

A Shotgun Marriage Chapter 5

Chapter 5

"Don't change the subject. Answer me!" Lance went up to Tia, clenched her shoulders, and shook her. "We've known each other for ten years. Tell me, what does he have that I don't? Why are you willing to marry some guy you've only known for days, yet you won't accept my feelings?" Since he was a little emotional, Lance gripped Tia's shoulder rather forcefully, and it caused her to frown in pain. "I don't want a marriage that has love," she said to his face. It was precisely because she knew his feelings for her that she wouldn't even think about marrying him no matter how desperate she got, for she feared they couldn't even remain friends if anything were to happen in the future. "Ha... Hahaha..." Lance suddenly burst out laughing as he looked into her eyes. "Just because I have feelings for you? Just because I've loved you for ten years?!" Tia turned her head aside in response, not wanting to continue looking at him. She had always regarded him as a friend and an older brother. Lance released her at that and said with a broken heart, "Tia, you can reject me, but you have to know not everyone shares your parents' fate. Not all love will end in a tragedy like that. Why can't you be brave and take a step forward? What you're doing is treating your happiness like child's play!" "There won't be pain if there's no love to begin with," said Tia as she shook her head. "Even if he gives in to temptation and cheats on me in the future, all I have to do is turn and walk away. There's no reason for me to hold on to the marriage." This was exactly why she insisted on having no love in her marriage, for she had prepared for the worst. Just as the song went, "There will be pain where there is love, and there won't be any if there's none. Turn around, and you can leave with debonair." "I've sworn to you before; I'll never cheat on you, and I'll love you with all my heart. Will you really not consider me at all?" Lance looked at her, fighting to the last ditch. To that, she shook her head and apologized, "I'm sorry, Lance." Seeing that she wasn't going to change her mind, Lance chuckled wryly and let her go, then turned to look out the window again. It wasn't after a long while that he sighed and said, "You may leave." With that, Tia nodded silently and left his office. When Tia returned home from work, Elizabeth was busying away in the kitchen, seemingly in a good mood since she was even humming some opera tune. After setting her bag down on the couch, she followed her grandmother's voice to the kitchen to find that she was reaching her hand into the oven to take the baked fish out. Tia hurriedly went up to her upon seeing this. "Let me do it, Grandma." With that, she took the oven mittens from Elizabeth and took the tray out before asking, "Grandma, why did you think of buying fish today?" The grandmother and granddaughter weren't fans of fish. In Tia's case, she was traumatized by the fishbone stuck in her throat when she was a child. Elizabeth, on the other hand, couldn't stand the fishiness and had always steered clear of it. "I didn't. It was a gift," Elizabeth said with a beam, evidently in a good mood. "From who?" Tia asked casually as she brought the fish to the dining table, then mumbled, "Couldn't the person have checked if we eat fish?" "Both you and Grandma don't eat fish?" Tia jerked in response and nearly spilled the sauce all over the table, spooked by the somewhat unfamiliar male voice that suddenly piped up. After that, she turned in the direction the sound came from to find a towering figure standing in the kitchen doorway, in a smart suit at that. "What? Why are you in my home?!" Tia exclaimed with incredulity as she stared wide-eyed at the man before her eyes. Though she had only ever seen him once before this, she recognized him to be the man she had met on a blind date half a month ago! She still remembered his name—he was Lewis Harvey! Standing beside her, Elizabeth snapped jokingly at Tia after taking a glance at her, vexed yet amused, "You and your big mouth." With that, she turned to Lewis, who was still standing in the kitchen doorway. "Is it good now, Lewis? Dinner's ready too. Come on, wash your hands and eat." Lewis nodded in response and explained, "Yeah, the light in the room keeps flickering because the fuse is aging, causing voltage instability. I've already changed the fuse, and it should be fixed." As he spoke, he strode in. "Alright, wash your hands. It's time to eat," Elizabeth urged as she turned to serve them some mashed potato. On the other hand, Tia looked at the exchange between her grandmother and the man, having no clue what was going on. Meanwhile, after washing his hands, Lewis explained to the baffled Tia as he wiped his hands with a napkin, "There's something I need to talk to you about. I tried calling, but you didn't pick up, so I decided to come here. I didn't expect you and Grandma not to like fish, though." Tia stuck her tongue out in response, feeling somewhat bad while mumbling inwardly, How did I know you gifted the fish? At that, she changed the subject and asked, "Did I not answer your call?" She pulled her phone out and checked the call history to find there was indeed a missed call, and it was when Lance had called her into his office. She did see the missed call after returning to her desk, but since she hadn't saved the number, she thought it was just another telemarketing call and subsequently ignored it. Who'd have thought it'd be him... Lewis caught this too, and he immediately took her phone without a word. "Um..." Tia was rather taken aback by this. She wanted to reach out and reclaim her phone, only to find that he was keying his name, saving the number she thought was from a telemarketer into her contact list. After that, he returned her phone and said, "Next time, don't ignore it on purpose." "I—" Just as she wanted to explain, Lewis had already gone to help Elizabeth serve the rest of the dishes. Elizabeth was in such a good mood that day that she hadn't stopped grinning from ear to ear, and when she saw Tia still standing there, she urged, "What are you standing there for, Tia? Hurry up! Wash your hands and eat." Tia came back to her senses at that, and she hurriedly did as told after ruffling her hair. Lewis' visit had surely delighted Elizabeth, for she ate a sizable amount of fish, which she had always steered clear of because of its fishiness. Of course, she also forced Tia to eat just as much of it, who ate in horror as she feared another fishbone getting stuck in her throat again. After dinner, Elizabeth desperately shoed the two out for a stroll downstairs. As her granddaughter, Tia naturally knew what Elizabeth was thinking. Hence, she obliged and took Lewis downstairs. Tia took him to the complex's park, and the two walked in silence. She didn't know if Lewis was just a man of few words, but she felt a little awkward, unsure of what to say to break the silence. As big of a park as it was, it was just a small garden, and many residents would stroll here during the day or in the evening, which was a complete one-eighty from the silence at this moment. The distance between each lamppost by the walkway was great, causing the dim, warm lighting to shine rather dully on peoples' faces. The two walked silently for a distance before Lewis finally spoke up. "I called to let you know that people will be coming over to inspect our marriage procedure in a couple of days. Since you didn't answer, I just came over." The Sentinel Division was the country's top-secret organization, so every member's marriage had to be strictly inspected, especially a leader like Lewis. Tia tucked her hair behind her ear and nodded in embarrassment. "In that case, do I need to prepare or take note of anything?"