi Nuan had led to Liu Minjun being humiliated by Shi Nuan.

Liu Minjun scanned her surroundings. “It's your husband's birthday today. Isn't your youngest daughter coming?”

Jiang Yu squinted. She didn't like Shi Nuan herself, but hearing Liu Minjun mention this still made her uncomfortable. Of course, it didn't help that Shi Nuan was now with someone from the Su and Jiang families. Jiang Yu carried on diplomatically, “She said she'll be coming with her boyfriend, and the guy so happens to be the son of Su Yunwan and someone from the Jiang family!” she

remarked while gazing at Liu Minjun. As expected, the latter woman's expression took a turn.

"Is that so?"

"Yup!"

As the lively party carried on, Shi Nuan arrived outside the villa. She glanced at the building and sighed gently before turning to see Su Shaoqing looking at her with a faint smile. That seemingly innocent smile made her feel rather uncomfortable. "Why are you looking at me like that, Mr. Su?"

Su Shaoqing stroked his own chin. "You look like you don't want to be here, so why did you insist on coming?"

Shi Nuan sighed. "There are times when you can't choose not to do something just because you don't want to. Let's go."

Shi Nuan opened the car door and took out the gifts. Su Shaoqing arched his eyebrow and nodded approvingly before getting out as well. "I'll take those."

Shi Nuan readily handed all the gifts to Su Shaoqing. "I'm counting on you then, Mr. Su."

"Come on. We've known each other for so long, so just call me Shaoqing!"

Shi Nuan chuckled. "But you won't be Su Shaoqing when we get there."

Su Shaoqing raised an eyebrow again. "To think I'd still have to pretend to be my cousin. He won't forgive me if he finds out about this." Despite saying that, the man didn't look sorry at all.

"You're finally here, Ms. Nuan!" An awkward look appeared on Mr. Yang's face as he saw Shi Nuan and Su Shaoqing arrive. "Where's Mr. Fu?"

“He couldn’t come, so be sure not to miscall anyone,” Shi Nuan replied. Mr. Yang nodded.

“I’ll be careful.”

Since Shi Nuan couldn’t officially take Fu Chengyan to meet her family this time, the butler naturally couldn’t refer to someone else as him. If anyone were to misunderstand, Shi Nuan’s reputation would surely be affected. “Hello, Mr. Su.”

Su Shaoqing nodded. “It’s been a while, Mr. Yang.”

“This way, please, Mr. Su.” Mr. Yang took the gifts from him and led the two into the villa.

Jiang Yu easily caught sight of them with her sharp eyes. “Look, Minjun! Speak of the devil! My daughter and her boyfriend have arrived,” she emphasized. “In that case, please excuse me.”

Jiang Yu sped over and pretended to dote on Shi Nuan. “You’re finally here, Nuan! I was just talking about you.” Then, she turned to Su Shaoqing. “I’m so glad to see you, Bancheng!”

Su Shaoqing grinned. “Hello, Mrs. Shi.”

“Oh, my, my!” Jiang Yu beamed, treating Shi Nuan especially kindly.

Shi Nuan frowned slightly, unable to tell what Jiang Yu had up her sleeves this time.

Su Shaoqing was just as perplexed by Jiang Yu’s behavior too, but it wasn’t long until realization dawned on them both. Su Shaoqing had just spotted his aunt, Su Yunwan, and right behind her was Su Bancheng himself!

Su Shaoqing's lip twitched as he helplessly turned to Shi Nuan with his hand on his forehead.

Shi Nuan was bewildered too. "What's your cousin doing here? And who's the lady next to him?"

"She's my aunt."

Shi Nuan was speechless.

Just as she was about to say something, Jiang Yu happily walked over to the guests. "You're finally here, Yunwan! Bancheng's been here for a while!" she said while preparing to hold Su Yunwan's hand. Yet, the latter woman froze and evaded Jiang Yu

's grasp just in time. "My son's been here for a while already?" she asked in confusion, frowning at her son next to her.

Su Bancheng remained expressionless.

That was when Jiang Yu finally noticed the dignified-looking man next to Su Yunwan. "Who would this be, Yunwan?"

Su Yunwan smiled faintly. "He's my son, Su Bancheng. Aren't you acquainted with him, Mrs. Shi?"

Su Bancheng? He's Su Bancheng?

Jiang Yu's jaw dropped as she stared at Su Yunwan and Su Bancheng in disbelief. Then, she turned to Shi Nuan and Su Shaoqing, who weren't far behind. "You're kidding me, right, Yunwan? If he's Su Bancheng, who's that?"

As Su Yunwan's gaze followed Jiang Yu's, all the other guests also paused and looked in the same direction.

Su Yunwan was taken aback for a moment before raising an eyebrow.
“Shaoqing? What are you doing here?”

Su Shaoqing?

All the guests were astonished. Deep down, they knew they wouldn't get to meet any notable big shots, but they had come anyway for Shi Jingzheng's sake. Now, everyone felt that it was indeed worth dropping by, for Su Bancheng and even Su Shaoqing had come too.

Knowing that he could no longer keep up the act, Su Shaoqing glanced at Shi Nuan. “Let's go. I'll introduce you to my aunt.”

Shi Nuan sighed. *I should've just come on my own. Things have just gotten real awkward now.*

She also finally understood why Jiang Yu was being so nice to her – it was solely because of Su Bancheng and Su Yunwan.

“Okay. Let's go.”

The two headed over. “Hi, Aunt Yunwan. Hi, Bancheng!” Su Shaoqing greeted them with an innocent smile.

Su Yunwan glanced at Su Shaoqing before turning to her own son. Seeing how composed her son looked somehow gave her an understanding of the situation. “What are you doing here?” she asked, putting on an act anyway.

Su Shaoqing grinned. “Hehe. I'm just here to join in the fun! This is my friend, Shi Nuan.”

“Hello, Ms. Shi.” Su Yunwan already knew a little about Shi Nuan despite meeting her for the first time.

“It’s nice to meet you, Ms. Su,” Shi Nuan greeted politely.

Meanwhile, Jiang Yu was completely dumbfounded; it took her a while to realize that she had been fooled. “You... You’re not Su Bancheng?” Her face reddened. “Then what have you been doing with my daughter all this while? You were obviously lying!”

Su Shaoqing’s eyes narrowed slightly as he maintained his smile. “That’s where you’re wrong, Mrs. Shi. I never said I was Su Bancheng.”

“You...”

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Su Shaoqing squinted. Though his smile remained the same, the look in his eyes turned slightly frostier.

Jiang Yu was so furious that she wanted to bicker with Su Shaoqing some more, but Su Yunwan spoke up, “You troublemaker,” she chided while glaring at her nephew. “I don’t mind you being here with Ms. Shi, but you should’ve had the sense to tell Mrs. Shi and I about it. Getting Mrs. Shi confused brings no good to either you or Bancheng!”

Now that Su Yunwan had said that, Jiang Yu couldn’t say much else anymore. She merely glared at Shi Nuan with rage. “You’ve known about this long ago, haven’t you?”

Shi Nuan pursed her lips slightly, not answering Jiang Yu’s question.

No matter how mad Jiang Yu was right now, there was no way she could lash out at Shi Nuan in front of their guests, especially when the Su family members were present. Even if Shi Nuan weren’t dating Su Bancheng, Su Shaoqing was a man one couldn’t afford to offend.

Jiang Yu had never met Su Shaoqing before, but she had certainly heard of him. She gazed at him strangely, wondering how Shi Nuan could have met such a prominent figure like him.

I thought everyone Shi Nuan knows are nobodies, and that Su Bancheng only chose to date her because Yunwan and I are friends.

Su Bancheng narrowed his eyes and walked over. “Long time no see, Ms. Shi Nuan,” he greeted, extending an arm. His words gave Jiang Yu and all the guests a huge shock.

It was obvious what the man meant—he was acquainted with Shi Nuan. This meant that he was aware of what was going on between her and Su Shaoqing.

Shi Nuan nodded and smiled. “It’s been a while, Mr. Su.” She, too, extended her arm to shake Su Bancheng’s hand.

Su Yunwan seemed to get a grasp of the whole situation after seeing her son’s behavior. Su Bancheng himself also leaned toward his mother, whispering, “She’s Fu Chengyan’s wife.”

Su Yunwan’s eyes instantly lit up as she stared at Shi Nuan in disbelief. Taking another look at both Su Bancheng and Su Shaoqing, realization finally dawned on her.

She then gazed at Jiang Yu, suddenly feeling humored. Jiang Yu had once saved Su Yunwan when they were younger, so in return, the former had requested to introduce her daughter to the latter’s son. Su Yunwan had agreed to the request, but in truth, she didn’t pay much attention to it.

Moreover, her son didn’t seem to want to date Shi Nuan, so she had stopped pursuing the matter altogether.

But yesterday, Jiang Yu had suddenly sent them an invitation, asking Su Yunwan to bring her son along. Su Yunwan had wanted to use this opportunity to make things clear with Jiang Yu, but she didn’t expect Shi Nuan’s status to be this unique. She also seemed to realize something.

It looks like the Shi family has no idea that Shi Nuan is married, and to Fu Chengyan at that!

“He sure has good taste. Ms. Shi is indeed a fine lady.”

From the way Su Yunwan responded, those who understood knew she was talking about Fu Chengyan, whereas those who didn't would assume she was talking about Su Shaoqing.

Su Shaoqing smirked. "Well, of course!"

Jiang Yu was naturally livid, but she still knew not to cause a scene in front of everyone. Feeling embarrassed enough, she walked toward Shi Nuan. "Come with me for a moment."

Shi Nuan curled her lips but didn't agree.

However, Jiang Yu assumed Shi Nuan had agreed to follow her, so the former left right away.

Not too far off, Shi Wei and Shi Jingzheng glared at Shi Nuan with hatred.

Damn it! Why is that woman always so lucky? It's not just Su Bancheng; she even has Su Shaoqing by her side too!

Shi Wei gripped her wineglass tightly, especially after seeing Fu Xicheng. The man stood by the corner, but his eyes remained on Shi Nuan. This fueled the hatred Shi Wei had for her own sister.

...

It was extremely lively at the Fu Residence. All the adults chatted away in the living room while two children happily played in the corner.

Soon, the rumbling of a car could be heard, followed by the sound of its engine being turned off.

The Fu clan's butler immediately headed outside. "You're back, Young Master Chengyan!"

Fu Chengyan had a coat in his hand. Despite it being early spring now, the weather in Jiang City remained rather cold. Upon seeing the butler, he glanced at him and nodded. “Yeah.”

Everyone inside the living room got up when they heard Fu Chengyan’s deep voice. “Yan!”

Fu Chengyan stood by the entrance with the coat in his hand, noticing a familiar face. He was stunned for a brief moment, but his eyes quickly turned cold.

He then turned his gaze away from the woman and smirked as his eyes fell on everyone else in the room. “Has Grandpa fallen seriously ill? Is he paralyzed?”

Fu Chengyan’s words were clearly directed at Fu Zhengyun. Then, straightening out his suit with his slender fingers, he turned. “Since he’s not dead yet, I’ll be taking my leave.”

“Stop right there!”

“Uncle Chengyan!”

“Daddy!”

Three voices rang out at the same time, causing everyone inside the living to pause. Even Fu Chengyan stilled for a moment.

His grip on his suit loosened slightly as a dangerous look flashed in his eyes. As he turned, the two children—one boy and one girl—ran toward Fu Chengyan, hugging him by each leg. The little girl, Cheng An, was the daughter of Fu Chengyan’s sister, Fu Jiayu. Meanwhile, the young boy looked adorable in his bowl cut.

Fu Chengyan’s face stiffened, causing the entire atmosphere in the room to turn glum. With a narrow of his eyes, he pursed his lips and clenched his fists.

Then, he pushed the little boy aside and picked Cheng An up.

The boy staggered backward before falling to the ground and bursting into tears. “Daddy’s so mean, Mommy!”

“Yu!” The woman turned pale and hurriedly went over to lift him. “Don’t cry, Yu. Mommy will carry you instead.” While consoling the boy, she turned to Fu Chengyan, bit her lip, and said pitifully, “Yan, Yu is...”

Fu Chengyan let out a scoff. “Shen Qianan, I told you that you’d pay if you ever came back.”

“I... Yan, I...” Shen Qianan paled even more as her grip on Yu tightened. “I was just...”

“Jiang City is my home too!” she finally declared. “What’s wrong with me coming back to my home? Besides, Yu—”

Fu Chengyan smirked coldly. He looked so gentle holding onto Cheng An, but the way he glared at Shen Qianan was terrifying. “I guess you’re looking forward to seeing what will happen next.”

“You brat!” Fu Zhengyun struck the floor with his walking cane, his eyes filled with rage. “How could you say such things? Qianan is your fiancée and Yu is your son! I’m the one who brought them back here!”

Fu Chengyan scoffed, “I see. You sure are sly, Grandpa.”

Then, he put Cheng An down and patted her lightly on the shoulder. “It’s getting late. I’ll give you a ride home, Sis.”

Fu Jiayu was already feeling extremely uncomfortable sitting here. She would rather not have come had Fu Zhengyun not decided to call her over.

The woman certainly knew how capable her younger brother was, having seen him in action all these years. Hence, when it came to this matter, she knew she had to pick a side.

Being the smart woman she was, it was no surprise that she had managed to stay out of trouble in the Fu family. Fu Jiayu nodded and got up. "It really is getting late. Cheng An has to go to school tomorrow, so I'll be leaving now."

She couldn't help but glance at Shen Qianan while making her way toward the entrance. Then, she picked Cheng An up. "Uncle Chengyan will take us home, okay, An?"

"Okay! I haven't seen Uncle Chengyan for so long. I missed him so much!" Cheng An clapped her hands in excitement. "I like Uncle Chengyan the most."

Fu Chengyan smiled. "I like you too, An," he responded while pinching the little girl's cheek. "Let's go."

"Hold it right there!" Fu Zhengyun walked over. He was about to hit Fu Chengyan with his cane, but Shen Qianan stopped the elderly man just in time. "Don't, Grandpa!" she screamed.

Yet, Fu Chengyan merely gazed at the two coldly. "If there's nothing else, I'll be leaving."

"I'd like to see you try!" Fu Zhengyun was fuming with anger. "I'm not dead yet, Fu Chengyan! Do you really think you've secured your spot as the future head of the Fu clan? That's never going to happen without my permission!"

Fu Chengyan turned sideways and stared at Fu Zhengyun frostily. "Are you threatening me, Grandpa?"

"You wouldn't be afraid of my threats if you were truly competent enough!"

“You’re right.” Fu Chengyan nodded calmly. “You may be old now, but I’m sure you’ve heard what happened to Li clan’s century-old business, Li Group.”

“You... Are you threatening me too?”

“I guess we’ll see about that.”

With that, Fu Chengyan took Cheng An from Fu Jiayu. “No one gets to bear my children without my permission,” he declared while gazing into Shen Qianan’s eyes. “Only my wife gets to bear my children.”

In a daze, Shen Qianan took two steps back. “Yan...”

Fu Chengyan stopped in his tracks for a moment but didn’t look back. Then, while carrying Cheng An, he and Fu Jiayu left the Fu Residence together.

After his departure, the Fu clan fell into silence once again.

Shen Qianan clenched her fists while holding onto Yu. “Can I leave now, Grandpa? I don’t think I should’ve shown up here.”

Fu Zhengyun frowned as he glared at Shen Qianan with disdain. “I’m the one who told you to come back. I’d like to see who dares chase you away!” While speaking, his gaze fell on Fu Sheng and Song Zhenyan.

“Look at what you’ve raised your son into!” Then, he turned to Fu Heng and Ning Xin. Initially wanting to add a few words, he ultimately decided against it upon remembering that Ning Xin had just recovered from her surgery. “In any case, Yan will divorce that woman!”

“Dad!” Fu Sheng furrowed his brows. “Why must you do this?”

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Fu Chengyan placed Cheng An on the seat and fumbled into the driver's seat. Meanwhile, Fu Jiayu got into the car carefully and sat next to Cheng An, holding him in her arms.

Fu Chengyan didn't start driving right away but rested his hand on the steering wheel. It was dark and dull inside the car, and the only light source was the faint light of the Fu residence. "Yan, I—"

"I know. Grandpa asked you to come back." Fu Chengyan interrupted Fu Jiayu. After a short pause, he added, "Do you also think that I'll divorce Shi Nuan after Shen Qianan returns?"

Fu Jiayu was slightly surprised. "Why do you ask so?" She was indeed shocked, and then she continued, "That kid..."

Fu Chengyan sniggered and glanced at Fu Jiayu but he did not try to explain. "I'll send you back!"

"But, Yan, I think Grandpa is serious this time. He..." Although Fu Chengyan was powerful, he must be under a lot of pressure given that the Fu clan was huge.

Fu Jiayu didn't understand why Fu Chengyan had to be with Shi Nuan for she couldn't see what was so special about the latter. *Shi Nuan looks so similar to Shen Qianan. Now that Shen Qianan is back, Shi Nuan as the substitute can...*

"Jiayu, I'll say it one last time. You can either choose to watch from the sidelines or take my side. But if you take their side, don't blame me for the consequences!"

Fu Jiayu fell silent and chuckled with downcast eyes. “Do you think I like to get involved in this? Actually, if Grandpa hadn’t asked me to come back this time, I could’ve pretended not to know.”

A depressing air hung between the siblings for the rest of the ride. After Fu Chengyan sent Fu Jiayu home, he went for a drive before heading back to Wutong Residence.

Wutong Residence was deserted, void of life; there was even a chill in the air.

After Fu Chengyan turned on the light and floor heating, his phone rang. When he saw the caller ID on it, his lips quirked upward slightly “Hello!”

“Yan, have you gone back home?”

“Yeah!”

“Just got home?”

“Yes.”

“I regret it, Yan. I should have brought you here today, actually. Alas!”

“Yep.”

“Don’t you want to ask me about what happened today?”

“Uh-huh.”

“Yan?” Shi Nuan grew suspicious. “What’s wrong with you? Are you feeling down?” Shi Nuan asked tentatively, “Did something happen at the Fu residence?” In fact, what Shi Nuan meant to ask was, *did the Fu clan get you over to talk about the things between us again?*

Shi Nuan was actually quite afraid of facing this issue. Before they made their marriage public, Shi Nuan was unafraid because no one knew anyway. But now that the Fu clan knew about it, everyone in the family—other than Fu Heng and Ning Xin—did not seem to like her. They were even hostile to her.

Especially Song Zhenyan and Fu Zhengyun. The thought of the two brought a ghastly expression to Shi Nuan's face.

“No!” replied Fu Chengyan, “What happened at the Shi residence today? Did someone bully you? Su Shaoqing didn't protect you, did he?”

“Of course not!” Shi Nuan giggled. “Su Shaoqing made a big fool of himself today. He pretended to be Su Bancheng, but unexpectedly, the real Su Bancheng was also present.”

Fu Chengyan knitted his brows. “Su Bancheng also went there?”

“Yes, not only Su Bancheng himself, but his mother also went.” Shi Nuan recounted everything to Fu Chengyan and then sighed. “I'm now hiding in the backyard! My mom is livid today but she can't show it. I was even wondering why she was being so good to me. I think she must be targeting the young madam of the Su family and Su Bancheng when she invited them over for my dad's birthday banquet. But she didn't expect Su Shaoqing would come and mess up her plan.” Sitting on the edge of the flower bed dangling her legs, Shi Nuan went on with a smile, “It's a pity that you didn't come today; otherwise, you'll definitely drive them mad and my mom's dreams will go down the drain. But now that she knows about Su Shaoqing, she doesn't want to let him go as well!”

Fu Chengyan pinched the space between his eyebrows. Shi Nuan's chitter-chatter gradually chased away the sense of emptiness he initially felt.

He remarked with a smile, “It seems that you're quite dissatisfied with it!”

“Of course.” Ever since Shi Nuan knew that she was not part of the Shi family, she had had a change of mind.

She believed she must be the master of her own destiny——she should not be left to that family’s mercy.

It was Yun Shen last time, then Su Bancheng, and now Su Shaoqing. *If my mom fails again with Su Shaoqing, will there be another man in the future?*

Shi Nuan didn’t like being used as a bargaining chip or a pawn. “It’s so boring, but I can’t leave now!”

“Where are Shaoqing and Su Bancheng?”

“Oh, someone is talking to them. They’re the center of attention. I’m sure you can figure out what kind of people are invited to my dad’s birthday banquet. Those people just swarm around those two bigshots!” Shi Nuan showed no interest in all these. “I miss you so much, Yan!”

With an idea in mind, Fu Chengyan got up, picked up the suit beside him, and said, “I miss you, too!”

Shi Nuan smiled sweetly in response to his confession. When she was about to say something, she heard footsteps coming from behind. She immediately whispered into the phone, “Someone’s here. Talk to you later. I’ll be able to go home after a while!”

After Shi Nuan put away the phone, she saw Jiang Yu walking up to her. “So this is where you’ve been hiding, you damned brat!”

Jiang Yu walked over and gave Shi Nuan a vicious look. “Tell me, did you already know that Su Shaoqing is not Su Bancheng?”

“I don’t understand what you’re talking about!” Shi Nuan eyed Jiang Yu coldly. She had now grown numb to Jiang Yu’s harsh words. “They’re both Mr. Su, Mom, and even you got it wrong, let alone me!” retorted Shi Nuan as she raised the corners of her lips slightly. Seeing the change in Jiang Yu’s expression, Shi Nuan

continued, "Isn't Aunt Su your bestie, Mom? Why don't you even know your bestie's son, Mom?"

"You bitc... damned brat!" Jiang Yu raised her hand to give Shi Nuan a slap in the face, but the latter took a step back and dodged it.

Smiling, Shi Nuan snapped back, "Damned brat? Do you really think of me like this deep down, Mom?"

The expression on Jiang Yu's face froze. "I—"

"Now I know." Shi Nuan heaved a sigh, and added, "In fact, regardless of whether it's Su Shaoqing or Su Bancheng, Mom, you should know that it's our family's blessing to be able to ride on the Su family's coattails."

"Y-You damned brat, get your facts straight. Our family is prestigious in Jiang City as well!"

"Is that so?" Shi Nuan didn't want to talk to Jiang Yu at all, but she knew that the latter would not let her go today so she continued to hit back. "In that case, Mom, I'd like to know why are you in such a hurry to matchmake me with someone from the Su family?"

"You—"

"What about me?"

Jiang Yu's face took on a ghastly expression. To her surprise, Shi Nuan seemed to have become completely different from the Shi Nuan of the past. Even the presence Shi Nuan gave off had changed; Jiang Yu actually felt intimidated.

Shi Nuan glanced at Jiang Yu. "If there's nothing else, I shall go in first. After all, although I have nothing to do with Su Bancheng, I know Su Shaoqing!"

The expression on Jiang Yu's face grew even gloomier. In fact, she preferred Su Bancheng more than Su Shaoqing. After all, Su Bancheng was the heir of both the Su and Jiang families.

Although Su Shaoqing was powerful and was known as the "fourth master", he was merely a doctor. Jiang Yu was of the opinion that Su Shaoqing couldn't help the Shi family in their business. "You need to cut ties with Su Shaoqing as soon as possible. Su Bancheng is my choice. You also know that Su Bancheng's mother, Su Yunwan, and I are best friends!"

"Oh, right. I've nearly forgotten about this. You're indeed her best friend. Why don't you go and talk to her?"

"You..."

Jiang Yu raised her hand. "Don't force me to do it the hard way. Let me tell you: the reason why you get to know the members of the Su family is because of me. Not only are you damned brat so ungrateful, but you're also disrespectful! Remember that I'm your mother!"

"Enough!"

Shi Nuan's face clouded over as she interrupted Jiang Yu. "I respect that you as an elder, but you yourself know very well how you've been treating me over the years. As for how I met Su Shaoqing and Su Bancheng, that's none of your business. Instead, you should ask yourself why you don't even know the son of your best friend!"

Shi Nuan flung Jiang Yu's hand away and left immediately. She really didn't want to continue talking to her. *Her brain is screwed up.* Shi Nuan used to believe that she could never get the best of anything and that even if she got it, it was because of her family.

Previously she was able to tolerate them, but now, she didn't want to anymore. She also wanted to learn to let go of the things she couldn't get.

Shi Nuan hurriedly left, only to meet Su Bancheng head-on as she walked. She was slightly stunned to see a smile on Su Bancheng's stern face.

Upon seeing Shi Nuan, Su Bancheng nodded at her and greeted, "Hi, Ms. Nuan!"

"Mr. Su. Hi!" Shi Nuan also nodded at him. She then froze momentarily and turned around to look behind her before glancing again at Su Bancheng. "I'm sorry."

Su Bancheng smiled. "Why did you apologize to me? I get to watch a performance for free."

Shi Nuan chuckled at his words. "It's my fault."

Su Bancheng gave her a faint smile. "I didn't know that Shaoqing would come today!"

Shi Nuan nodded. "I also didn't know that you would be here, either. In fact, I have to apologize to you for this matter. It has been more than six months, but I'm still using your name and causing you trouble. I'm so sorry!"

A hint of surprise flashed across Su Bancheng's eyes. He then said, "Never mind."

The two of them lapsed into silence for a moment. Feeling a little awkward, Shi Nuan said, "Umm... please don't take what my mother just said to heart!"

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Su Bancheng gave her another nod. "It's getting late."

Acknowledging his comment, Shi Nuan replied, "Indeed." It was time to go back, as the time she had spent at the Shi residence was long enough. Besides, she had upset Jiang Yu. If she didn't leave now, she was afraid Jiang Yu would pick on her later. "Let's go then!"

Su Bancheng offered, "Let me walk you to Shaoqing!"

Shi Nuan quickly figured out what he meant. "Thank you!"

As long as Su Bancheng was by her side, others would not dare to come and harass her, and Jiang Yu and the others would have no chance to settle the score with her.

Meanwhile, Su Shaoqing had long gotten rid of the people pestering him and had been looking for Shi Nuan. When he saw Shi Nuan and Su Bancheng walking over together, he let out a sigh of relief. "I was wondering where you have gone. If something happened to you, I'm afraid Fu Chengyan will come after me today!"

"You're exaggerating!" Shi Nuan couldn't help but laugh and shake her head helplessly at Su Shaoqing's dramatic gesture. "Now that I'm fine, you don't have to worry about Yan going after you! "

"Of course!" Su Shaoqing raised his eyebrows triumphantly. "But, don't think I'm afraid of him. I just don't like complications!"

“Really?” Shi Nuan didn’t buy it. She looked at Su Shaoqing and then at Su Bancheng. Noticing the look of despise on Su Bancheng’s face, she chuckled. “Look, Mr. Su also agrees with me!”

“Hey, hey, you...” Su Shaoqing was displeased. “Whose side exactly are you on? I’m always the one who helped you whenever you needed. This guy, uh, Bancheng doesn’t help much, you know.”

“Alright, I know you’re kind, Mr. Su!” Shi Nuan had no choice but to relent. “So, would you be so kind as to send me back now, Mr. Su?”

Su Shaoqing nodded. “Alright. This is an attitude I can accept.” He then looked at Su Bancheng. “Bancheng, you...”

“Well, I’ll go find my mom now and leave as well!”

Su Bancheng found Su Yunwan and bade goodbye to the Shi family members. Shi Nuan took the opportunity to follow along. Even though Jiang Yu didn’t want to let her go just yet, she was stopped by Shi Jingzheng. “Is it not embarrassing enough today?”

“But that little b*tch, Shi Nuan—” Jiang Yu was startled by the cold stare from Shi Yunsheng before she could finish her sentence.

Shi Yunsheng pursed his lips. “Don’t think I don’t know what you’re up to today. I’m telling you now: I won’t agree to it, whether it’s Su Bancheng or Su Shaoqing. You can forget about it!”

Shi Yunsheng was pissed off by his son and daughter-in-law as the two of them created all this mess and ended up making a fool of themselves.

Before Shi Yunsheng had time to talk to Shi Nuan, Jiang Yu had got in the way. In addition, Fu Chengyan did not come today, causing Shi Yunsheng to feel a little displeased.

Jiang Yu looked at Shi Yunsheng in disbelief. “Dad?” She really couldn’t figure it out. Establishing a relationship with the Su family would greatly benefit their family, so she didn’t understand why Shi Yunsheng opposed their proposal from the very beginning.

Moreover, Shi Yunsheng made his stance even clearer this time by voicing his opposition in front of so many people. “As you have noticed, even if Nuan and Su Bancheng don’t end up together, judging from her good relationship with that man called Su Shaoqing, maybe they’ve already—”

“Damn you. How can you say such a thing! Is this something a mother would say?” Shi Yunsheng was so angry that he shot Jiang Yu a menacing glare. “You’re so good at selling your own daughter out for personal gains. If you’re really capable, just get ahead on your own instead of relying on others!”

As soon as Shi Yunsheng was done speaking, he asked Mr. Yang, the butler, to help him upstairs while Jiang Yu clenched her fists in resentment.

*All the maltreatment I received today is caused by Shi Nuan, that little b*tch, who not only failed to help but also caused me trouble.* ”Zheng, I don’t care what your father said today. No matter what, Shi Nuan must marry a member of the Su family!”

“Umm...” Shi Jingzheng was in a dilemma. “But Dad—”

“What about him? He’s so old already. Does he still care about the company? Don’t you know what situation the company is in now? Without the help of the Su family, you know what will happen to Huancheng.”

The look on Shi Jingzheng’s face darkened. “Give me some time to consider.”

“Hmph! Think about it yourself!” Jiang Yu then went to mingle with the guests with a grin on her face.

Meanwhile, Shi Wei was holding Fu Xicheng's arm with a twisted expression. She said cynically, "You believe me now? As I said, Nuan is doing so well. She knows so many bigshots of Jiang City, whom even my parents have to woo!"

There was also a ghastly expression on Fu Xicheng's face. He came today because of Shi Jingzheng's birthday. Although his relationship with Shi Wei was not great at the moment, Shi Jingzheng was still his father-in-law so it was impossible for him not to come. Besides, Shi Wei had been behaving well lately and didn't cause any trouble. He also came for the sake of collaboration between Fucheng and Huancheng. And lastly, it was because of Shi Nuan.

Fu Xicheng hadn't seen Shi Nuan for a long time. All this while he had been thinking about her, so he would come today even if he could only see her briefly.

Fu Xicheng did not expect Shi Nuan to actually come with "Su Bancheng". Later, he also learned that she not only knew Su Bancheng, but also Su Shaoqing, a man who was as famous as Fu Chengyan.

All of a sudden, Fu Xicheng became frustrated that all the men Shi Nuan encountered after she left him seemed to be better than he. He did not want to admit it, but...

Fu Xicheng clenched his fists hard. Sensing the mood swings of the man beside her, she started raging with hatred. "Fu Xicheng, you're still thinking about Shi Nuan, that b*tch!"

"Enough! What b*tch? You don't even bother to hide your thoughts now, do you?" Fu Xicheng looked at Shi Wei indifferently. "B*tch? How can you swear so naturally? Don't forget that Shi Nuan is also your sister. If she's a b*tch, so are you."

"You..." To Shi Wei's dismay, Fu Xicheng actually still cared about Shi Nuan and even defended her. "Let me make this clear, Fu Xicheng. No matter how Shi Nuan is doing now, you are my husband. This is a fact that you cannot change. Don't think that I don't know what you're thinking. You also have to understand

that even if I don't mind you being with Shi Nuan after having married me, do you think Shi Nuan will want you?"

Shi Wei snorted coldly, flung Fu Xicheng's hand away, and stormed off.

Meanwhile, Shi Nuan and the others came out together. As the birthday banquet had not ended, not many guests were leaving. No one dared to approach her because of the presence of Su Shaoqing and Su Bancheng. Shi Nuan was suddenly glad that she was leaving with them; otherwise, she would definitely be pestered by Jiang Yu, who might want to gain something from her again.

Shi Nuan was absorbed in her own thoughts. As soon as she walked outside, she sensed a strange atmosphere. When she looked up, she saw a familiar car not far away and her somewhat depressed face instantly lit up.

Ignoring Su Shaoqing and Su Bancheng, she sprinted in the direction of the black Bentley.

"Yan!"

The man in the car naturally saw Shi Nuan rushing over; a smile crept across his initially gloomy face. As soon as he opened the car door, he was greeted by a passionate embrace.

Shi Nuan threw herself into Fu Chengyan's arms as she rubbed her head against his chest and wrapped her arms around his waist.

He looked down at her head and stroked her hair. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing!" Shi Nuan sniffled. "I just miss you. Why are you here?"

"Cause I miss you!" There was a trace of bewitchment in Fu Chengyan's husky voice. He smiled. "Do you not want to see me?"

Shi Nuan hurriedly shook her head. "Of course I want to see you, but weren't you still at home when I talked to you on the phone?" Shi Nuan was surprised that he was already here given he was still at home about half an hour ago. "Did you speed here?"

"It's okay." Fu Chengyan simply let Shi Nuan hold him. "I came because I missed you!"

Shi Nuan smiled in satisfaction. "That's more like it. I'll forgive you for what happened today then." Shi Nuan rubbed her head against Fu Chengyan's chest again. "But why didn't you call me when you arrived here? Were you bored waiting alone?"

"It's okay; I can wait for you." Fu Chengyan felt at ease holding Shi Nuan in his arms.

Shi Nuan felt even more satisfied after hearing his reply. "Okay, but you can't do this next time. Luckily, I came out early today. If I get stalled by my parents, I won't be able to leave so soon. Moreover, it's cold now!"

"Alright!" Fu Chengyan shook his head helplessly. "It's my fault!"

Having said that, he reached out and pinched Shi Nuan's nose. "Don't you feel embarrassed?"

Fu Chengyan's deep voice carried a trace of adoration without any hint of reproach. Seemingly realizing something, Shi Nuan suddenly raised her head and turned around. As expected, she saw three people looking at her and Fu Chengyan from not far away.

Su Shaoqing and Su Bancheng had seen her with Fu Chengyan. Although Su Bancheng might not have seen her acting coquettish to Fu Chengyan, a man like Su Bancheng should be able to accept such interaction between her and Fu Chengyan. However, Su Yunwan, who was walking next to Su Bancheng and Su

Shaoqing, was surprised to see Shi Nuan with Fu Chengyan. To be precise, Su Yunwan was focused more on Fu Chengyan.

Su Yunwan furrowed her brows slightly but she quickly let it go.

Rumor had it that Fu Chengyan was unapproachable and that no women could get close to him. But looking at his interaction with Shi Nuan, Su Yunwan believed that it was because he just hadn't met the right person previously.

Shi Nuan pushed Fu Chengyan away in embarrassment and whispered, "Why didn't you remind me?"

Shi Nuan even gave Fu Chengyan a sidelong glance as the latter answered with a helpless smile. Fu Chengyan then reached out to pat Shi Nuan's head. "You're finally feeling shy?"

Su Yunwan and Su Shaoqing had already walked over; the latter whistled at Fu Chengyan and Shi Nuan slyly. "Oh, my eyes! Fu Chengyan, you're not cool!"