

I Want a Lifetime with You

Chapter 366

While Shen Qianan was startled by Shi Nuan's words, she also had a questioning look on her face. It was the second time she reassessed the woman in front of her as her rival.

The first time was in Fu Chengyan's office this morning. Initially, Shen Qianan thought Shi Nuan was not different from other women other than the fact that she looked exactly like herself. She figured that Shi Nuan was nothing without her looks.

However, Shen Qianan was wrong. Before she could unleash her attack on Shi Nuan, the latter already made a clap back, which caught her off guard.

Shi Nuan simpered. "It's always good for one to be accepting of new stuff. Are you so used to brewing your own tea that you don't want to try mine?"

Shen Qianan sneered. "Ms. Shi, it's only a cup of tea. Chill, girl!" She took the cup of tea from Shi Nuan and could immediately smell the delicate fragrance of the hot tea. Shen Qianan then took a sip of the tea. There seemed to be a hint of annoyance on her face.

"So, how is it?"

"Not bad!" Shen Qianan didn't take another sip of the tea. She set the teacup on the table and turned to Shi Nuan. "For the record, I asked you out today because I want to be your friend. After all, Yan and I were... Even though our engagement didn't last, we are still friends. Also, look at the two of us! We look so alike! We must be fated to meet. Be honest with yourself. Aren't you curious about me

when you first saw me? You really piqued my interest back when I first met you. I don't have any other agendas for asking you out."

"I also want to be your friend too, since Yan is your friend. As his wife, I feel like it's important for us to connect too, don't you think so?"

Shen Qianan was slightly stunned. "Yes, I agree with you. As long as you don't misunderstand my intentions. Hmm, I think I need to get going. It's getting quite late."

"Should I drive you back?"

"It's fine! This place is quite close to the Fu Residence. I stay there now. It's quite convenient, I must say." Shen Qianan rose to her feet. "Grandpa said he wanted to arrange for a driver to bring me around but I rejected him."

"If that's the case, then let me send you off." Shi Nuan did not insist to send Shen Qianan back home since she didn't really have the intention to do so. She just offered her a ride out of common courtesy. Shi Nuan figured that if she actually showed up at the Fu Residence, Fu Zhengyun might talk her down in front of Shen Qianan. Shi Nuan was smarter than to let herself be humiliated.

Now that Shen Qianan had left, Shi Nuan sat back down to continue brewing the tea. Very soon, there was a knock outside the private lounge. Shi Nuan paused for a while before answering, "Come on in!"

The man strode into the room on his long legs. He had his jacket in one hand.

Shi Nuan shifted her gaze to that man just in time to meet his eyes.

She continued to make tea. The man hung his jacket over the seat next to her and sat down. All of his attention was on her as she skillfully moved around the tea strainer and the teapots.

Fu Chengyan propped his head on his right hand. His dark eyes were glued to Shi Nuan attentively. Shi Nuan raised her head to look at him. "How long has Mr. Fu been eavesdropping on us girls?"

There was a surprised look on Fu Chengyan's face. He chuckled softly before taking over the cup of tea from Shi Nuan's hand. "What do you think?"

Shi Nuan's lips curled upward. "What? Are you worried that I will bully your old friend?"

Fu Chengyan arched his brows and nodded.

The next moment, Shi Nuan raised her fist and punched Fu Chengyan in his chest. "That was a rhetorical question which you are not supposed to answer! Aren't you afraid of angering me?"

Fu Chengyan wrapped his fingers around Shi Nuan's hands. "I answered because I know Fu Chengyan's wife would never be bullied by anyone else. She is the bully herself! No one can touch her even one bit!"

Shi Nuan squinted at him. Her eyes were smiling, but she puffed up her cheeks as she yanked her hand out of his hold. "I don't trust you!"

"Then what do I have to do to make you believe in me?" Fu Chengyan held Shi Nuan's hands in his again. "Do I have to dig my heart out to show the love I have for you?"

"Yeah, I think so. But you will be dead, so I will pass on that." Shi Nuan was now trapped in Fu Chengyan's lovey-dovey act. She scratched his palm as she asked, "What made you come here?"

"I can't stop worrying about you!" Fu Chengyan answered. "Also, I'm hungry."

"You haven't eaten?" Shi Nuan gasped, but she hurriedly added, "Actually, I haven't eaten too!" Shi Nuan didn't feel hungry just now as her body was in fight

mode. Now that Fu Chengyan brought up hunger, she could feel the lack of food in her stomach.

“Okay, let’s go!” Fu Chengyan rose from his seat. He dragged Shi Nuan out of the lounge by her hand. Shi Nuan removed Fu Chengyan’s jacket from his seat and allowed herself to be ushered out of the room. “Hold up! The jacket!”

Su Yian was standing at the doorsteps when the couple got out. “The two of you are leaving?”

“Yeah!” Fu Chengyan nodded. “Thank you!”

Su Yian only grinned. “You are welcome! Come and visit us more often!”

As Shi Nuan got into the car, Fu Chengyan stuffed a pack of junk food into her arms. It was a pack of lemon-flavored cucumber chips.

Shi Nuan turned to face Fu Chengyan. She pointed at the chips. “Are these for me?”

“Yep!” Fu Chengyan nodded. “Do girls not like them?”

Shi Nuan was at a loss for words.

“Have something to fight your hunger for now. We’re going for hotpot!”

Shi Nuan’s eyes lit up. “Which hotpot place are we going to?”

“The Shengs’.”

“We are going to the Shengs’? Isn’t it peak hour now? There’s going to be a long queue since we didn’t make a reservation. Are you sure you want to wait?” Shi Nuan tilted her head to stare at Fu Chengyan.

Fu Chengyan ruffled her hair with one of his hands still on the steering wheel. "I already made a reservation. The food is already waiting for us!" Fu Chengyan passed his phone to Shi Nuan. "Look at our number. How many numbers do we have ahead of ours?"

"Five." Shi Nuan blinked her eyes in surprise. "Yan, since when have you learned to make reservations through the application on your phone?"

Fu Chengyan pouted his lips. "What now? Do you think your husband is a blockhead?"

Shi Nuan rolled her eyes. "Keep your eyes on the road and drive faster! There are only five more numbers before it's our turn!"

Shi Nuan kept Fu Chengyan's phone in her pocket and opened the pack of cucumber chips. She grabbed a handful of the chips. "Who told you girls like these?"

Fu Chengyan winked. "Zhou Zheng!"

"Mr. Zhou?" Shi Nuan broke into laughter. "Mr. Zhou's girlfriend must be a cute girl."

"She doesn't have a girlfriend," Fu Chengyan uttered.

Shi Nuan almost choked on her chips. "Wait, he doesn't have a girlfriend? Then how does he know..." Shi Nuan shook the bag of chips in her hand. "So the advice he gave you is all theoretical?"

"It's only a bag of chips. He doesn't need to actually date a girl to tell me what girls like," Fu Chengyan said matter-of-factly. "So, do you like it or not?"

Shi Nuan contemplated for a few seconds before answering, "I guess I like it."

Suddenly, Shi Nuan scratched her head and asked, “Yan, I have a question for you!”

“Mhm?”

“How did you get to know Shen Qianan?”

Fu Chengyan paused to think. “I don’t remember.”

“How can you not remember? Isn’t she your ex-fiancée?” Shi Nuan was baffled. She had a feeling that Fu Chengyan was lying to her.

Fu Chengyan sighed. “Who told you she’s my ex-fiancée?”

“She’s not?” Shi Nuan was really confused. “But just now she-” Shi Nuan cut off herself, “If you say she’s not ex-fiancée, then so be it. I have another question for you. Then why does everyone say there’s something going on between you and Shen Qianan?”

This time, Fu Chengyan had to mull over his answer for a much longer time. “I think she’s the best option I have out of the others. It’s better to have one rumor going on about me than dozens of them, right?” He stared Shi Nuan straight in her eyes. “Do you understand what I mean?”

Shi Nuan shook her head. “I don’t understand!” *What does he even mean? It sounds like he’s forced to make a decision. Does he not have any feelings for Shen Qianan at all?* Yet, Shi Nuan remembered from a conversation earlier that day that Shen Qianan and Fu Chengyan used to be together. Still, Shi Nuan didn’t know what happened between the two of them.

Fu Chengyan shook his head. “It’s fine then. You don’t have to understand.” In all honesty, Fu Chengyan didn’t expect Shi Nuan to understand him either.

Nonetheless, Shi Nuan didn’t want to let go of the topic. “Are you saying that you and Shen Qianan... Um, you’re only using her?”

Fu Chengyan turned his head over to look at Shi Nuan contentedly. "You finally understood what I mean."

Shi Nuan scoffed. "So you dated her just to get rid of the women who were pursuing you? But Shen Qianan was also trying to get you, right? Does that mean that if things went well between the two of you, and I didn't appear in your life, Shen Qianan would be your wife now? My theory is correct, right?"

"Nope. You're wrong!" Fu Chengyan knocked Shi Nuan on her forehead. "Seems like you haven't fully grasped what I was talking about."

"What were you talking about?" Shi Nuan rubbed her forehead as if Fu Chengyan had hurt her. "Why did you hit me?"

"Huh? I was hitting you?"

"Yes!" Shi Nuan pouted. "I pointed out a fact and you got angry!"

Fu Chengyan fumed but he eventually cracked up. "If I had taken Shen Qianan seriously, then wouldn't you go crazy?" Fu Chengyan then reached out his hand for Shi Nuan's. "Perhaps you have yet to wrap your head around it. Shen Qianan is really only a decoy for me to throw off the other girls and nothing else."

Shi Nuan finally felt more at ease. Fu Chengyan's answer was reassuring. "So, you really don't have a thing for her?"

"If I have a thing for her, you wouldn't be here," Fu Chengyan said as he reached behind to grab another pack of snacks for Shi Nuan. "I think it's hard for you to understand me right away, but you'll soon figure it out yourself!" Fu Chengyan poked Shi Nuan's tender lips with his slender finger.

The callus on Fu Chengyan's finger grazed the skin on Shi Nuan's lips. It left behind a tingling sensation. Shi Nuan blinked her eyes and gawked at Fu Chengyan. Out of the blue, Fu Chengyan threw a question at her. "Ten years ago, when you fell down from the tree, did you hit someone?"

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Ten years ago?

Shi Nuan stared at Fu Chengyan in confusion. She could still feel the tingling sensation his finger left on her lips. She could hear her heart throbbing at his bewitching voice.

For the rest of the night, Shi Nuan couldn't get the question off her mind, even when they got home after dinner.

Ten years ago, I was still a kid, right? Did I fall from the tree?

Shi Nuan narrowed her eyes as she tried to jog her memory. She was curious as to why Fu Chengyan would ask her such a bizarre question. *Did I fall from a tree ten years ago and hit him?*

“What do you have on your mind now?”

Fu Chengyan got out of the bathroom and noticed the blank expression on Shi Nuan's face. He dried his hair with a towel and walked to her. Then, he knocked on the nook of her head as he saw that she was still in a stupor. “What's wrong?”

Shi Nuan broke out of her trance and shook her head. “Nothing. I feel like I was thinking about something earlier but I can't remember what it was.” Shi Nuan pouted and spun her head around while chanting a string of gibberish as if she were performing a ritual on herself.

Fu Chengyan's fingers clamped onto Shi Nuan's small head. He spoke in a sturdy tone with a sliver of admonishment, "Stop moving!"

"Okay!" Shi Nuan stopped bobbing her head around. However, her mind was still running. "Yan, did you know me a long time ago? You secretly admired me for many years, right?"

Shi Nuan extended her neck upwards like a giraffe and stared at Fu Chengyan seriously.

She had run through many possibilities in her head but she found this the most plausible. Honestly, she didn't believe in love at first sight, at least not in the relationship she had with Fu Chengyan.

The man's dark eyes were twinkling as if they had a lot to tell Shi Nuan. Fu Chengyan reached out a finger and swept her bangs to one side. Shi Nuan's petite face was beaming like a full moon. He prodded the tip of her nose. "Just guess."

"No, I don't want to!" Shi Nuan shoved Fu Chengyan aside. "You are such a hooligan. Everyone who doesn't know said you are a tame and harmless sheep, but I say you are a big bad wolf hiding under a sheep's hide."

"Hmm?" Fu Chengyan lifted one of his brows. "What are you talking about?" With a scoop, he had Shi Nuan falling into his embrace. He pinched her nose and ordered, "Say it again!"

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Meanwhile, a fatigued Shen Qianan finally returned to the Fu Residence. After rejecting Shi Nuan's offer to fetch her home, she had no luck in hailing a cab. She then walked across the road for the bus stop. As she waited for the bus to come, she saw Fu Chengyan and Shi Nuan walking out of Ruyi Tea House. Only then did she know that Fu Chengyan also went to the tea house.

*Why did he go to the tea house? Was he worried about what I'll do to Shi Nuan?
Or did he have qualms about how Shi Nuan will treat me?*

Shen Qianan soon realized that her heart was uncontrollably getting jealous of Shi Nuan.

Earlier that day, Shen Qianan suffered a crushing defeat when she was trading blows with Shi Nuan. Shi Nuan seemed nonchalant when she was replying to Shen Qianan. But the truth was that every single of her words slammed down Shen Qianan's attempt at provoking her. Shen Qianan had to admit that Shi Nuan was quite a formidable woman. She could now see why Fu Chengyan liked her.

Nevertheless, this acknowledgement of what Shi Nuan was capable of made Shen Qianan quiver in green envy.

Shen Qianan was pacing outside the gates of the Fu Residence until the servant gave her a call saying that Yu was crying because he couldn't find his mother. Only then did Shen Qianan hurry into the house.

Upon entering the house, Yu rushed into Shen Qianan's embrace. "Mommy!"

Shen Qianan stumbled as Yu charged into her. The servant held her steady from behind. "Ms. Shen, are you alright?"

"Yep, I'm fine!" Shen Qianan shook her head and hoisted Yu into the air. "What's the matter, Yu?"

"Mommy, can we go home? I don't want to be here! I don't want to stay here anymore!" Yu hugged his mother tight as if he were afraid of something.

"Mommy, you are a liar! You said we are going to find Daddy! Where is he?"

Shen Qianan's face stiffened at the mention of Yu's father.

Song Zhenyan and Ning Xin, who appeared behind Shen Qianan at that moment, also looked grim.

“Yu, be a good kid, okay? Daddy is busy with his work at the moment. Once he’s not busy, he will come to visit you!” Shen Qianan could no longer care too much. All she wanted at the moment was for her baby boy to feel better.

Yet, Yu only seemed to cry louder. “Mommy, you’re a liar! Everyone says Daddy doesn’t want me anymore! They say my Daddy isn’t my Daddy! They are bad people!”

Yu pointed a finger at Song Zhenyan. “She’s a bad person, Mommy! Can you chase her away?”

“Pfft! Shen Qianan, you better teach your kid some manners!” Song Zhenyan scoffed. “You want to chase me out of this house, kiddo? There is indeed someone in the Fu Residence who can chase me out, but it’s definitely not you. Shen Qianan, you’re not even from the Fu clan, but we are generous enough to take you and your illegitimate son under our roof. You guys better be more grateful!”

“Mdm. Song, please don’t take Yu seriously. I apologize on behalf of him for his misbehavior. But Yu is not just anyone else’s child. He’s-”

“He’s what? You really want us to believe that he’s Yan’s son? Shen Qianan, if this child is really Yan’s, why have you stayed away from us for the past three years?”

Song Zhenyan did not give Shen Qianan any room to breathe at all. She was not fond of the woman just as she disliked the latter’s mother.

In her whole life, Song Zhenyan didn’t have much hate for any women, except for Shen Qianan’s mother and Ning Xin. Now that Shen Qianan came to stay with her, she was not going to let her have an easy time.

Song Zhenyan spat at Shen Qianan. "I know Old Master Fu brought you back, but that doesn't mean anything. If he can despise Shi Nuan, I say the same can happen to you. Even more, you brought along your illegitimate son. What will people think of us if they knew we took in a woman who has a kid out of wedlock? At least, Shi Nuan used to be a single woman with a clean track record."

Song Zhenyan's words were sharp daggers. They shredded up Shen Qianan's heart without any mercy. Shen Qianan just couldn't bear being compared to Shi Nuan.

Shen Qianan lifted her head to look at the older woman. Her bloodshot eyes were quivering with rage.

Song Zhenyan was also dumbfounded. It was the first time she saw Shen Qianan in such a livid state.

Shen Qianan started to giggle in a deranged manner. "I do have respect for you since you are Yan's mother, but that doesn't mean you can ridicule me as if I have no feelings. We all know what happened three years ago. If I recall correctly, you were also involved in the grand scheme of things. I wonder how Ms. Song is now?"

"You..."

"That's enough! What are you guys arguing about?"

A fearsome growl came from upstairs. Fu Zhengyun walked down from the stairs with his walking cane. His fierce eyes were glowering at the two of them.

"Qianan, Zhenyan is older than you. Now that you are in the Fu Residence, you need to respect her!"

"Yes, Grandpa!" Shen Qianan had no choice but to give in as much as she didn't want to. After all, she and her son were living off the Fu family right now. She held Yu tight in her arms. "If there's nothing else, I will bring Yu upstairs."

“Hold up!” Fu Zhengyun halted Shen Qianan in her steps. “Zhenyan, how could you berate Shen Qianan in such a manner? You should know better as an adult,” Fu Zhengyun chided Song Zhenyan in front of Shen Qianan. “You need to know that this is the Fu family and not the Song family!”

He turned to Shen Qianan. “Qianan, I think Yu must be missing his father a lot! Bring Yu to work tomorrow!”

“But isn’t that-”

“No!”

Coming downstairs, Fu Heng draped the cloak in his hand over Ning Xin’s body. He patted her shoulders gently. “It’s already late. Why don’t you head up to rest?”

Ning Xin swept her eyes across the people in the living room and nodded. “Alright then. I don’t feel very well too. I’ll take my leave now. Good night!”

After Ning Xin left, Fu Heng glared at Shen Qianan. He then turned to Fu Zhengyun. “Father, we all know why you brought Shen Qianan back. However, I hope you are aware of the consequences that might happen.”

“Are you trying to lecture me?” Even though Fu Zhengyun was a retired old man, he was still as capable as he was back in his prime days. Thus, he didn’t like to be warned by his son.

“I’m not lecturing you, Father.” Fu Heng shook his head. “However, Yan is now in charge of Shengyuan. I bet you are aware of how well he is doing now. You were there when he set up the rules for his company. Heck, you even agreed to them. When you slot Shen Qianan into the company, it’s already against the rules. Now, you want her to bring her kid in? Aren’t you going head to head with Yan now?”

“Yan is the one who’s trying to oppose me!” Fu Zhengyun sneered, “I am not blind. Just this morning, he fetched that woman to work. There were so many

people looking at them when they walked through the company's gates. Has he ever had Shengyuan's reputation under his consideration?"

Fu Heng's eyes darkened. He also didn't expect Fu Chengyan to be so showy of his relationship with Shi Nuan. However, there was nothing for Fu Chengyan to hide. "Shi Nuan is Yan's legal wife! Why can't he fetch her to work?"

"What? She's his wife? Pfft! Do you know what family she comes from? The Shi family doesn't even have anything. How can she ever be a match for any men from the Fu family?" Fu Zhengyun scowled as he mentioned the Shi family. "Also, Shi Nuan has a messy background. Her brother-in-law was literally her boyfriend. Tsk! Besides, her sister was really something to have the heart to steal her boyfriend. How preposterous is that! That guy is that useless brat Fu Yuqing, right? Anyway, have I not said enough? Clearly, the Shi family doesn't know how to raise their children well!"

To sum up, Fu Zhengyun just abhorred Shi Nuan with a passion.

"Father, no family can be spotless. I've seen Shi Nuan! She's a pretty nice girl. Moreover, she must be a good person if Yan likes her." Fu Heng was fervent in defending Shi Nuan as all of his encounters with Shi Nuan had been nothing but pleasant.

Fu Zhengyun responded with disdain, "Yan likes her for how she looks! Do you think Yan will like her if she doesn't have that pretty face on her?" Then, Fu Zhengyun turned to Shen Qianan. "How's work today, Qianan?"

Shen Qianan faltered slightly as she suddenly heard her name. She squeezed out a smile. "It's fine."

"What do you mean by its fine? So did you see Yan today?" Fu Zhengyun seemed to be dissatisfied with Shen Qianan's answer. "I purposely arranged for you to be on the twenty-seventh floor so you can be close to him. Since your looks are the reason why Yan is so interested in Shi Nuan, now that you're back,

I hope you can grasp the opportunity and steal his heart back from that wretched woman!”

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For the next few days, Fu Chengyan fetched Shi Nuan to work. Every day, not only would she get off his car at the company's main entrance, but Fu Chengyan would also wait for her in his car at the same spot after work. It was not possible for anyone in Shengyuan Group to not know their relationship. It was as if Fu Chengyan's name was engraved on Shi Nuan's body. Everyone knew Shi Nuan was his.

The employees did notice the sudden addition of Shen Qianan into their company too. But no matter how similar to Shi Nuan she looked, it was apparent to the entire company which of the two women had captured Fu Chengyan's heart.

Everyone also betted on which of them would be the more spectacular one in the company. Most of the people were on Shi Nuan's side. In the meantime, Shi Nuan was elbows deep in her mountain of work. She had no energy left to care about the rumors going on in the company.

Shengyuan was already more or less primed to engage in the joint project they had with Prosperous Group. For the past few days, Shi Nuan had visited Prosperous Group with Lin Yu to hammer out the final details. Nevertheless, even though the two companies were in agreement on the terms they had for each other, there were still internal affairs Shi Nuan needed to settle.

Upon returning from the Prosperous Group, Shi Nuan and Lin Yu heard the news that the old chairman was paying the company a visit. Yuan Jian rushed to Shi Nuan once she saw the latter. "Shi Nuan, just spill the beans! Everyone is talking about you and Mr. Fu. Aren't you married? What is your relationship to Mr. Fu?"

Although Yuan Jia was well-versed in the art of gossiping, she still didn't know what was going on between Shi Nuan and Fu Chengyan. All she knew was that Shi Nuan was a married woman.

Shi Nuan pursed her lips and pried Yuan Jia's fingers off her body. She then sat down at her desk. "What kind of relationship do you think I have with Mr. Fu?"

Yuan Jia stuck out her tongue. "Aren't you just going to tell me right away? I'm your best friend in the company!" Yuan Jia paused to think for a while before replying. "Everyone said you are Mr. Fu's latest woman, but they didn't know you are already married. I told them you are a married woman, so how could you—"

Yuan Jia came to an abrupt stop. Out of the blue, she held Shi Nuan's hand in hers. All of her attention was on the plain ring on Shi Nuan's ring finger. "Don't tell me Mr. Fu is the guy you are married to!"

"Mmhm!" Shi Nuan retracted her hand from Yuan Jia. "Hahaha! I can't believe you only found out about it now!"

"What do you mean? It's not like you told me before!" Yuan Jia acted as if she just saw a ghost. She swallowed and continued, "Is Mr. Fu actually your husband? Don't lie to me! But your ring looks so..." Indeed, Shi Nuan's ring was nothing out of the ordinary.

Shi Nuan had her arms crossed in front of her chest. "Okay, you know everything now. Let's get back to our work, okay?"

"Uhm..." Yuan Jia had more questions, but Shi Nuan didn't seem to be in the mood to entertain questions about her personal life. After Yuan Jia walked away, Shi Nuan rubbed the ring on her finger and sighed.

She was not excited to have Fu Zhengyun at the office. If anything, it bugged her that the man was now in the same building as her.

"Shi Nuan, come in for a second."

Shi Nuan was daydreaming when Lin Yu summoned her. She put on a straight face and walked into Lin Yu's office. "Mr. Lin, are you looking for me?"

"Please take this document to the twenty-seventh floor."

"Okay." Shi Nuan accepted the document from Lin Yu. Her eyes scanned the cover and she said, "Are these the documents for the project in Bay City?"

"Yep!" Lin Yu smiled. "Once we are done with the project in the North District, we will have to start on the project in Bay City."

"Oh." Shi Nuan nodded. "Then, I'll bring this to Mr. Fu now."

Shi Nuan reached the twenty-seventh floor just in time to bump into Zhou Zheng. "Mrs. Fu!"

Ever since Shi Nuan decided to go to work with Fu Chengyan, Zhou Zheng started to address Shi Nuan as the wife of his master. However, Shi Nuan was a tad bit startled. "I think it's better if you call me by my name, Zhou Zheng. Is Mr. Fu here?"

"Yes, but..." Zhou Zheng seemed to have a lump of stone in his throat. "The chairman is also here too."

Shi Nuan raised her brows. "Alright, thank you for telling me. Then, please help me pass this document to Mr. Fu."

"Ms. Shi!" Zhou Zheng stopped Shi Nuan as she turned around to leave. "Other than the chairman..."

"Shen Qianan is also inside?" Shi Nuan wriggled her lips. Zhou Zheng was flummoxed. "How did you know?"

“I can tell from your expression.” Shi Nuan was not stupid. Fu Zhengyun rarely came to the company unless it was for crucial matters. Usually, he would show up at the office only when the board of directors was not willing to listen to Fu Chengyan’s ideas. Otherwise, there was nothing he needed to take care of at Shengyuan.

Nevertheless, Fu Zhengyun was visiting quite frequently as of late. It wasn’t because of work. Rather, he came here for Shen Qianan.

Shi Nuan knew what Fu Zhengyun was up to. He was trying to get rid of Shi Nuan by having Shen Qianan around. In fact, he probably thought Shen Qianan could replace Shi Nuan, since the former looked exactly the same as the latter. If Shi Nuan’s mind was any more fragile, she might be asking Fu Chengyan for a divorce now.

But Shi Nuan only scoffed. She was not someone who could easily be daunted.

All the years she spent at Shi family had built an impenetrable fortress of iron around her heart. Only the people she cared about could hurt her. The rest could not even touch her.

Zhou Zheng was puzzled at Shi Nuan’s nonchalance. “Are you not upset about it?”

“Of course I am upset!” *But how will being upset help me in any way?* “Someone is eyeing my darling. How can I not be upset?”

Zhou Zheng still couldn’t quite understand Shi Nuan. While he was still in a daze, Shi Nuan whisked the document in Zhou Zheng’s hands away from him. “Bah! I’ll take the document to Mr. Fu myself. Mr. Lin said it’s very important.”

Zhou Zheng twitched his mouth. He was even more confused now. Still, he gave Shi Nuan a word of advice. “I think the chairman’s birthday is in two days’ time.”

Shi Nuan arched one brow. “Oh, really?”

“Yes. Every year, the Fu family will have a big celebration for the chairman’s birthday. It’s not like they are trying to show off their wealth, though. Old Master Fu just loves having lively occasions.”

Shi Nuan sniggered. “Yeah, he sure likes lively arguments too. Alright, Mr. Zhou. I should not bother you anymore.”

Shi Nuan headed in the direction of Fu Chengyan’s office and knocked on the door.

“Come in!”

Fu Chengyan’s voice was deep and sturdy. Shi Nuan could not sense the atmosphere of the room from his tone. She pushed the door open and saw Fu Chengyan engrossed in work at his desk. Fu Zhengyun and Shen Qianan were sitting to one side. At the moment, Shen Qianan was making tea for Fu Zhengyun. It seemed harmonious in the room.

However, Shi Nuan’s knock had interrupted the three of them.

Fu Chengyan lifted his head. When he saw Shi Nuan, the light in his eyes wavered slightly. “You have something for me?”

Shi Nuan strode into the room. Her eyes were fixated on Fu Chengyan the whole time. “Mr. Lin asked me to pass you this.”

Fu Chengyan browsed through the pages of the document. “Lin Yu seems to be doing better in his job. I just asked him for this two days ago, and he’s already done with it.” Fu Chengyan closed the folder. “How’s the discussion going on over at Prosperous Group?”

“Everything is already finalized. Once we receive the first batch of funding, the work will commence. Since Li Heng is not here, Liang Lin is helping Li Xufan to manage the Prosperous Group. He seems to be doing well.”

“Alright!” Fu Chengyan nodded before taking out another set of documents from his drawer. “Please pass this to Lin Yu. Inform him to get started on this project as soon as possible. It has already been delayed for quite a long time.”

Shi Nuan nodded. “If there’s nothing else, I’ll leave now, Mr. Fu.”

Up till the instant Shi Nuan was leaving, she didn’t turn to face Fu Zhengyun and Shen Qianan at all. But Fu Zhengyun couldn’t hold it in himself anymore. “Wait!”

Shi Nuan’s hand slipped from the door handle. She turned her head to look at him. “Chairman, you’re asking for me?”

“Yeah. There are only a few of us in this room. Who else am I calling?”

Shi Nuan smiled politely. She closed the door properly before approaching Fu Zhengyun. “Chairman, is there anything I can help you with?”

“Can’t I just have you come over for nothing?” Shi Nuan was a thorn in Fu Zhengyun’s side. “Who taught you your manners? Why didn’t you greet me earlier?”

Shi Nuan’s smiling eyes stared into that of Fu Zhengyun’s. “Nice to meet you, Chairman!”

“You! Are you not clear of Shengyuan’s rules? No one can come up to the twenty-seventh floor out of their own accord.” It was obvious that Fu Zhengyun was just trying to make Shi Nuan’s life difficult.

Yet, Shi Nuan kept a cool head. She glanced at Fu Chengyan and noticed that he was buried in work. She then turned back around to face Fu Zhengyun with a broad smile. “Of course I know about the rules. I abide by the rules of our company all the time. Please allow me to explain myself. I was summoned here by Mr. Fu himself. If he doesn’t wish to see me, I will leave right away. Anyway, even though I have only joined Shengyuan for a short time, I still know the rules well. Other than the board of directors and Mr. Fu himself, the only other people

who can enter this room are the head secretary and Mr. Fu's personal assistant. After all, there are so many confidential documents stored here. You know what I am talking about right, Ms. Shen?"

Shen Qianan's face stiffened. "Yes, of course!"

Shi Nuan grinned. "Good to know that! How smart you are to be familiar with the rules despite joining us just not long ago! Then allow me to give you a pop quiz! Ms. Shen, do you know what's the punishment for breaching the rules?"

"That's enough!" Fu Zhengyun was aware of what Shi Nuan was trying to imply.

Fu Zhengyun came to the company to see how Shen Qianan was doing. To his disappointment, even though he had placed Shen Qianan on the twenty-seventh floor, Fu Chengyan only assigned her the lowly job of a junior secretary as the man knew what the sly old fox had in mind.

Recently, Fu Chengyan even took things up to the next level with Shi Nuan. They were literally together the moment they stepped out of the company and were basically trying to show the world that they were together.

Fu Zhengyun was not going to let Shi Nuan have her way. The purpose of his trip today to the office was to set things up for Shen Qianan. He wanted to appoint Shen Qianan the role of Fu Chengyan's personal secretary, who would be in charge of his life on a daily basis.

Nevertheless, Fu Chengyan didn't pay heed to anything Fu Zhengyun said.

He just sat there at his desk, working hard and completely ignoring Shen Qianan's and Fu Zhengyun's presence in his office. Once Shi Nuan turned up, his expression had softened at once. Fu Zhengyun knew it was Fu Chengyan's way of protesting against his wishes.

"Oh my, I hope I didn't cross any line! I am sorry if I did! Anyway, it's still office hours. It's best if I return to my work. Chairman, please allow me to take my leave

if there's nothing else. I need to keep up with my work. After all, I am working to feed my man and my family. Perhaps it's a concept many will not understand," said Shi Nuan.

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Shi Nuan's words were obviously directed at Shen Qianan. She was not going to let herself be bullied so easily. If anyone tried to lay claim to her husband, she would take them down at all costs.

Shen Qianan couldn't withstand Shi Nuan's attacks. Her hands trembled as a streak of bitterness flashed across her eyes. She looked truly pitiful.

Shi Nuan glanced at the expression on the face that resembled hers and scoffed internally.

Shen Qianan's gaze then moved to Fu Chengyan. She hoped the man would say something to defend her. When Fu Chengyan split up with Shen Qianan, he had sent her off without saying anything. Shen Qianan always thought Fu Chengyan still had feelings for her. If not, why would he marry someone who looked so alike as herself?

But unfortunately, Fu Chengyan didn't notice the pitiful look on Shen Qianan's face.

He was absorbed in his work. Even though a storm was brewing before him, he did not say a word.

Shen Qianan was disappointed, but she was not going to back down so easily. She took a deep breath and put on a smile. Then, she looked Shi Nuan firmly in her eyes. "You are indeed very capable, but it's not good for you if you only know how to work. No man likes a woman who's too caught up in her career."

"Oh, is that so?" Shi Nuan lifted her lips.

She chuckled dismissively, but she was irked when she saw Shen Qianan staring at her husband. “So I can assume that your future husband prefers you to act weak and helpless?”

“You...” Shen Qianan was dumbfounded. She did not think that Shi Nuan would be so direct with her words. At a loss, she turned to Fu Chengyan unwittingly. The man’s brows quirked a bit but he still continued working. Shen Qianan writhed her lips. “I just think that a woman doesn’t have to show that they are strong and capable all the time. Ms. Shi, you have mistaken my words!”

“Oh, I’m sorry. I really do have some other work to tend to at the Project Management Department. If there’s really nothing else, I will take my leave now. Not everyone can be so efficient as Ms. Shen as to have time for chitchat and tea but still be able to finish their work on time.”

Shi Nuan then smiled politely at Fu Zhengyun. “Chairman, I’ll take my leave then.”

Fu Zhengyun kept mum the whole time as his eyes shifted between Shi Nuan and Shen Qianan. In the end, he only stared as Shi Nuan left the room.

A beat later, Fu Zhengyun’s eyes drifted over to Shen Qianan. At once, the woman could feel icicles on her spine. She rose from her seat and said, “Chairman, I suddenly remember I still have work to finish. I’ll also take my leave now!” She then walked up to Fu Chengyan, then took a deep breath before saying, “Yan, I didn’t mean to take jabs at Ms. Shi just now. I was merely trying to...”

Fu Chengyan finally raised his head. The coldness in his eyes frightened even Shen Qianan. She subconsciously pinched her palm to force herself come to her senses. “Yan, I-”

“Looks like Grandpa only brought your body here but left your brains at home.”

The blood drained from Shen Qianan’s face. “Yan, w-what do you mean?”

Fu Chengyan annotated on the document he was reading as he spoke without looking at Shen Qianan. "Without my approval, you aren't supposed to enter my office, especially with your rank in the company. Since it's only your first mistake, you only have to pay a fine that amounts to one month of your salary."

Shen Qianan inhaled sharply. "Yan, do you really have to-"

"Please address me by Mr. Fu in the office! Leave now!"

Shen Qianan still wanted to continue, but her throat was jammed shut by the icy air around Fu Chengyan. She bit her lips and scurried out of the office. The tears welling in her eyes were about to slide down her cheeks.

Fu Chengyan heard a loud bang as the door shut. He put down the pen in his hand and lifted his head. Then, his eyes met that of Fu Zhengyun's. "Grandpa, do you think she will change anything in my life?"

Fu Zhengyun twisted his brows. "It's true that she won't be able to change anything. But let me be clear! Shi Nuan will never be the matriarch of the Fu clan. Dream on, Yan!"

"Then let me make myself clear too! There's only one woman that I will marry and that will be Shi Nuan. I will not marry anyone else!" Fu Chengyan rose from his seat and looked down at Fu Zhengyun.

Fu Zhengyun slammed his walking cane on the ground. "You just want to challenge me and rebel against my words, right? Anyway, what good is that Shi Nuan woman? She has nothing. Her family has nothing. She can't aid you in your career. How can she ever be a good fit for you?"

Fu Chengyan smirked. He had one hand in his pocket. His sharp eyes stared straight into Fu Chengyan's eyes. "So what if Shi Nuan didn't come from a prominent family? I have never expected her to help me in any way. Grandpa, you know that I've never care about what she can offer me!"

“You are the future head of the Fu clan. You can’t always have everything your way. I will say it one last time. Shi Nuan is not suitable for you.”

“I think she’s the perfect match for me! No one in the world will ever be able to replace her!” Fu Chengyan was not going to compromise even if he had to rebel against his grandfather. He was fearless.

“You’ve also seen it yourself just now. So what if Shen Qianan is from the prestigious Shen family? She can’t work for her life! Just this point alone proves that anyone can be better than her!” he retorted.

“You!”

Fu Zhengyun suddenly had a moment of realization. “Don’t tell me you didn’t interrupt their argument just now because you wanted to show me what Shi Nuan is capable of! Yes, I do agree that Shi Nuan is more capable than Shen Qianan. But as long as I don’t agree, she will never be a part of the Fu family.”

“My wife doesn’t need your approval!” Fu Chengyan shot Fu Zhengyun down right away. “It’s quite late now. Grandpa, if you have anything else that’s work-related, please go ahead and tell me about it. But if you want to stick around to talk about my personal affairs, I don’t think I can carry on with the conversation. Now that Shi Nuan and I are legally wedded, there’s nothing you can do to tear us apart. I hope I have made myself clear enough!” Fu Chengyan paused a while before adding, “Grandpa, aren’t you curious as to whose child Yu is?”

Fu Zhengyun gawked at Fu Chengyan. “Didn’t she say that you’re Yu’s father?”

Fu Chengyan plastered on a smile. He was relaxed now. Slumping his body against the side of the sofa, he uttered mysteriously, “Grandpa, why do you believe her now? You used to think she was lying back then, no?”

Fu Zhengyun’s face was as white as a sheet. “I’ve done a DNA test on Yu. He’s indeed descended from the Fu family.”

Fu Chengyan's face twitched as he gritted his teeth. "And thus you think the kid is mine?"

Fu Zhengyun tightened the grip on his walking cane. "Just tell me! Did you sleep with Shen Qianan back then?" If Fu Chengyan did sleep with Shen Qianan before, then what happened during the month Shen Qianan was taken away? Shen Qianan never divulged to anyone what happened to her in the month she disappeared.

When Shen Qianan showed up in Fu Chengyan's room with her clothes disheveled, everyone thought something happened between the two of them. However, Fu Chengyan had gone over to the Song family in the capital after that, and when he came back, Shen Qianan was already pregnant.

Fu Chengyan neither admitted nor denied anything. The only thing he did then was sending Shen Qianan out of Z Nation.

After Shen Qianan left, there were a few racy pictures of Shen Qianan left at the Fu Residence. It was at this time Fu Zhengyun and Fu Sheng decided to call off the marriage between Fu Chengyan and Shen Qianan. After that, no one ever brought up Shen Qianan again.

But during the previous time Fu Zhengyun went to C Country to visit Shen Qianan, he really found Yu familiar looking. At once, he suggested Shen Qianan carry out paternity testing for Yu. Fu Zhengyun could not let Fu Chengyan know about the testing. Thus, he was the one who provided the genetic material required for the paternity test. In the end, it was proven that Yu was related to the Fu family.

Thus, Fu Zhengyun doubtfully brought Shen Qianan and Yu back to the Fu Residence. If Yu were indeed Fu Chengyan's son, he would legally adopt Yu into the Fu family after he had driven Shi Nuan away. To Fu Zhengyun, Shen Qianan was also not good enough for his grandson. He would never let Fu Chengyan marry her too.

“You are underestimating me, Grandpa. I will never let my woman be harmed by anyone. If Yu is really my son, I will not neglect him. Why do you think I sent Shen Qianan away back then?”

Fu Zhengyun’s words were caught in his throat. “But the results of the paternity testing show that-”

“Pfft! Grandpa, you can’t trust everything you see. I can also ask Shaoqing to forge such medical documents for me.” Fu Chengyan scoffed. “Grandpa, you were in the business world for such a long time. How could you be fooled by such tricks?”

Fu Zhengyun’s face was covered in gloom. He loathed being reprimanded by his grandson. “Even if Yu is not your son, I will still not accept both your wife and Shen Qianan into the family!” That was Fu Zhengyun’s ultimatum.

He continued, “Don’t make me repeat myself. I will only take Shi Nuan as my wife. If you wish to remain in your stance, then I have to apologize. There’s no way I can ever conform to your wishes! I don’t care whatever happens to the Fu family!”

“You brat! Don’t you dare threaten me!” Fu Zhengyun’s sullen eyes were glowering at Fu Chengyan. “I was the one who gave you this position you have now! If you think I can’t remove you from this office, think again! Your woman or your career? You can only choose one!”

The color on Fu Chengyan’s face also faded. “If that’s the case, I have nothing else to say. Grandpa, if this is how things have to go down, you know what my decision is going to be.”

“You...” Fu Zhengyun clenched his fist around his walking cane. The veins on his hand were bulging.

Fu Chengyan furrowed his brows once Fu Zhengyun stormed out of the office. Out of the blue, someone knocked at the door. Fu Chengyan groaned in annoyance, "What is it!"

"Mr. Fu, it's me!" Zhou Zheng entered the room. "There is some information about Yu from K Nation!"

Zhou Zheng passed the files to Fu Chengyan. "Mr. Fu, Yu actually did a paternity test with your grandfather before. The report has not been tampered with. Yu is indeed related to the Fu family."

Fu Chengyan was slightly taken aback. He narrowed his eyes and ordered, "I want you to find out what happened to Shen Qianan in the month she disappeared three years ago."

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24/06/2021 by [Novel Heart](#)

“Noted. I’ll look into this matter right away,” Zhou Zheng said as he also began to realize how grave the problem at hand was. “Mr. Li is also in K Nation at this moment!”

“Li Heng? He’s no longer in C Country?” Fu Chengyan frowned as he continued, “Pei Huan and Bao are both there, too?”

“Yes, it seems that Mr. Li’s presuming that the culprit is in K Nation!” Zhou Zheng looked at his superior as he spoke, awaiting his response. Fu Chengyan motioned with a casual handwave. “I see. Keep in touch with Li Heng from time to time. And remind him to be careful as well: the one who poisoned Pei Huan and Bao might not necessarily be Li Cenbei, as we thought.”

Fu Chengyan had a strong hunch that whoever the perpetrator was, that person’s target wasn’t just the Li clan. The Fu clan might very well be on the list, too, now that even both Pei Huan and Bao had also become victims.

He had sent his men to C Country to find out more about Li Cenbei ever since his demise. He hadn’t been able to fully grasp the full picture of that man’s character, but he was sure about one thing——Li Cenbei’s feelings for Pei Huan was very real, so real that he even once had the idea of bringing her together with him to death.

But Li Cenbei clearly cared for her very much. He wouldn’t have had the heart to infect Pei Huan with the virus even if his personal agenda were busted. If he were ever forced into making the decision of dragging Pei Huan to death together, it could only mean that he didn’t have the antidote himself.

Fu Chengyan quietly analyzed as he pursed his lips. He looked somber. If his deductions were correct, it would mean that this mysterious person hiding behind the shadow of Li Cenbei was the true mastermind. *Who is this person? What are his objectives?* Fu Chengyan had no clue.

“Mr. Fu, you mean to say that Mr. Li and the others are still at risk of being in danger?” Fu Chengyan’s train of thought broke at Zhou Zheng’s question.

“I don’t think so, not for the time being.” *The culprit seems like a vigilant person. It’s highly unlikely that the person would make a rash move at this point and risk exposing himself or herself.* Pinching his eyebrows briefly, he directed his assistant, “For now, focus on investigating Shen Qianan. Dig as much as possible into everything that’s happened while I was away from Jiang City, including every person whom she’s been in contact with!”

“Understood!” Zhou Zheng answered promptly. He then hesitated for a second, straightened himself, and added, “Mr. Fu, earlier on Mrs. Fu...”

“Yes?” Fu Chengyan looked up. “What about her?”

“When Mrs. Fu came upstairs earlier, I accidentally spilled the beans on the chairman’s birthday that’s coming up in two days.” Zhou Zheng carefully observed Fu Chengyan’s expression as he explained slowly, and was relieved when he didn’t see any signs of disapproval from his boss. “I thought since Mrs. Fu is now a part of the Fu clan, it’s only natural that she would attend his birthday, so...”

“You’re so nosy!” Fu Chengyan replied with a side glance, though there was not a single hint of disappointment or rebuke in his words. “Anyway, go have a look at House of Chigu and keep me updated on their latest products.”

“Yes, Sir. If there’s nothing else, I shall take my leave.”

“Hm.” Fu Chengyan dismissed Zhou Zheng with a wave of his hand. As his assistant left, he frowned slightly at the reminder of his grandfather’s birthday.

How could he have forgotten that Fu Zhengyun's birthday was in two days?

He pinched his brows again for a second, then dialed Shi Nuan's number on his cellphone.

Shi Nuan picked up his call in an instant. "Hello there!"

"It's me." The familiar deep voice on the line sounded somewhat helpless.

"Of course I know it's you." Shi Nuan smiled as she continued, "What's up? Is there something wrong with that document earlier?" She was curious as to why Fu Chengyan would call her at this time, given they had just met each other shortly before.

"No, it's not that. Can you come with me to House of Chigu after work?" he asked.

Shi Nuan raised her eyebrows slightly at his words. She smiled and responded gleefully, "Sure! But I might get off work slightly later today."

"Alright, I'll wait for you!"

Shi Nuan hung up the phone with a faint smile. Although she told Fu Chengyan she might be late, she wouldn't want to keep her beloved waiting too long. Delighted at the thought of seeing him, she sped up her work.

She had been occupied at her seat that entire evening studying the pile of blueprints on her desk. As she placed the last document onto the stash of finished work, she glanced at her watch. *Oh, there's still plenty of time! I finished earlier than expected!* Secretly happy at the opportunity to leave the office earlier than usual, she texted away on her phone: *Yan, I'm done earlier than I thought. I'll head to the carpark to meet you!*

"Okay!" Fu Chengyan's reply was extremely succinct, but it was significant enough for Shi Nuan that she read over his text a few times. Meanwhile, she sent

another text to Song Rongrong and Su Yian in their private group chat: *What do you girls think would be a good birthday gift for a family elder?*

Song Rongrong was quick to reply: *An elder at home? Who's that? Both your granddad and grandpa's birthdays are still miles away, right? And if you're referring to your father, didn't he just have his a while ago?*

Shi Nuan paused her fingers for a moment, unsure of how she should respond to these questions. Not long after, her phone sounded with another beep as Su Yian's text came in: *Is that someone from the Fu family?*

You're brilliant, Yian!

Impressed at Su Yian's deduction; Shi Nuan replied: *That's right. Yan's grandpa will be having his birthday in two days. I'm wondering if I should give him something myself, as a personal gift.*

This would mark her first time visiting the Fu Residence officially as a family member. Even if Fu Zhengyun didn

't seem to like her, she could be seen as disrespectful for attending his birthday celebration empty-handed, even if she did not like Fu Zhengyun.

Song Rongrong's text came in shortly after: *Fu Chengyan's grandpa? So you guys are finally going official in front of the family, huh? Seriously, just how long have you both been hiding your marriage from them... Anyway, if it's really your first time officially meeting the elders, it's indeed better to think carefully about what to present as a gift!*

Rongrong was still completely in the dark about the fact that the Fu clan had already known about Shi Nuan. Now, the situation was further complicated with Shen Qianan in the picture. Knowing Rongrong's personality, however, Shi Nuan decided to not disclose such detail for now. *It's not the right time.*

On the other hand, Su Yian was already aware of these things. Earlier on she had cross paths with that lady who looked eerily similar to Shi Nuan. Su Yian felt somewhat uneasy about her.

Su Yian wasn't the type of person to throw a wet blanket over someone else's situation, though, and she knew it wasn't her place to comment too much on Shi Nuan's family matters. Thus, she kept her thoughts to herself all this while. *I'd hate to say anything, but this time it's Old Master Fu's birthday. I bet it's a very important celebration for the Fu clan with many important guests attending. What if...*

Su Yian broke off her own imagination on the potential events that might unfold. Instead, she returned her friend's question with some of her own: *What gift do you have in mind? What about Chengyan? Did he suggest anything?*

No. He only asked me to accompany him to the House of Chigu later. It's most likely to browse for a gift for his grandpa. But I'm thinking if I should get him something from myself personally!

What are you talking about? You're a married couple, so you should give him a single present together. Otherwise, the family might still assume that you're both not officially together. I'd say, why not take this chance to reveal your marriage?

As a rather impatient person, Song Rongrong had always felt uncomfortable with how her friend had been keeping her marriage with Fu Chengyan a secret from others. It just didn

't make sense to her. I still don't get it. I know Fu Chengyan's an extraordinary guy from an influential family, but Nuan is not any worse!

Su Yian soon responded: *Nuan, this time around I agree with Rongrong. I think you should discuss this matter with Chengyan and decide together on what gift you'll be getting. But it has to be a single gift that represents both of you.*

Alright, I get it. Shi Nuan ended the conversation and texted her friends goodbye as she realized it was now past working hours for the day. She headed straight for the basement, where Fu Chengyan's designated parking spot was.

Just as she exited the elevator and was about to give Fu Chengyan another call, a faint conversation could be heard from the direction of the carpark. "Yan, do we really have to be like this? You should've known that back then, I..."

"I'm not interested in your personal affairs, Shen Qianan. I don't care what you think. It's already long over between us, and I owe you nothing," Fu Chengyan's cold and indifferent voice could be heard, cutting off the former's unfinished sentence.

Shi Nuan felt her guts tensing up into a knot. She stopped in her tracks and listened. Her instincts told her that there's no reason for her to be anxious—she could've walked out to the carpark as she pleased. Nonetheless, she doubted herself for a second. She clenched both hands into fists in an attempt to calm herself down and quietly tiptoed to a corner near the exit.

She recognized that voice speaking to Fu Chengyan. Shen Qianan could be heard again saying, "But Yan, did you really let go of the feelings between us completely? We've known each other for so long. I've always thought... I was the reason why you married Shi Nuan, isn't that right?"

Once again Shi Nuan felt a cold shudder. She clutched onto her handbag tightly as she struggled to remain quiet. There was no one else around. The entire space seemed so empty that an echo could be easily heard even if she made a slight noise. She tried to keep her breath as slow and light as possible.

When Shi Nuan encountered Shen Qianan in person, the former managed to keep her head high and displayed a confident and proud front. While she was able to pull off such an arrogant act, Shi Nuan knew deep down she couldn't lie to herself. It still bothered her, so very much. She was bothered about Fu Chengyan's past as well as how things were between him and Shen Qianan.

Shi Nuan was fully aware that this person in front of Fu Chengyan was now merely his ex-girlfriend, but the fact that they were almost married at one point—that they were once engaged—still stung her heart. Not to mention that this woman resembled herself so much.

“Married Shi Nuan because of you?” Fu Chengyan snorted and let out a chuckle, as if what he had just heard was a ridiculous joke.

Shen Qianan felt disheartened at his mocking tone and cold, apathetic glare. “Yan, I know you’re still upset at that day when I left the house. I was angry and couldn’t care much about your opinions. But you have to understand: I’m a woman. You were putting all your focus onto work and never cared about how I felt. I...I left because I wanted to give myself some time and space for a few days. I was hoping that you’d come to your senses. I didn’t do anything during that time, we...”

“Shen Qianan, do you really think I don’t know anything about you?” Fu Chengyan interrupted her and glanced at his watch. Not hiding his annoyance, he quickly added, “There’s nothing else worth talking about between us. What’s done is done. I’ve been considerate enough to not bring it up or pull your leg in any way. As to why you came back all of a sudden, I’ll find out on my own. But let me warn you: if you want to remain here in Jiang City, you’d better be careful and know your place. Do what you should, and don’t do what you shouldn’t.”

“But Yan, do you even truly understand why I... You promised me that day. You told me you would marry me but you ended up with Shi Nuan. I know it’s because of how much her looks resemble mine. Yan, I know you still love me somewhere deep down, right? I know you still do...” Shen Qianan argued in dismay. She took a step forward and reached out to the man in front of her.

Her hand paused in mid-air as Fu Chengyan suddenly turned toward the other direction and demanded, “Who’s there?”

At his words, Shi Nuan realized that she could no longer keep hiding. She bit her lip and steadied herself, and came out of the corner. “It’s me!”

She walked towards them with an air of confidence. Her sight fell upon Shen Qianan's hand that was attempting to reach Fu Chengyan. She glanced briefly at her husband with a slightly worried look and then stared into Shen Qianan's eyes directly. She forced a calm smile as she said, "Ms. Shen, you seem to have a liking for things of the past. And people from your past, too!"

Shen Qianan felt her body stiffen all over. She smiled awkwardly, not sure where to place her hand that was extending to her ex-lover. "So I see that Ms. Shi has a hobby of eavesdropping as well!"

"How could this be considered eavesdropping? The place where I stood wasn't even a good spot for playing hide-and-seek. I have no reason to hide, after all!" Shi Nuan answered while maintaining her graceful smile, "This is Yan's private carpark; everyone at Shengyuan knows that nobody is allowed to come here without Yan's authorization. Ms. Shen is a new visitor; I guess the common rules are too difficult for you to understand!"

"I..." Shen Qianan tried to counter but was at a loss for words. Aware that her exchange with Fu Chengyan had been overheard, she gave up her friendly act and retaliated without holding back on her hostility. "What about Ms. Shi yourself? Aren't you a staff of Shengyuan, too? So on whose permission did you come here? Seems like you also haven't learned the company's rules well enough!"

Shi Nuan raised an eyebrow and calmly answered, "Oh, Ms. Shen, I'm afraid you've mistaken some things. Work hours have ended, and aside from being an employee of Shengyuan, I'm also Yan's wife. What belongs to Yan belongs to me. Look..." She held up her hand and swayed it gently in front of Shen Qianan's face, showing off the ring on her finger. "They say 'one boasts about what one doesn't own', but I guess I don't even need to show off anything. I'm not short of a husband, and I don't lack a wedding ring, either... Now, that reminds me, there actually *is* something I don't have!" She then leaned towards her husband as her lips curved into a flirtatious smile. "Darling, I'm missing a few diamonds on my ring!"

Fu Chengyan returned her display of affection with a reassuring smile. "Let's get them for you tomorrow!"

“I only want the big ones!” she pouted cheekily.

“Anything for you!”

At the sight of the couple’s lovey-dovey act towards each other in her presence, Shen Qianan’s blood slowly drained from her face. “Ms. Shi, don’t you think you’re overdoing it?” Shen Qianan retorted defensively.