

Stealing Your Heart Chapter 261

The call was from Bai Yinning. Upon seeing the caller id, her chest tightened a little. Lin Xinyan naturally associated Yao Qingqing to Bai Yinning.

“I’m leaving, you pick up the call,” Qin Ya remarked, thinking Lin Xinyan did not pick up the call due to her presence.

However, it was not true. Lin Xinyan was actually slightly hesitant as she was afraid Bai Yinning would tell her more about Yao Qingqing. She did not want to be further involved in that matter anymore.

Yet, Bai Yinning seemed to be very persistent. The phone continued ringing despite Lin Xinyan being indecisive about whether she wanted to pick the call up.

Taking in a deep breath, Lin Xinyan finally gave in. As she pressed the ‘answer’ button, she heard Bai Yinning ask, “Are you leaving today?”

“No, I’m leaving tomorrow,” Lin Xinyan responded.

“Let’s meet today then,” Bai Yinning suggested.

Lin Xinyan stared at her shoes, still feeling uncertain and tried to decline, “I think it might not be very convenient...”

“You’re leaving tomorrow. Shouldn’t you bid me farewell?” Bai Yinning cut her off.

Lin Xinyan remained silence.

“I won’t take up a lot of your time,” Bai Yinning persuaded once again.

After all, Bai Yinning had saved her before. It will be too heartless of Lin Xinyan to reject his requests continuously. Finally, Lin Xinyan gave in, "You can come and look for me."

"I'm can't see you right away. Is it okay if I send someone to pick you up instead?" Bai Yinning proposed.

"Forget it, just tell me the location. It will be too troublesome for someone to come and pick me up. I'll go there myself," Lin Xinyan answered.

"We can meet at the mansion. I'll be there in a jiffy."

Lin Xinyan paused for a moment before she replied, "Alright, see you."

Lin Xinyan stood at the side of the road and was only able to hail a taxi after a good twenty minutes.

Soon, the car stopped in front of the mansion. Lin Xinyan paid and alighted from the taxi.

Prior to her arrival, Bai Yinning had informed Liu to be prepared. Upon seeing Lin Xinyan, Liu approached her and greeted, "Ms. Lin, it's good to see you again."

Since they had interacted before, the atmosphere between them was not awkward. Lin Xinyan spoke, "It's too cold out here. Why didn't you wait in the mansion?"

"It's alright, Young Master told me you were reaching soon. Let's head into the mansion," Liu smiled.

The mansion was not an unfamiliar place for Lin Xinyan as she had stayed here for a couple of days before.

Entering the living room, she took off her outer coat and hung it onto the rack since the room had already been warmed up by the heater.

As Liu made coffee, she depicted, "I thought I would never see you again."

As she placed the cup onto the table, Liu added, "Actually, Young Master is a very nice person."

There were two females who were significant in Bai Yinning's life. For Liu, she personally liked Lin Xinyan much more than Yao Qingqing, for no particular reason. Liu just thought Lin Xinyan was friendlier; she could easily get along with her.

In comparison, the impression Yao Qingqing gave off was much more cold and gloomy.

Acting as if she didn't hear Liu, Lin Xinyan did not reply. Instead, she walked towards the fish tank and changed the subject, "The fishes are still here."

Lin Xinyan remembered that Bai Yinning had gotten her these fishes for her entertainment after she was rescued by Bai him. It was because Lin Xinyan wasn't able to move around freely.

These fishes were pretty unique; brightly colored, with distinctive features. When Lin Xinyan gently touched the tail of the fishes, they were startled and swam away instantly. Lin Xinyan was certainly intrigued by their reaction.

Liu stood beside Lin Xinyan. As she glanced at the fish tank, Liu muttered, "Young Master would feed these fishes every day."

Looking up, Lin Xinyan could not help but wonder the truth in her words. How could Bai Yinning be so free to feed these fishes every day? Seeing her confusion, Liu continued, "Young Master will only feed them when he's around. Usually, I will be the one in charge of taking care of these fishes. But, if he's here, he will definitely do it."

As Lin Xinyan continued to play around with the fishes, she seemed engrossed as she stared at their swift movement.

“It is said that fishes have seven seconds of memory. If only we can be like them, and choose to forget some memories selectively,” a voice interrupted their conversation. Turning back, Lin Xinyan saw Bai Yinning approaching in his wheelchair.

“Did you wait long?” Bai Yinning asked.

“Nope. I just reached.” Lin Xinyan shook her head slightly.

Once Bai Yinning stopped beside the fish tank, he instructed Liu, “You can take your leave first. Wait by the door and ensure no one enters.”

Liu peeked a glance at Lin Xinyan and then Bai Yinning, but did not utter a word. Gently nodding, she acknowledged Bai Yinning’s commands and left the room.

After Liu closed the door and silence enveloped the entire living room.

Breaking the silence, Lin Xinyan raised her eyebrow and probed, “What secret did you want to tell me?”

Lin Xinyan was certain that the news Bai Yinning was going to tell her was confidential, based on the very fact that he had made Liu leave and instructed her to wait by the door.

Nodding his head, Bai Yinning admitted, “Yes, I have something to tell you.”

However, it was not a secret.

“What’s it about?”

“Take a seat,” Bai Yinning signaled as he moved towards the wheelchair towards the sofa.

Lin Xinyan followed Bai Yinning to the sofa and took a seat. Taking a sip of the coffee that Liu made, Lin Xinyan finally heard Bai Yinning say, “She’s alright now. However, she refuses to speak and does not want to see me at all.”

Upon hearing his words, Lin Xinyan paused a moment. She did not reply despite knowing who was Bai Yinning referring to. At this moment, Lin Xinyan preferred to listen.

“I know she’s ashamed to see me, but the doctor told me her emotions are not so stable these days. I will admit her to the nursing home soon,” Bai Yinning continued as if Lin Xinyan was not beside him.

Bai Yinning really hoped Yao Qingqing could lead a normal life.

“I’m collecting the evidence for her abuse by the Yao Family. I will bring the culprit to justice.”

After thinking through the entire ordeal, Bai Yinning was much calmer after that night.

“I believe you can do it,” Lin Xinyan assured. Given Bai Yinning’s status, punishing those villains shouldn’t be a problem.

Hearing Lin Xinyan’s response, Bai Yinning looked straight into her eyes and wondered, “Why do you have so much trust in me?”

Lin Xinyan smiled. “It’s not that I have trust in you. It’s just that you are capable enough.”

Bai Yinning gave a bitter smile, “You are really adamant to draw a line between the two of us.”

Lin Xinyan paused for a moment, before she uttered, "If I really wanted to draw a line between us, I wouldn't be sitting here, listening to you."

Fate had brought them to know each other. Lin Xinyan had nothing against Bai Yinning, so she would not distance herself intentionally.

Bai Yinning beamed, "That's good to hear."

"Is this all you wanted to tell me?"

Hesitating for a few seconds, Bai Yinning finally conceded. "You have seen Cheng Yuxiu previously, am I right?"

Lin Xinyan was astounded by how Bai Yinning had changed the topic so quickly.

We were talking about Yao Qingqing, why is he mentioning Cheng Yuxiu out of the blue?

Besides that, Bai Yinning knew Cheng Yuxiu anyways.

However, her confusion was cleared up when she made the connections. Bai Hongfei was Bai Yinning's foster father, so it won't be surprising if Bai Hongfei had told Bai Yinning about the past.

"Cheng Yuxiu is in B City. How is it possible for me to see her?" Lin Xinyan denied. She did not forget her promise to Cheng Yuxiu.

Lin Xinyan did not disclose a single detail to Zong Jinghao. Similarly, she would not tell Bai Yinning anything.

Staring at her, Bai Yinning spoke once again, "Are you going to keep your lips sealed about this matter? Even if it's I who's asking?"

Without answering his question directly, Lin Xinyan retorted, “What if I have seen her? And what if I have not?”

“I know she told you something.” Bai Yinning finally revealed his intentions.

Without waiting for her to reply, Bai Yinning continued, “The tea silk master who taught you previously was Cheng Yuxiu’s brother, Cheng Yuwen. Cheng Yuxiu was my foster father’s, first love. He remained single his entire life for her. When he was still alive, someone severed his fingers. I’ll be honest with you, I’m investigating the mastermind who harmed him.”

Lin Xinyan clenched her fists. Bai Hongfei’s fingers were severed?

Many thoughts raced in her mind. At that point in time, Cheng Yuxiu only revealed that Wen Qing had used Bai Hongfei as his bargaining chip and forced her to call Zong Qifeng. However, Cheng Yuxiu did not say much about the means Wen Qing had used when she was threatened.

So, did Wen Qing sever Bai Hongfei’s fingers in order to make Cheng Yuxiu succumb to his threat?

“My foster father groomed me and entrusted the family business to me. I must definitely repay his kindness,” Bai Yinning stated. He knew Lin Xinyan was aware of what had happened in the past and knew who the culprit who harmed his foster father was.

As Bai Yinning spoke, Lin Xinyan was stuck in a dilemma. The Wen family were still acquainted with the Zong family. If she were to tell Bai Yinning the truth, he would definitely seek revenge.

What if Zong Jinghao’s identity was uncovered? As long as it concerned Zong Jinghao, Lin Xinyan was not willing to take any risk!

“I don’t know...”

In a frenzy, Liu barged into the living room and interrupted Lin Xinyan, “Young Master, there are some people causing a scene outside!”

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As Bai Yinning was interrupted, irritation etched across his face. Bai Yinning chided, "What happened? What's wrong with you?"

"There's a man at the door asking for you, Young Master. He brought an entire gang of people, threatening you to release his sister!" Liu reported.

Bai Yinning and Lin Xinyan exchanged a glance. Without a word exchanged, they both knew who was at the door.

"I will go and take a look. You stay in here," Bai Yinning told Lin Xinyan. Today, Bai Yinning had not appointed many bodyguards to follow him. There was only Gao Yuan at the door. If any conflicts were to happen, Bai Yinning had to ensure Lin Xinyan was safe.

Lin Xinyan ignored what he said. If any conflicts were to stir up, how was it possible for her to avoid it simply by staying in the mansion?

Besides that, Lin Xinyan didn't think Yao Qingqing's brother came here to 'rescue' Yao Qingqing. He probably heard that his sister knew Bai Yinning and was here to take advantage of the man.

"If you're willing to pay a sum of money, I believe there will be no conflicts," Lin Xinyan ridiculed casually. It's unbelievable such a family existed.

Formulating a plan in his mind, Bai Yinning remarked coldly, "I won't let you get hurt in my territory."

As Bai Yinning finished his sentence, he wheeled himself out of the door. Silently, Liu peeked a glance at Lin Xinyan.

Bai Yinning treated Lin Xinyan really well.

Yao Bin could not find where Yao Qingqing was, but through their cousin, he discovered that Yao Qingqing actually knew Bai Yinning. Without further ado, he quickly gathered his gang of friends he usually fooled around with and headed looking for Bai Yinning.

As Bai Yinning was disabled, he rarely appeared in front of the public. Although many knew such a person existed, many didn't know much about him, including Yao Bin.

“Get Bai Yinning to come out now! Where did he bring my sister to?” Yao Bin ordered as he held onto a cigarette.

When Bai Yinning reached the door, he heard Yao Bin and responded, “I am Bai Yinning.”

Upon seeing Bai Yinning in a wheelchair, Yao Bin blinked for a moment to process the fact that he was disabled.

“Ha, ha, ha! Bai Yinning, you're disabled? Everyone is talking about how outstanding you are, but you can't even stand!” Yao Bin exclaimed as if he heard a joke.

Lin Xinyan furrowed her brows, feeling disgusted by Yao Bin's ignorance.

Expressionless, Bai Yinning did not react to Yao Bin's taunts. Yet, he suddenly realized that Yao Bin looked really familiar.

It suddenly occurred to him that Yao Bin had ridiculed him in the lift when he left Yao Qingqing's house that day. He certainly left Bai Yinning with a great impression.

Did he go looking for Yao Qingqing that day?

“Gao Yuan, you’re not as competent as before,” Bai Yinning commented. Bai Yinning remembered the time he had instructed Gao Yuan to keep a watch on Yao Qingqing, only for the man to not discover anything.

Gao Yuan remained silent. He could only station people to monitor the district she lived in. How was it possible for him to find out what happened in her apartment?

After Yao Bin was done mocking, he asked, “Is my sister with you?”

“She’s with me,” Bai Yinning quickly admitted.

Yao Bin was taken aback at how honest Bai Yinning was. At first, he thought Bai Yinning would deny everything and was prepared to take this chance to ask for some benefits. However, given how straightforward Bai Yinning was, it was hard for Yao Bin to continue with his plan.

“Hmm...Where is she now? You have two choices. You can either hand her to me or buy her from me,” Yao Bin didn’t back down.

Yao Bin’s intentions were crystal clear. He just wanted money from Bai Yinning, the richest man in Baicheng.

Bai Yinning’s expression darkened by the second. He grasped tightly onto the handle by his side. How dare he say he was going to sell her, a human being?

“Alright, I accept your proposal.”

Yao Bin was surprised that Bai Yinning did not even hesitate. He grinned, “Rich people are indeed generous.”

The crowd of hooligans behind Yao Bin echoed and agreed.

“How much do you want?” Bai Yinning asked as he kept a straight face, masking his infuriation.

Once the topic was about money, Yao Bin grew more cautious. He took a moment to consider before answering, “My sister looks decent and is able-bodied. If you’re willing to purchase her, even if you don’t like her, she would still be useful to you. How about a million? Once I get the money, she will officially be yours.”

Bai Yinning pretended to be doubtful. “She’s a living person and has the freedom of choice. How credible are you? How can I ensure she’s mine like you said?”

Yao Bin was afraid Bai Yinning would change his mind and reassured, “Don’t worry, I’m credible. In our family, I get to call the shots. Yao Qingqing is just an adopted child. She’s an orphan who we were generous enough to raise her up. It’s about time for her to repay our kindness.”

“Do you always ask her for money?” Bai Yinning casually asked.

Yao Bin did not think much about the question. Although he was badly spoilt, Yao Bin was also simple-minded. “My family raised her. It’s only natural for me to ask her for some money.”

Bai Yinning responded with a scorn.

Your family raised her? How dare they claim they raised her?

Resisting the urge to explode, Bai Yinning asked, “How about you write me a receipt?”

Seeing that Bai Yinning was persuaded, Yao Bin could no longer hold his excitement and exclaimed, “After I give you my receipt, you’ll give me the one million you promised?”

“Yes,” Bai Yinning affirmed.

Without any hesitation, Yao Bin stated, "I will write it now!"

Immediately, Bai Yinning ordered, "Gao Yuan, get him some paper and a pen."

Gao Yuan instantly went to carry out his orders.

Yao Bin did not manage to finish his education since he had fooled around most of his schooling days. Holding onto the pen Gao Yuan had passed him, he asked, "How should I write it?"

"Gao Yuan, teach him," Bai Yinning instructed.

Peeking a glance at Bai Yinning, Gao Yuan whispered, "What should he write?"

"Human Trafficking," Bai Yinning commented casually.

Gao Yuan understood Bai Yinning's intentions. The man was determined to leave some evidence in order to ensure Yao Bin would be sentenced.

With only the one million in mind, Yao Bin simply wrote down whatever Gao Yuan instructed him to.

They were done within ten minutes. Gao Yuan took the receipt to Bai Yinning.

As it was barely legible, Bai Yinning took a while to read through the contents of the receipt before he nodded, "Make him sign it with his fingerprint."

Gao Yuan passed the paper to Yao Bin while he said, "Your fingerprint."

"If you don't give me an inkpad, how can I stamp my fingerprint?"

Gao Yuan rejected his requests and answered, "We do not have an inkpad with us. Why don't you use blood as a replacement?"

Yao Bin's expression changed instantly. Whose blood?

"If you don't want the one million, you can leave now. I don't have any time to waste," Bai Yinning remarked, pretending to be in a hurry.

However, Bai Yinning simply wanted to ensure that they did not have any time to think rationally.

The gang of hooligans behind Yao Bin immediately persuaded, "He's giving you a million! It's just a little cut on your finger, don't be a coward!"

Glaring at the man who spoke, Yao Bin provoked "How about you cut your own finger!"

Yao Bin's provocation was intentional. He didn't want to cut his finger as he was afraid of the pain. Knowing that his gang of friends also cared about the money, he was waiting for someone to be willing to sacrifice.

"Alright, I will cut my finger, but you must give me twenty thousand in return!"

Seeing that his plan had worked, Yao Bin did not hesitate at all and agreed, "Deal."

After all, even after Yao Bin gave away that twenty thousand, he would still have nine hundred and eighty thousand remaining. That was still a hefty sum of money.

That guy immediately bit on his finger. As blood trickled down, he offered, "There you go."

After Yao Bin stamped his fingerprint, he threw the receipt to Gao Yuan and groaned, "Now, can I have the money?"

“Alright. I don’t have one million in cash with me right now. Let me make a call first.” Bai Yinning whipped out his phone.

Anticipation overwhelmed Yao Bin as he started to fantasize about what he could do with all that money. “Once I get the money, we shall first have a feast. Of course, it’s my treat! Later in the night, I’ll get the girls to come...What a long night it will be,” Yao Bin jested as he gave a creepy smile. The hooligans accompanying him cheered in response.

Throughout the occasion, Lin Xinyan did not speak at all. She simply silently observed how the entire incident unfolded. Lin Xinyan knew it was impossible for Bai Yinning to let Yao Bin off so easily.

Within minutes, the people who were supposed to deliver the money arrived. With more than ten cars pulling up around the mansion, more than fifty people exited those cars. They instantly surrounded Yao Bin and those hooligans.

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Taken aback, Yao Bin gaped at Bai Yinning and stuttered, "What...What are you trying to do?"

"You seemed to like using violence as a mean to solve problems. Like you, I have the same hobby," Bai Yinning smiled.

"You lied to me!" Yao Bin hollered, pointing at Bai Yinning.

His allegations caused Bai Yinning to chuckle, "Since when did I say I won't be using violence?"

Someone behind Yao Bin muttered, "I think he's right."

The realization hit Yao Bin. He had been scammed by Bai Yinning. Waves of humiliation hit him. Trying to mask his embarrassment, he kicked the person who spoke and bellowed, "How dare you tell me what to do!"

"Have you gone nuts?" the man whimpered as he crunched over on the ground. Holding onto his abdomen, he glared at Yao Bin.

"I am not scared of anyone!" Yao Bin berated. With a vicious look, he brandished a knife from his pockets before he targeted the nearest person surrounding him.

However, those people Bai Yinning had called were also skilled. Before the knife could reach them, Yao Bin was already disarmed. They twisted his arm backwards, and the knife fell onto the ground.

Bai Yinning naturally wanted to deploy legal means to punish those who have harmed Yao Qingqing. However, before that, he was determined to give Yao Bin a hard time.

“All of you can do whatever you want, just ensure that they stay alive after this. I will bear all consequences.”

Upon hearing Bai Yinning’s assurance, the men had no worries holding them back anymore. Lashing out some basketball bats, the crowd started to aim for those hooligans. Although they tried their best to retaliate, the hooligans were easily outnumbered.

This ‘battle’ came to an end quickly with the hooligans begging for mercy.

“Please...please stop! We won’t dare do this anymore!” One of them pleaded.

Many of them had been punched till they could no longer stand. Wincing in pain, another continued, “Yes! We weren’t the ones looking for trouble. It was all Yao Bin!”

“All of you are cowards!” Yao Bin lunged, feeling livid. If only if they had tried their hardest, they might not have ended up in defeat.

Sitting comfortably in his wheelchair, Bai Yinning instructed Liu, “Get Ms. Lin a stool. This is such a rare sight, it should not be missed.”

Lin Xinyan had her brows knitted. She had never seen Bai Yinning like that before. It was so unlike him, so violent and cold-blooded.

“We need to teach these people a lesson or else they will think that they can be let off easily. After going to the police station for a few days, they will still continue their ways regardless. Today, we shall do their parents a favor and make sure all of them turn over a new leaf!”

Placing a stool behind Lin Xinyan, Liu signaled, “Ms. Lin, take a seat.”

Lin Xinyan was not very eager to watch the scene. The hooligans were already subdued. All Lin Xinyan could hear was them grimacing in pain.

“Am I cruel?” Bai Yinning looked into her eyes.

Biting on her lips, Lin Xinyan did not share her opinions. It was difficult to define what was actually good and bad. Lin Xinyan knew she wasn't anyone to give a verdict.

Subconsciously, Lin Xinyan actually agreed to Bai Yinning's ways. However, she couldn't bear to watch it happening in front of her.

Walking towards Bai Yinning, Gao Yuan inquired, “What should we do now?”

Bai Yinning was not pleased by his question and simply stared at his assistant. Gao Yuan had stayed by his side for so long, yet Bai Yinning could not understand why he wasn't able to read his mind.

Upon seeing Bai Yinning's furrowed brows, Gao Yuan finally understood. “Send them to the police,” Gao Yuan instructed the crowd who started to evacuate the hooligans almost immediately.

A thin gentleman ambled towards Bai Yinning and called out, “Mr. Bai.”

Although this person was the one who brought the crowd in, and also seemed like a thug himself, he seemed to know Bai Yinning.

“Tell Second Master I owe him a favor. I will personally visit him one day and thank him.”

“I will pass the message to him. I think it's time for us to take our leave. I will leave the rest to you, Mr. Bai.”

Bai Yinning nodded in response.

Within minutes, the area outside the mansion had been cleared; it was as if nothing had happened before. Bai Yinning took a glance at his watch and asked, "It's almost noon. Let's have lunch?"

With no hesitation, Lin Xinyan rejected, "Xichen and Ruixi are waiting for me. It's time for me to leave."

After finishing her sentence, Lin Xinyan headed straight towards the door. As the wind kissed her cheeks, she could still smell whiffs of metallic blood lingering. This made her quicken her pace.

As the mansion was pretty isolated, it was not convenient for Lin Xinyan to hail a taxi. She walked along the pathway and headed towards the main road.

Beep! Beep!

Lin Xinyan noticed a car approaching by the flashes from its headlights.

Lin Xinyan saw the car window being wound down and Bai Yinning's face came into view. "Let me give you a ride. It's hard to get a taxi here."

"Are you scared I will abduct you?" Bai Yinning joked.

Lin Xinyan felt bad to reject him again. So she gave in and entered the car.

"Did you reject me previously because you're afraid President Zong will be jealous?" Bai Yinning asked.

Lin Xinyan looked up and calmly spoke, "He's my husband, I should care about his feelings."

Bai Yinning was expecting Lin Xinyan to deny his claim. Hearing her answer, Bai Yinning could not help but felt bitter.

Forcing a smile, Bai Yinning continued, “Your feelings for each other are pretty touching.”

Lin Xinyan simply responded with a smile.

Soon, silence enveloped the car. Lin Xinyan did not bother to start a conversation, and Bai Yinning did not insist to continue the previous conversation. He did not want to feel even more terrible.

There was no other unbearable pain than you realizing that the person you love, wholeheartedly loves someone else.

Before the awkwardness set in, Bai Yinning suddenly spoke, “I have a guess.”

“Regarding?”

“Zong Jinghao might be Cheng Yuxiu’s ‘daughter’.”

“My foster father, Bai Hongfei, told me to marry Cheng Yuxiu’s daughter. This means he knew Cheng Yuxiu had given birth to a child before. After that, she was married to Zong Qifeng, so who do you think her child is?” Bai Yinning asked.

“Mr. Bai, you do have an impressive imagination,” Lin Xinyan replied. She was trying to maintain a calm composure despite her throbbing heart. Lin Xinyan could not believe Bai Yinning was so close to the truth.

“Am I right?” Bai Yinning continued to probe, with a small grin on his face.

Lin Xinyan smiled at his inquiry. Without divulging anything, she replied “As you said, it’s a guess. You don’t have any evidence, do you? Besides, why are you even asking me about it? How would I possibly know?”

As the vehicle pulled up in front of the hotel, Lin Xinyan opened the door swiftly, wanting to get out. "I shall take my leave now."

As she stood, her outer coat got stuck in the gap between the seats. Seeing that she was struggling, Bai Yinning assisted her and tugged on the coat. "My car was modified previously. There isn't supposed to be such a big gap."

His car had been specially modified so that it would be convenient for him to enter and exit with a wheelchair.

Bai Yinning leaned towards Lin Xinyan as she spoke; the distance between each other shrinking. Two of them looked like they were whispering to each other and seemed really intimate.

"Do I owe you a coat now?" Bai Yinning joked.

"It's alright. Thank you Mr. Bai," Lin Xinyan answered indifferently as she finally got down the car.

However, the moment she looked up, Lin Xinyan saw Zong Jinghao. Anger was apparent on his face, causing Lin Xinyan to be slightly stunned. What luck I have!

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“What are the both of you doing?” Zong Jinghao questioned. Lin Xinyan could hear the irritation in his tone.

She paused for 3 seconds, and tried to remain calm, before she replied, “He just sent me back.”

“Okay, he sent you back. But is there a need for him to be so close to you? Or am I seeing things?” Zong Jinghao sneered.

Lin Xinyan’s eyelids twitched upon hearing what Zong Jinghao said. This guy is so petty!

“Jinghao...” Lin Xinyan tried to explain.

Before she could finish her sentence, Zong Jinghao cut her off, “Get in.”

Lin Xinyan felt her heart skip a beat. With a heavy heart, she entered the hotel.

“Mr. Bai, could you get out of the car? Let’s have a talk.” Zong Jinghao’s voice was calm but obviously, he was masking his genuine emotions.

With the help of Gao Yuan, Bai Yinning got down from the car. Zong Jinghao went ahead towards the garden beside the hotel with Bai Yinning trailing behind him.

“What do you want to tell me, Mr. Zong?”

Stopping in his tracks, Zong Jinghao turned behind and faced Bai Yinning. Before he could react, Zong Jinghao grabbed his collar and pulled Bai Yinning towards himself. His grip was so strong, Bai Yinning was lifted up from the wheelchair.

“Did you not understand my warning?” Zong Jinghao threatened.

As Bai Yinning was being strangled by his collar, he struggled to answer, “It’s...it’s not what you think. It’s a misunderstanding. I met with Ms. Lin because I wanted to ask her a few questions.”

Zong Jinghao snickered. It was apparent that he did not believe anything Bai Yinning had said. Zong Jinghao could tell that Bai Yinning loved Lin Xinyan, even without her reciprocating his feelings.

“If you are willing to ask Ms. Lin about the past, the truth can be unveiled. We won’t have to spend so much effort to investigate it. After all, finding out the past isn’t that easy...”

Zong Jinghao strengthened his grip and stopped Bai Yinning from continuing. Zong Jinghao slightly lowered his head and intimidated, “Yes, I am interested in what happened to Cheng Yuxiu. However, I would never force Lin Xinyan to do anything that she is unwilling to. You have passed my bottom-line. The cooperation between both of us is now over. You can rely on yourself to find out the truth.”

Finally, Zong Jinghao let him go, and Bai Yinning fell back onto the wheelchair.

Bai Yinning was not willing to concede. “Have you ever thought if someone was hiding the truth intentionally, how much of the truth can we find out? Or, how long would it take to know the truth?”

Pausing in his tracks, Zong Jinghao sniggered, “So what if the truth was never found out?”

They were not in the same situation, to begin with. Bai Yinning wanted to find out the truth to avenge for his foster father. On the other hand, Zong Jinghao was simply curious about what happened to Cheng Yuxiu.

Why did Cheng Yuxiu have to hide her surname? Also, how was it possible for Zong Qifeng to not know about it at all?

Zong Jinghao knew Cheng Yuxiu had secrets. Yet, even if he was curious, he would never force Lin Xinyan to reveal anything she didn't want to.

Actually, deep down Zong Jinghao was afraid to know the truth. He could sense that Lin Xinyan had changed her attitude towards her due to that secret.

That secret was able to change her attitude; so it would definitely cause a stir if it was unveiled. It might even involve him.

He was stuck in a dilemma. Zong Jinghao was curious about the truth, yet afraid to know it.

In the hotel, Su Zhan arranged a dinner to welcome his grandma's arrival. As everyone gathered around in the function room, the only person who had yet to arrive was Zong Jinghao.

Lin Xinyan hugged her daughter, trying to distract herself and mask her uneasiness. She was not sure whether Zong Jinghao and Bai Yinning had ended up in a conflict.

"Let me introduce you to my grandma! She was the one who singlehandedly raised me," Su Zhan beamed.

Grandma did not cooperate with him. "Who doesn't know I'm your grandma? Save the introduction! You told me you're going to get married by the end of the year, but who is your girlfriend?"

Upon hearing what she said, Su Zhan felt something wither within him.

Grandma seemed to be possessed. In every single conversation they had, she would only ask about his girlfriend and about their marriage!

Throughout the entire afternoon, that was the only thing she was harping on. It was driving Su Zhan nuts! Now, all he wanted to do was to find any woman he could tie the knots immediately with, just to stop Grandma from nagging!

Shen Peichuan sat by the side and silently observed Qin Ya being indifferent to the entire situation. She did not join the conversation nor speak her views. Once in a while, Qin Ya would talk to Lin Xichen, who was sitting beside her while Lin Xinyan clearly looked troubled.

Grandma scanned through the crowd. Knowing Lin Xinyan was already attached, she continued to her next target. Smiling, she asked Qin Ya, "What is your name?"

Qin Ya took a glance at Su Zhan before she answered, "My name is Qin Ya."

"Qin Ya? Is your surname Qin and your name Ya?"

Qin Ya nodded in response. "Yes."

"Do you have a boyfriend?"

Before Qin Ya could reply, Shen Peichuan answered on behalf of her, "She does."

Hearing his answer, Grandma looked extremely disappointed. Why was she attached so early? Grandma couldn't help but sigh in frustration.

Qin Ya turned towards Shen Peichuan for an explanation.

Shen Peichuan bantered, "Didn't you and Su Zhan announce the news that both of you were dating?"

Su Zhan was instantly speechless while Grandma's face lit up. Su Zhan and Qin Ya are dating?

This means my dear grandson has finally got a girlfriend?

Smack!

"Why didn't you tell me about it?" Grandma chuckled as she gave a slap across Su Zhan's back.

Su Zhan did not reply as he held his breath and observed Qin Ya carefully.

Grandma was beyond overjoyed as she strode towards Qin Ya. At first glance, Qin Ya was not extremely attractive, but she wasn't ugly either. Her well defined face matched her distinctive features.

Holding onto her arm, Grandma exclaimed, "Why didn't you tell me you're dating Su Zhan? Did he bully you? If he dares bully you, I'll beat him up!"

"No... We are..."

"Grandma, don't scare her. I didn't want you to be too agitated so I didn't tell you about it," Su Zhan quickly explained, interrupting Qin Ya.

"Su Zhan..." Qin Ya tried to get his attention.

Once again, Su Zhan did not hesitate to cut her off. "Grandma, take a seat."

Qin Ya's face was flushed from anger. Su Zhan was such an asshole! How could he so shameless when she had already explained to him clearly!

"Alright, alright." Grandma nodded. It was obvious Grandma was extremely satisfied to know that Qin Ya was Su Zhan's girlfriend.

He's lying and taking advantage of her! Qin Ya would not let him to use her to deceive Grandma.

"Su Zhan, come with me." Qin Ya was determined to make things clear.

Su Zhan gently stroked Grandma's back, as he said, "I will have a word with Qin Ya. We would be back soon."

"Both of you can have a conversation right here. Why must you leave?" Grandma questioned. She could not wait to take this chance to talk to Qin Ya and get to know more about her family and background.

Su Zhan tone was firm. "Why? Do you want to invade in our privacy? We just want to have a moment, grandma."

"Alright, alright."

Su Zhan is finally attached to a girl. It will not be worth it if I were to be the reason that caused an argument or even their breakup.

When Qin Ya passed by Su Zhan, she tugged on his sleeve and whispered, "Hurry up."

Trying to coax Grandma, Su Zhan uttered, "Qin Ya is a very shy girl. I'm just afraid she would get too embarrassed if I told you about her. Let me go console her a bit."

"Okay. Go ahead." Grandma smiled. She was willing to agree to anything as long as it was for his girlfriend.

Seeing that Grandma was appeased, Su Zhan left the room and saw Qin Ya standing by the corridor, looking infuriated. Taking a deep breath, Su Zhan braced himself before he marched towards her.

Stealing Your Heart Chapter 265

Su Zhan had thought about it before. Rather than being nagged by Grandma every single day, Su Zhan would prefer to just marry someone.

Not only would Grandma stop nagging at him, Su Zhan also knew he had reached the age to settle down and have a family. Also, most importantly, he liked Qin Ya too.

Su Zhan thought if the person he's going to marry was Qin Ya, he would find it perfectly acceptable.

"What is all that about? You said we're fake dating. Once the awkward phase is over, we would announce that we've broken up. Why didn't you say anything about it?" Qin Ya interrogated.

Su Zhan held onto her arm, trying to console her. Yet, Qin Ya immediately flung his hand away and continued, "Stop. Either tell them we have broken up or tell them the truth."

"I don't want to. You are the who slept with me, so you must take responsibilities." Su Zhan had made up his mind that Qin Ya was the one.

Upon seeing how shameless he was, Qin Ya was exasperated. "Are you even a man?"

Leaning against the wall, Su Zhan laughed, "Shouldn't you know that the best?"

"Alright, if you don't want to tell them the truth, I'll do it!" Qin Ya scoffed. She wouldn't let Su Zhan have his way.

However, before she could leave, Qin Ya was grabbed by the wrist. As Su Zhan pulled her towards himself, she fell into his arms.

“Su Zhan!”

Lifting her arm, she was already prepared to give him a slap across his face. However, before she could do so, Su Zhan swiftly held onto her hand and held it behind her. After ensuring that she could no longer resist, Su Zhan pulled her closer and gave her a kiss.

Smooch!

Qin Ya was in disbelief. How could he...

Gently biting on her lip, Su Zhan threatened, “If you don’t promise you’ll marry me, I won’t stop kissing you.”

How can he take advantage of me like this!

Without Qin Ya realizing, tears brimmed in her eyes, as her voice turned hoarse, “You...you’re such a bully! How...how can you do this...”

Without completely releasing his grip, he gently tugged on her ear and whispered, “You have to pay when you buy something. Similarly, you are the one who has slept with me. Shouldn’t you give me an official title?”

Anger brimmed in Qin Ya; she could no longer control her emotions. The tears were uncontrollable and strewn down her cheeks.

Su Zhan panicked and finally let go of her. He tried to console her, “Although I had many girl friends in the past, I didn’t sleep with all of them...”

Instantly, Qin Ya’s whimpers turned into bawl.

She was a virgin. To make it equal, Qin Ya had also hoped her significant other was one too. However, Su Zhan had slept with so many women...

Realizing he had said the wrong thing, he quickly added, "Qin Ya, I promise that from now on, you'll be my only one."

Qin Ya ignored Su Zhan completely and continued to cry.

"Sorry, I'm the one in the wrong. Please, stop crying." Su Zhan was flustered.

Qin Ya wiped her tears as she glared at him. "I will stop crying if you tell everyone the truth."

Sighing, Su Zhan responded, "You can cry as much as you want then."

"Su Zhan!" Qin Ya snapped as she started to throw punches at him.

Su Zhan did not avoid her punches. He understood Qin Ya had lost her chastity to him, and was being into marrying him. It was only natural of her to be resentful and enraged.

She could hit him as much as she wanted, as long as she could be appeased.

At that moment, the lift opened and someone started to walk in their direction. Su Zhan quickly enveloped her fists and wrapped his arms around her waist. In his embrace, Qin Ya glared at him. However, before she could say anything, Su Zhan exclaimed, "You're really slow. Everyone is waiting for you in the function room."

That person was Zong Jinghao. He uttered an 'alright' after he took a glance at them.

Upon seeing Zong Jinghao, Qin Ya remained silent.

With Qin Ya still in his arms, Su Zhan softly coaxed, “Qin Ya, it’s natural for us to get married. Am I not right?”

“We are not living in the ancient times...”

“Exactly, we are living in the modern world. Hence, we should set a good example.”

“But I don’t like you, do you not understand?” Qin Ya rebutted. This reason should be strong enough to stop him.

Drawing in a deep breathe, Su Zhan smiled. “It’s fine. I will make sure you fall in love with me. Besides, I’m not unattractive nor am I ageing. I have the confidence you’ll fall for me.”

Speechless at how thick skinned this man could be, Qin Ya retorted, “What if that never happens?”

He paused for a moment to think. “If you don’t fall in love with me by 2080, I’ll give up then.”

Qin Ya glared at the man in disbelief.

“Alright, let’s go back now. Everyone is waiting for us, don’t be so stubborn.”

With Qin Ya tried to disagree while curled in his arms, but somehow couldn’t bear to reject Su Zhan.

When Zong Jinghao opened the door, everyone was expecting to see Su Zhan and Qin Ya. Upon seeing Zong Jinghao instead, Shen Peichuan sighed, “I was expecting something else.”

Without speaking a word, Zong Jinghao sat down and held Lin Ruixi in his arms.

With Lin Ruixi being carried away from her seat, there was now an empty seat between Lin Xinyan and Zong Jinghao.

Lin Xinyan clenched her fists under the table. She knew that this wasn't a suitable time for her to explain herself. Sighing in her mind, Lin Xinyan decided that she would talk to him after dinner.

"My apologies. Thank you everyone for waiting for the both of us." Su Zhan beamed.

With his arms around Qin Ya's waist, both of them finally entered the function room.

Grandma was very pleased with what she saw. "The year is ending soon. Both of you should take this chance to tie the knots."

Su Zhan was taken aback by her suggestion. Yet, he quickly replied, "That works too."

Qin Ya attempted to disagree.

However, as always, she was cut off by Su Zhan. "Qin Ya didn't want you be worried for the both of us. She has already agreed to marry me."

Qin Ya was going to lose her mind. How could he say that!

Su Zhan leaned in and whispered in her ears, "Grandma is getting older. She cannot be agitated. Can you bear to see her so worried for me?"

Qin Ya could understand his concerns. Yet, why must she sacrifice herself for his filial piety.

Su Zhan placed her hand onto his chest. Looking into her eyes, he asked, "Are you sure you don't like me, even one tiny bit?"

Qin Ya avoided his eye contact. It's true that she had some feelings for him. However, the fact that Su Zhan was such a glib talker made her extremely insecure. Hence, Qin Ya was reluctant to fall for him.

"You avoided my eye contact. You're guilty, am I right? You must have some feelings for me, Qin Ya," Su Zhan murmured. They leaned towards each other as they mumbled. From a by-standers' perspective, they looked really intimate.

"Okay, stop showing off your affection in public. I want to be able to eat my dinner peacefully." Shen Peichuan interrupted their conversation.

Su Zhan held onto Shen Peichuan's shoulder tightly. "If it weren't for you, I would not be able to get married."

If not for Shen Peichuan, Su Zhan would still trouble about how to introduce Qin Ya to Grandma.

Shen Peichuan chuckled, "Oh, so I'm your matchmaker?"

"I won't forget you on my wedding!" Su Zhan chirped.

"December 18 is an auspicious date. We can have the wedding held in this hotel and the marriage certification can be done after that. What do you all think?" Grandma suggested.

Upon hearing what she said, everyone went silent.

December 18 was in less than 3 days. Grandma is in such a hurry...

"Grandma..." Su Zhan began.

However, he was quickly cut off, "Enough, this is final. The wedding can be held first and the both of you can register for your marriage after we head back to B City."

Shen Peichuan went towards Grandma and whispered, “Grandma, isn’t the timing too tight? There are a lot of things to prepare for the wedding. Also, all of their relatives and friends are still in B City. It’s not very nice if we hold the wedding here without informing them.”

Grandma mumbled, “I’m afraid there might be more complications if the wedding is dragged. Liu Feifei is back. I don’t want my grandson to be hurt again because of that woman.”

Stealing Your Heart Chapter 266

Because of Liu Feifei, Su Zhan had been decadent and sluggish as if he couldn't get out of a broken love.

The elderly lady didn't like this woman who had broken her grandson's heart. So, in order to prevent him from turning on his words when he met Liu Feifei, she decided to let him marry someone right here before going back.

Shen Peichuan's expression changed instantly. No wonder she was always asking about Su Zhan's whereabouts. Liu Feifei was back into the picture and she feared that her grandson would return to the woman.

The elderly woman pulled on his arm, "You can't tell Su Zhan about this or you'll be dead," she threatened.

Shen Peichuan was contemplating whether he should tell Su Zhan or not. The woman that he once liked so much had returned.

But after receiving her threats, he didn't have the guts anymore. The elderly lady could be scary when she was mad.

Now he regretted asking her about this. He had to pretend that he didn't know anything.

"What are you whispering about?" Su Zhan suddenly appeared.

"Uh...I was thinking about how much I should put in the red packet for your wedding." He came up with a believable lie.

Su Zhan didn't notice that his grandmother was a little rushed to get him married. It was normal after all. She would usually urge him like this.

“As much as possible,” he replied in a cheerful and happy way. Who wouldn’t be delighted to receive free money?

“Okay, I’ll give you a big one.”

“You’re lucky that your best friend is here. I think the hotel is great. So it’s decided. Your wedding will be held on the 18th.”

“Uh...I...”

“You’re gonna get married regardless.”

Qin Ya wanted to say that she had not agreed on this marriage. But Su Zhan grabbed her hand which made her change her mind. “Sure. On the 18th then. We’ll get the marriage certificate when we go back.”

Just like that, the marriage between Su Zhan and Qin Ya was decided.

After lunch, the elderly lady dragged Shen Peichuan to meet the person in charge of the hotel to discuss about the venue.

Meanwhile, Lin Xinyan was feeling bothered because of Zong Jinghao’s deliberate disaffection. As for Su Zhan and Qin Ya’s marriage, she didn’t express any personal opinions.

She didn’t have the chance to talk to Qin Ya when Su Zhan was pulled away by the others.

“Mommy, I see that you’re in a bad mood,” Lin Xichen tugged on her hand, “Are you guys fighting?”

Usually Zong Jinghao would always stick with his mom. But today he didn’t even sit beside her during lunch.

Lin Xinyan stroked her son's head. Her heart was a mess but she couldn't find it in herself to confide in her son. He was meticulous and if he noticed that something was wrong, he would be worried for her.

But it was obvious that Zong Jinghao was acting different. "It's not a big deal. Every married couple will bicker once in a while."

"Oh. Then please reconcile quickly," he answered with much concern which made his mom smile.

When they arrived the room, Lin Xichen let go of Lin Xinyan's hand and went to his own room. He was addicted to games recently and would always play them on the bed whenever he had time.

Lin Ruixi was with Zong Jinghao and they were not in the room. Lin Xinyan went to another room to find them but it was in vain when she saw that it was empty.

She fished out her phone and was about to call her husband when she felt someone tugging on the hem of her dress from behind. She turned her head and looked down to see Lin Ruixi smiling cutely at her. She squatted down to hug her daughter tightly. Then her eyes found the man standing not far away from them.

"Who did you want to call, mommy?" her daughter asked while touching her cheek.

Lin Xinyan paused to think about what to say, "I wasn't trying to call anyone. Just looking at the time."

"Oh. Where's brother?" The little girl blinked.

"In his room."

"I'll go play with him then." She hopped happily away to find her brother.

When she found him, her joyful voice echoed. “Brother!”

Lin Xinyan got up from the floor and faced Zong Jinghao wordlessly. They both stayed silent for a while as the woman was thinking about how to start the conversation. “Uh, I...”

But as soon as she spoke, Zong Jinghao refused to listen and he walked to their bedroom, leaving the woman speechless.

He sat on the couch with his laptop on his laps, sorting out the documents sent by Guan Jing. This was actually not that important as he was actually waiting for Lin Xinyan’s explanation.

It wasn’t like he didn’t trust her. In fact, he liked that she was the one who approached him first to explain herself. Because it showed that she cared about him.

“When I went out with Qin Ya, I received a call from Bai Yinning. He asked me out and since I already met him once, I considered him as a friend and I agreed. He told me about Yao Qingqing and then when her brother went to find Yinning, there was a little conflict which took a lot of time. He asked me out for lunch but I rejected him. When he sent me back, my clothes were caught in the gap between the seats and he helped me to get it out. That’s when you saw it.”

Zong Jinghao’s expression didn’t change a bit as if her words went to deaf ears. But he heard her very clearly. He just wanted to continue acting to be angry and wait for her to persuade and coax him.

He didn’t know how it happened but he felt like something had controlled his movements. He literally wrote the words ‘coax me’ on the signature part of the document.

Guan Jing saw the words on the other side and he was dumbfounded.

He still managed to tremblingly reply: How?

Zong Jinghao was taken aback by the one-worded reply. He felt like reprimanding the latter for not being serious but when he reread what he typed, he cringed at himself.

Lin Xinyan saw that he was quite busy so she didn't want to disturb him. "I'm not cheap. Please believe me. You can continue working." With that, she turned and left.

That's it? She's not going to persuade me?

Shouldn't she kiss him, hug him, please him, make him believe her and ask him not to be mad anymore?

I didn't say that I'm not mad anymore. How dare she leave just like that?

He put down his laptop and chased her. But he was a step late because Lin Xinyan was already in the elevator going downstairs.

The other elevator seemed to have a problem because the doors wouldn't open no matter how many times he pressed the button. Then he gave up and decided to run down the stairs instead. Yes, he was willing to do that just for her.

However, when he was downstairs, Lin Xinyan had already left the hotel.

Qin Ya was getting married so she wanted to personally design the wedding dress for her. She was running out of time. She needed to buy tools and accessories to sew the wedding dress. Cheng Yuwen had given her a white fragrant cloud yarn and she planned to use that fabric as the dress' main material. She also needed some lace for the embellishment.

She asked one of the hotel workers earlier and was informed that there was a emporium where people could find everything they wanted. So she wanted to go there herself and see if they had the things that she needed for the dress.

She already had the outline of the dress in her mind. She was just short of materials.

After a while, the car stopped at the shopping center. Lin Xinyan got out of the car and the driver followed her.

A lot of cars stopped at the entrance since the parking lot was full. People came here to buy goods and all of them were holding shopping bags.

“This place isn’t that big but it’s packed with people,” the driver voiced out loudly.

Lin Xinyan agreed as she nodded her head. She felt that maybe there was something extraordinary in the mall that attracted this many people. With that, she quickened her pace. “Let’s go in.”

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There was a sea of people here. Fortunately, the entrance wasn't also the exit door. Otherwise, the door would have been blocked.

The driver kept up with her pace in fear that something would happen to her.

He was a driver cum bodyguard. Making sure of Lin Xinyan's safety was his job. Or else he wouldn't know how to explain if he went back without her.

There were three floors and each of it was very spacious. They could find everything and anything in here.

Her eyes were automatically attracted to a toy store. Maybe because of the fact that she was a mother of two. She felt the need to go to the store and see if there were any toys that her children would like.

Lin Xichen liked brainy toys. He wouldn't bat an eye on stuffed toys. On the contrary, Lin Ruixi liked fluffy toys the most.

A polygonal Rubik's Cube caught her attention. She picked it up and studied the toy. Each of the side had approximately fifty module of blocks. They were as small as a tiny fingernail and there were a total of six sides.

This looks difficult. She thought as she turned the cube around.

"A lot of people can't solve that. If you're buying for your child, I suggest you to buy this." The owner of the store approached her and pointed to a shelf. There were different types of Rubik's Cubes on it. Some were triangle and some were the normal square ones. "These are suitable for children between five to ten. How old is your child?"

“Five,” she replied but she still liked the one she was holding. Those are too easy for Xichen.

“I suggest you this one.” The shop owner picked up a triangular one which was more novel than the square one. There were only a few sides and it seemed relatively simple which was very suitable for a five-year-old.

Lin Xinyan smiled as she took out her purse, “I still want this one. Please pack it up for me.”

The owner could only beam out a smile. It didn't matter if she didn't listen to his suggestion as long as he made sales.

“I'll get a new one for you.” He went inside and fished out an unopened package of the same toy for her, mumbling softly, “What a weirdo. Does she think her child is a genius or something?”

The toys were originally put inside boxes. People would only look at them and not buy them. There was no way they were going to be sold out if this continued. So he decided to take them out for the customers to try playing them. He managed to attract a lot of people after that but there were still no buyers.

However, he sold one today and he was very happy with it. The cube was difficult and quite pricey so he didn't expect that it would be bought.

He went back to the woman with a smile while putting the toy into a bag and handed it to Lin Xinyan. “Your kid must be very smart.”

She returned the smile wordlessly. For her, her son was the smartest child in the world. She was no different from the other mothers who thought that their children were the best. “How much?” she asked.

“Three hundred and sixty.”

Lin Xinyan gave him four hundred and he refunded her fifty, saying, "I'll spare a ten for you. This cube's opening price is three hundred fifty. The poor toy has been here for two years and someone finally bought it. I'm not at a loss."

She took the money and walked out of the store as the driver approached her. "Let me carry it."

"No need," she answered while waving her hand.

The driver had been guarding her going between the various shops. It was so crowded that they were unaware of a man wearing a blue parka, a baseball cap and a black mask stalking behind them.

This floor was full of toys and accessories. She couldn't find her materials here so she decided to go to the second floor. When they were in the elevator, Lin Xinyan felt eyes on her. She turned her head around but didn't see anyone looking at her.

"What's wrong?" the driver asked.

She shook her head but glanced back again. Indeed, no one was looking at her.

She turned to the front suspiciously. The elevator reached the second floor in no time. She found that the materials that she needed were here and immediately quickened her footsteps. The suspicion of someone watching her was quickly pushed to the back of her mind.

She rounded the floor for a good few minutes before finally coming across the type of lace that she wanted. The texture of the yarn was soft, delicate and thin. Exactly what she was looking for.

"This is kind of expensive." The shop owner voiced out as he saw the fascination on Lin Xinyan's face.

As a fashion designer, she had a broad knowledge about fabrics and the price that it should come with. "Is this sold by feet?"

"Yes, one thousand eight hundred and eighty per foot."

"Can't it be cheaper?" She looked at the boss and smiled.

"That's the cheapest price. In this entire mall, this fabric can only be found in my store. No one wants to sell it because it's expensive."

Lin Xinyan rubbed the fabric in her hand and said, "This material is woven from silk. That's why it's soft and delicate. But the price that you're offering is a bit expensive."

The boss didn't dare to argue seeing that she was an expert that could make out the element just by touching it, "Uh, how much do you want? I'll make it cheaper for you."

"I'll need maybe a few feet."

The boss smiled brightly as soon as she said that, "I'll give you a discount then."

It wasn't like she couldn't afford the price. The material was indeed expensive but it shouldn't be as expensive as what he was offering. "One thousand and eighty per foot."

"That's too low." The smile on his face was quickly wiped off.

"It's not. You earn around eighty per foot with that price. I need six meters. Three feet per meter which makes it eighteen feet. You still can gain around one thousand four hundred and forty."

He was dumbfounded. This isn't a bargaining tactic. She's actually a pro.

“You’re also in this field?” It would be impossible to know the price this clearly if she wasn’t.

“Kind of,” she answered without clarifying anything.

“Okay, then.” He finally agreed. It wasn’t everyday he could get customers after all. Her showing up and buying a few feet was already a huge blessing.

There were a lot of imitation products similar to this with a lower price. It was hard to sell the original one.

“You have a good eye.” He gave her a big thumbs up.

After cutting the fabric accordingly, he neatly stacked it into a delicate box before putting it into a shopping bag.

He gave her the bag as she fished out her card and handed it to him, saying, “No password.” She didn’t carry that much cash on her.

“Okay.” He took the card with both hands and walked to the cashier to swipe it. He printed the receipt then gave it to her along with her card. “I have other materials here. Do you need it?”

“No. By the way, do you know which store sells pearls?” she asked as she put her card back into her purse.

It was really unfamiliar for her. She used to have her own purchase channel and all the clothes’ accessories had their own sources. She wasn’t in Country A nor B City now so she could only rely on the locals here.

“If you need only a few, you can go to the jewelry store. But if you need lots of them, you can go to the factory. It’s affordable. You can even personally choose them.”

She thought for a while and concluded that she needed quite a lot. “Do you know where the factory is?”

“Do you need a lot?” the boss asked. She nodded her head in response.

“How about this? Give me your address and tell me which type of pearls you want. I’ll get it for you.” He smiled, “I can earn a bit more with this. And you can save yourself some trouble.”

“Sure,” she agreed after pondering for a moment. It would cost her a lot of time if she went there by herself. Someone was offering to help and she only needed to pay a bit which was rather convenient for her. She wrote down her address and the pearls’ specifications. “Can you give me by tonight? I’m really in a rush for it.”

“I will. Don’t worry,” he reassured.

When she exited, the driver carried her things. They were ready to drive home as she had already bought everything that she wanted.

“You can wait for me in the car,” she said to the driver when they were on the first floor.

He looked at the sea of people and feared that it wouldn’t be that safe for her. “I’ll wait for you at the door.”

Lin Xinyan only wanted to use the restroom. She nodded.

She asked someone for the restroom’s direction and when she was done, she walked out. She was looking for the driver at the door when she was suddenly grabbed by the wrist.

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She jolted up in shock and felt cold sweat travelling down her body at the contact. "Who are you?" she nervously asked with a trembling voice.

He Ruize turned his head and pulled down his mask. Lin Xinyan's face paled as soon as she recognized the face.

It was He Ruize. The man she feared the most. He was the one who imprisoned and hurt her.

"Let me go!" she shouted.

"No!" He gritted his teeth as the hand on her wrist tightened its grip.

It had been so long since he last met her so of course he wouldn't let go!

The scene caused those who were passing by to stop and look at them.

Lin Xinyan didn't wish to be taken away from him again, and she shouted, "I don't know you! Please let me go immediately! Or else I'll call the police!" Her loud voice attracted people's attention.

He panicked but managed to calm himself down as he pulled her into a hug. "Don't make a big scene."

He released her before explaining to the crowd. "I'm so sorry for that. She's my girlfriend. We're just having a little quarrel."

A sigh was heard after that and someone approached them to help him persuade her, “Little girl, that attitude is not good. There are so many people here. If you continue quarrelling with your boyfriend like this, he’d hurt his pride.”

“I’m not his girlfriend. I don’t even know who he is.” Lin Xinyan furiously shook her head.

“I’m sorry. It’s my fault, Yan. I shouldn’t have angered you. Can we stop quarrelling? Let’s go home now.”

He wrapped his arm around her waist and dragged her out. Nobody helped her since they thought that it was a quarrel between the ‘couple’.

On the contrary, they were supporting He Ruize. They thought that the woman was so ignorant that she didn’t care about her boyfriend’s image in public.

No one would help her. She clenched her hands and sank down, making it hard for him to pull her. When he was grasping her, she held his arm and bit on it harshly.

He Ruize grunted in pain as his grip loosened. She took this opportunity to escape from him. When she was about to run, a stranger pulled her arm.

“Don’t be stubborn. Can’t you see how hurt your boyfriend is from the bite?”

“I am not his girlfriend!” She roared word by word which stunned the person as he let go of her hand.

“Yan...” He grabbed her hand again.

“Let her go!” the driver yelled as he sprinted towards them. He Ruize panicked and he let her go before quickly running away.

The driver wanted to chase him but was stopped by Lin Xinyan. "Don't bother. There are a lot of people here. He can hide anywhere. It'd be hard to find him."

The driver retreated and stood in front of her. "Are you okay?"

She nodded her head, "Let's go."

"Are you really not his girlfriend?" the previous stranger asked dumbfoundedly. He just wanted to help but it turned out to be making more trouble instead.

Lin Xinyan threw him a glare without replying. That shameless bastard. Everyone misunderstood because he said they were lovers. They even interceded for him.

If it weren't for the driver who came here on time, she wouldn't know if she could escape from him.

The driver kept her within his sight when they were exiting the mall. When they were in the car, Lin Xinyan slowly released the tension. What happened just now kind of traumatized her.

Is he always watching me in the dark and appears once he gets the chance?

She didn't know. There were a number of speculations in her heart that was unsettling for her. Nobody knows when he'll show up again.

He Ruize's existence was like a untimed bomb that would explode any time. It was also the kind of bomb that threatened her at all times.

Too lost in her thoughts, she didn't notice that they were back at the hotel.

"We're here, Ms. Lin." The driver opened the door for her.

His voice was what pulled her back to her senses. She bent down to get out of the car and once she was out in the open space, she couldn't help but glance

back. What happened just now had planted a paranoia in her. She felt like He Ruize was creeping somewhere, peeking.

“This is our territory. He won’t show up,” the driver assured her.

She nodded her head before entering the hotel.

During the journey from the hotel’s lobby to the upper floor, she would fearfully look around from time to time. Though she knew that they were all Zong Jinghao’s people, she just couldn’t help but feel uneasy.

She couldn’t control herself.

When the elevator stopped, she walked out.

“Ruixi, can you stop being so childish?” Meanwhile, Lin Xichen was talking to his sister through gritted teeth.

“I’m not childish. I just like playing Plants vs. Zombies. What’s wrong with it?” she defended herself.

“Oh! I picked up a lot of suns! I can make a pea shooter!” The little girl said to herself, completely dismissing her brother’s slander.

She didn’t find herself childish. She just enjoyed playing the game.

Lin Xichen ruffled his hair. He couldn’t look at her any longer. But she just had to raise her voice which irritated him.

“Xi,” Lin Xinyan called him at the door.

Lin Ruixi was concentrated on the game so much that she didn’t notice her mother’s presence.

“Mommy.” Lin Xichen walked over with a deep frown even at such a young age.

Lin Xinyan stretched out her hand and stroked his brows. “You’re a good boy. You’ve been taking care of your sister for me. So I have a gift for you.”

With that, his eyes lit up. “What gift?” he asked happily.

Lin Xinyan handed him a shopping bag which he quickly took. “A Rubik’s Cube!” he exclaimed after taking out the box.

His mother nodded her head and said, “The boss said it’s hard to solve so I don’t know if you can do it.” She deliberately provoked him.

Lin Xichen looked up and stared at her. His hands never stopped messing with the box. He wanted to see how difficult it was. The boy liked challenging games.

He finally opened the box and took out the cube. “Mommy, where did you buy this?”

“I...I bought it outside. Why?” She was confused by his attitude.

“I like it.” He was already eager to try solving it. “Thank you, mommy.”

“I’m glad you like it.” She smiled while rubbing his head.

“Can I go play now?”

“Of course.”

With that, he ran to the couch in his room and began studying the cube.

Lin Xinyan saw that her children were quietly doing their own stuff so she went to the other room.

Zong Jinghao was still on the couch with his laptop, dealing with some company stuff. He was in the same posture as when she left. He looked really busy.

Lin Xinyan's eyes drooped as she walked into the room with her light footsteps.

She put the things down, fished out a paper and pen from her bag before strolling out again. She didn't want to disturb the man.

Zong Jinghao had been waiting for her. He was elated when she came back. He noticed that she had bought Lin Xichen something when she walked through the door.

He didn't want her to notice him so he slowly retreated back to the room. He sat on the couch while pretending to look busy and still angry at her.

Where did she go earlier? She bought something for Xichen. Did she buy anything for me?

He anticipated for her to enter the room. But once she did, she didn't even greet him before silently leaving again.

He put down his laptop after that. Can't this woman just come and coax me? Doesn't she see how unhappy I still am? Doesn't she care about me? What the hell was she doing outside?

He had never been this anxious before. Finally, he couldn't hold it anymore. Fine. If she doesn't come find me, I'll go to her instead.

He wished not to argue with his own wife. After persuading himself, he walked out the room and saw Lin Xinyan at the end of the corridor.

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The sunlight shone through the French window. She was sitting at the corner with a drawing board in her hands. She was drawing the design of the wedding dress.

The rough outline of the dress was already imprinted in her mind as her hand sketched back and forth smoothly. Once she was in her working mode, she would be lost in it. Even the incident of bumping into He Ruize wasn't in her mind anymore.

When Zong Jinghao was about to approach her, the driver who accompanied her just now approached him. He usually didn't need to personally report on such things. But Su Zhan and Shen Peichuan weren't there today.

He thought that Zong Jinghao should know about He Ruize's appearance.

"I went shopping with Ms. Lin today. We bumped into He Ruize."

Hearing that, the light on the man's face instantly dampened.

"He wanted to take her away but failed. I think that he might be watching us in the dark all this time."

There wasn't a doubt that he would do that. He was just waiting for the perfect timing.

"Okay, you can go now." Zong Jinghao waved his hand at him.

They were in the light while He Ruize was in the dark. If they wanted to catch him, then they must pull the snake out of its hole to avoid future troubles.

He made up his mind. But Su Zhan was getting married soon so he could only put the plan on hold.

“Wait,” he called out when the driver was about to leave.

“What did she buy?” He pretended to be serious. She bought Lin Xichen a gift so she must have bought him something too.

The driver thought for a while before answering, “Pearls, a Rubik’s Cube and some fabric.”

He remembered that the Rubik’s Cube was for Lin Xichen which was something the child liked.

But it was obvious that the rest of the things weren’t for Zong Jinghao.

Which meant that he had no gift.

This woman! Am I even in her heart at all?

“Okay, you can leave,” he calmly said. With that, the driver left.

On the other side, Lin Xinyan was immersed in her designing, completely unaware that somebody was approaching her. She didn’t even notice the shadow hovering over her.

The black pencil kept going back and forth on the paper. She already drew the rough outline of the dress. Now she was just trying to figure out the details.

Zong Jinghao leaned down as his eyes were fixed on her design.

The woman was so lost in her world that she didn’t notice him. Then her hand suddenly paused.

Wedding. What a sacred ceremony.

She once had such a longing to put on a wedding dress and marry her desired man that she could spend her life with. They would walk through this life hand in hand. But... She slowly lowered her eyes.

“What are you thinking?” He was so close that she could feel his breath on the spot between her ears and neck. She quickly looked up to meet his gaze.

The moment she raised her head, Zong Jinghao caught a concealed disappointment in her eyes that quickly disappeared.

Something flashed in his eyes. When they were getting married, he didn't give her anything. She was also like any other woman who wanted a wedding dress.

“N-nothing.” She lowered her head and scooted away to distance herself from him. She busied herself tidying up her things to hide her disappointment.

“Where did you go?” He neared her again.

“Went out and bought some things.” She held the drawing board and pencil in one hand. She used the other hand to support herself to get up. But then she felt that her leg was numbed.

“Are your legs numb?” He crouched down and touched both of her legs. “Which leg?”

She hesitated a bit before saying, “Left.”

“Here?” he asked, rubbing her left calf.

Lin Xinyan looked at his hand. His palm was broad, warm and covered with rough crisscrossing palm prints which she could feel. A layer of sweat travelled

down her body, soaking her clothes. His gentle and feather-like touches penetrated warmth into her heart.

“Yeah.” Her voice unknowingly became low.

Zong Jinghao was wearing trousers so crouching was uncomfortable. He simply sat down and put her leg on his lap. “Stretch out.”

Lin Xinyan did as he told while he massaged her leg with his head down.

“Don’t you have anything to tell me?” he asked after a minute of silence.

“There’s really nothing going on between us,” she explained once again as she thought that he was still mad about the whole Bai Yinning affair.

He raised his head and studied her. He hoped that she would take the initiative to tell him about meeting He Ruize. He wished that she would be more open to him and be frank about anything when she was with him.

As for Bai Yinning, he said, “Don’t go anywhere near him from now on.” His voice was stone cold.

“Okay,” she responded, nodding her head.

She was being so obedient that he couldn’t blame her for not telling him about today’s incident. “You met He Ruize today?”

Lin Xinyan suddenly raised her head and stared at him, flabbergasted. How did he know about this?

Then she remembered the driver she was with. He must have reported it.

“Did he hurt you?”

Her chest still felt tight when she recalled about He Ruize's sudden appearance.
"No."

It was terrifying that he almost succeeded in taking her away. Being able to escape from him was truly lucky.

Zong Jinghao could see that she was hiding how she really felt. He Ruize's appearance meant that he must had the intention to take her away again. He took her into his arms and held her close. I'm glad that he failed. "Stay by me from now on. If you push me away, where am I supposed to look for you?"

Lin Xinyan lowered her head and said nothing. He pushed her forehead lightly, "Do you hear me?"

She remained silent as he pulled her closer. She could feel the warmth from his body which made hers tense involuntarily. "Yes," she whispered.

He glanced down. Her long hair was matted down on his chest and he tried to smoothen out the hair knots. While brushing her hair, he said, "Good girl."

He clasped her by the waist and picked her up from the floor. "Can you walk now?"

She moved a bit to feel the sensation on her numbed leg. "Yes."

She tried to push him away to walk on her own. But she was swept off the floor out of the blue. She panicked when she thought of her children who were in the room and the bodyguards in front of the elevator. She wanted to yell but that would just attract unnecessary attention so she didn't.

Zong Jinghao beamed a smile. She buried her face in the crook of his neck. "Aren't you afraid of being seen?"

"Why should I?" Both his face and tone turned serious. "Let's have a wedding ceremony when we go back."

When she heard that, she felt a lump in her throat and her eyes welled up with tears.

Meanwhile, Su Zhan kept chattering in Qin Ya's ears. "How about we use flowers as our main theme?" The latter didn't respond. It was as if she hadn't come back to her senses.

"Qin Ya, please say something." A big man like him acting like a baby with his hand on her arm made her shudder. Goosebumps travelled all over her body as she looked at him. "Can you be a bit more serious?"

"Ms. Qin, how serious do you want me to be?" Almost instantly, his entire face changed. He stood straight as if he was going to fight a very serious lawsuit.

He looked so serious that Qin Ya was in a trance for a second. Is he really the Su Zhan I know?

The voices of Su Zhan and Qin Ya coming from the elevator were getting louder and soon they would appear at the corridor.

Lin Xinyan suddenly looked up and said, "Put me down."

"I'm afraid it's too late."

As soon as he said that, Su Zhan and Qin Ya walked over.

Lin Xinyan shut her eyes in panic and pretended to be asleep. Otherwise, she would feel embarrassed if people saw her being carried like this in broad daylight for no absolute reason.

Su Zhan's eyes travelled from Zong Jinghao to Lin Xinyan, then to the window to make sure that it wasn't nighttime yet.

"You two..."

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“What are you doing?” Su Zhan smiled vaguely.

Zong Jinghao could feel how stiff the woman in his arms was. It felt like he was carrying a rock. Knowing that she was thin-skinned, he ignored Su Zhan and entered the room.

“When did they get so close like this?” Su Zhan asked himself.

Qin Ya glanced at him before turning around, also walking into the room. The man quickly followed her. “Ya.”

“Stop talking!” she groaned. “Can you be a bit more mature and make me feel safer?”

“Of course.” Su Zhan hugged her and said, “Just tell me what you don’t like. I’ll change.”

Qin Ya was taken aback when she saw how serious he was. “Really?”

“Yes,” he replied without hesitation and stared at her seriously. “Let’s get married. Give it a chance. Who knows? Maybe we’re meant to be.”

She fell silent while gazing at him for a moment. “Okay, let’s try this,” she slowly replied, which made the man smile and hug her tighter.

At night, the boss that Lin Xinyan met at the mall delivered the pearls as promised. There were two types of them. One of them was as big as a bean while the other one was as small as a mung bean. There were eight hundred of them in total. All of which were nice, round and also well-colored.

The boss voluntarily did this in hope of making extra money. She was very satisfied with the products. She paid for the pearls and gave him extra money for his service as well as his honesty.

Lin Xinyan carried the pearls back to her room and began sewing. After all, she really didn't have that much time left.

The lace that she bought was to make a six-meter long veil with pearls sewn on the edge of it. She added the pearls for two reasons. One was of course for a good image. While the other one was so the veil wouldn't be crumpled when being dragged on the floor.

After dinner, Zong Jinghao played with the kids while she sewed. Then he took a bath after the kids were asleep but she was still busy sewing on the couch.

The man frowned, "I'll give you money. You can use it to buy whatever type of wedding dress that she wants."

She's sewing hundreds of pearls on that. She must be exhausted.

She shook her head, "I want to do this. It's nothing to do with money."

Besides, this was her job so she didn't feel tired.

As long as she had enough time, she would personally sew for her guests. Sometimes when she was really busy, she would leave it all to her qualified workers.

Zong Jinghao wanted to sit next to her. When he was bending his body and about to sit down, she stopped him. She was very rigorous when it came to her work that a smile was hardly seen on her face. "You can't sit here. Go sleep with the kids."

He silently stared at her and bit back the words on the tip of his tongue. Then he climbed on the bed next to his daughter. I'm the most pitiful husband in the whole world.

They had two kids but he only slept with his wife once. The memories were shallow.

Lin Xinyan raised her head and noticed that the man was very quiet. She could do her work in peace.

As the night got deeper, Lin Xinyan didn't even know when she fell asleep. In her daze, she felt someone carrying her but she was too sleepy to open her eyes. Then her back landed on a soft and big bed. She adjusted into a more comfortable position before falling asleep again.

Everyone was busy during these two days. Shen Peichuan and Su Zhan were busy arranging for the wedding. Lin Xinyan on the other hand stayed in her room to sew the dress.

Other than handling his work, Zong Jinghao would take care of the children.

Two days had passed in a blink of an eye and the wedding day came.

It was freezing; fortunately the ceremony was held indoors. Su Zhan had hired a wedding planner. The whole set looked very dreamy and the theme was dominated by purple. That was a mysterious color so when applied to weddings, it looked divine, sacred and solemn.

In the lounge, Lin Xinyan put on the dress she had sewn on Qin Ya's body. "I don't have a gift for you so consider this dress as my gift."

"You sewed so many pearls on it in such a short period of time. You must have not slept," Qin Ya said as she looked at the veil on top of her head. Her eyes were slightly wet.

Lin Xinyan raised her head and noticed the tears in her eyes. She hurriedly fished out two pieces of tissue to wipe them away. "This is your day. You can't cry. You'll ruin the makeup."

"Thank you," Qin Ya sniffed.

"We're practically siblings. If you thank me for this, it makes me feel like we're strangers." Lin Xinyan allowed the tears to roll down her cheeks. Qin Ya didn't have any relatives so she was the only one.

"Your makeup is ruined, dummy." She then asked the makeup artist to fix Qin Ya's makeup.

Lin Xinyan squatted down behind her to sort out her wedding dress. "I went to the wedding site earlier. It's very romantic. It's obvious that Su Zhan has been diligent in this."

Qin Ya agreed as she silently stared at herself in the mirror. It was too late to regret anything now. She could only hope Su Zhan wouldn't let her down.

When it was time for Qin Ya to enter, she was all alone on the red carpet considering that she had no relatives. She stepped on the carpet strewn with rose petals and slowly walked to the first arch.

Lin Xinyan knew Qin Ya very well. She knew what type of wedding dress would suit her the most as well as the design that could highlight her strong points. Qin Ya was slim but her breasts were well-developed which looked appealing in a tube top. She looked good in the fishtail design. Only a certain body type could fit this design given that it was picky in terms of waist size. But Lin Xinyan was confident in Qin Ya's body figure. Sure enough, she looked like a beautiful walking mermaid. Her slender waist was perfectly hugged by the tailored dress, vividly highlighting her figure.

With every step she took, the pure white veil would bloom behind her. The big and small pearls dotted on it were like shining stars. That made her look like a fairy descending from the sky.

The ceremony was simple and smooth. There weren't that many guests.

Su Zhan, dressed in a black tuxedo, was standing at the end of the red carpet. He was staring at the woman who was slowly approaching him. His eyes were suddenly clouded with determination.

She was someone naïve and special. She was the one who made him open up about this whole marriage issue. He slowly broke into a smile.

Qin Ya finally neared him under the melodious wedding song. He reached out a hand to her. She hesitated a bit but placed hers on it anyway.

At this time, the host started speaking. "Today is a happy day for Mr. Su and Ms. Qin. Please applaud the new couple."

His grandmother was dressed in a red cheongsam with a mink shawl draped around her shoulders. Tears were streaming down her face as she clapped vigorously, clearly happy for her grandson.

She had been wishing for this day to come her whole life. Now it finally came true.

"Do you, Mr. Su, take this woman, Ms. Qin, to be your lawfully wedded wife, to have and to hold, in sickness and in health, in good times and woe, for richer or poorer, keeping yourself solely unto her for as long as you both shall live? If so, answer 'I do.'"