

A Shotgun Marriage Chapter 15

Chapter 15

"Are the vegetables ready?" asked Lewis as he looked over to Tia after putting the fish in the dutch oven to make stew while she gawked at him. Tia was immediately jolted back to reality, and she blushed in embarrassment as she looked down at the vegetables in the baskets, which only half were ready. "A-Almost," she said frantically. With that, Lewis went up to her, and when he saw the leaves she had discarded, he quirked his lips. "You don't do this often, do you?" It was a question, but he said it with an affirmative tone. Tia chuckled awkwardly and defended herself upon being exposed, "I do, just rarely." At work, she and her colleagues would normally order food delivery for lunch, and when she returned home after work, Elizabeth would already be serving the dishes. All she had to do was wash her hands and eat. Hence, she rarely did any preparing or cooking, unless one counted making instant noodles as cooking. Lewis chuckled in response, then took the basket from her. "I'll do it. If you keep at this, only half of it will be left—maybe even less." Embarrassed, Tia looked at him and smiled sheepishly. Meanwhile, Lewis prepped the rest of the vegetables. He removed the wilted bits in a flash, then rinsed them under the tap. Tia stood right behind him this whole time, thinking about what she could do to help. This was her home, after all. What host would let their guest cook?! As Lewis turned around after prepping the vegetables, he accidentally bumped his shoulder on Tia's forehead, causing her to cry out in pain. Seeing so, Lewis hurriedly put the basket of vegetables on the countertop and asked, "Are you okay?" "Why is your shoulder so firm? It's like I hit a boulder," she mumbled as she rubbed her forehead. It hurt so much that she was tearing up a little. Her whining got Lewis chuckling, and at that, he gently rubbed her forehead while explaining, "I keep a habit of working out, and I have over eight hours of training every day." His palm was scorching hot, and the way it pressed on her forehead made Tia slightly uncomfortable; more precisely, it made her self-conscious. With that, she backed up while saying, "I-I'll do it myself." When he noticed her discomfort, Lewis silently withdrew his hand. After rubbing for a while, Tia put her hand down and asked shyly, "Is... there anything I can help you with?" "There is." Lewis nodded. "What is it?" She looked over at him in response, curious. "Go and watch some TV for now. You can bring the dishes out later when they're ready," Lewis ordered soberly with zero hints of a smile on his face like he was giving a dire instruction. Tia's lips twitched upon hearing that, and she defended herself, saying, "I can still manage a few simple tasks." After all, she could set the table or something. She couldn't mess that up, could she? Hearing that, Lewis pulled a smile and very naturally ruffled her hair, cooing, "Go out. I can manage on my own here." It didn't dawn on him how intimate his actions were right then. Abashed, Tia nodded and left the kitchen without another word, startled by his sudden intimacy. After leaving the kitchen, Tia went straight to the couch in the living room, and it took quite some time for the heat on her face to recede. When she looked at the platinum band on her right ring finger, a sense of surrealness arose within her. I'm really married, huh? She smiled and shook her head at the thought. She had transitioned from a bachelorette to a married woman, and her husband was the man she had only met a month ago. It wasn't until she looked back at it now that she truly thought what she did was rather crazy, and the feeling was inexplicable. At that, she took a deep breath to calm down, then headed into her room. When Lewis came out of the kitchen after plating the dishes to find Tia absent from the living room, he frowned in bafflement and looked toward the entryway. Her shoes were still where she left them, which meant she didn't leave the house. Then, he turned around and looked at the two closed doors behind him. With his keen judgment, he knew that one of the bedrooms belonged to Grandma while the other belonged to Tia. With that, he went up and gently knocked on the door. However, nothing replied to him after a good while, and he couldn't help frowning as he knocked for the second time. Still, not a sound came from inside. Thus, he gave up on knocking and opened the door to find Tia sitting on her bed with her back facing the door. She seemed to be staring at something in her hand, and she was so focused that she didn't even hear him knock. When he got closer, he found that she was looking at a family portrait. It seemed timeworn, for its yellowish edges were visible despite being kept in a frame. It was a portrait of a couple and their five- or six-year-old girl. The girl looked a lot like her mother, who was the spitting image of the present Tia. Undoubtedly, the man standing behind the mother and daughter was Tia's father. He had on a pair of glasses and was dressed in a white shirt, looking rather gentlemanly. However, Lewis found the man familiar as if he had seen him somewhere, yet he couldn't put his finger on it. It wasn't until Tia sighed and kept the portrait away that she realized Lewis had been standing behind her for God-knew-how-long. "You! When did you come in?" she asked, taken aback. Her voice jolted him back to reality, and he looked away from the portrait before explaining, "I knocked twice, but you didn't answer, so I came in." "Oh, did you?" She was so lost in thought that she didn't hear anything at all. Lewis nodded in reply, then took a gander at the portrait in her hands before saying, "Dinner's ready. Come and eat." "Okay." Tia nodded and stored the family portrait in her bedside table drawer face-down.