

Stealing Your Heart Chapter 986

He held her hand. "Yanxi, let's go in."

Zhuang Jiawen unloaded the luggage from the trunk.

Zong Yanxi nodded. "Let's go."

As they entered the house, they switched on the lights to the living room. With a flip of the switch, the whole house lit up at once.

Zong Yanxi remarked. "Why don't both of you sleep first? I'll go see Mom and Dad."

She knew that her parents were definitely still awake.

Zhuang Jiawen replied, "Okay."

After he brought her luggage to her room, Shen Xinyao and him headed upstairs.

However, Shen Xinyao was worried, "Is Yanxi..."

"She will manage. Don't worry." Zhuang Jiawen ushered her into the room to sleep.

Standing at the door, she reminded him, "Just keep watch downstairs, alright?"

Zhuang Jiawen's room was further inside. Although both of them were about to be married soon, the most they did was kiss and nothing beyond that.

To Zhuang Jiawen, sleeping with Shen Xinyao before marriage was an irresponsible act. As for Shen Xinyao, she shared his views about the matter. Hence, despite the fact they were

already promised to each other and recognized by everyone else, they had a tacit understanding of where to draw the line.

Therefore, even though they were engaged, they still slept in separate rooms.

Zhuang Jiawen grunted in acknowledgment. "You should go ahead and sleep first."

Shen Xinyao nodded and entered her room.

The moment she closed the door, Zhuang Jiawen heaved a sigh of relief and glanced downstairs. However, he didn't interfere and returned to his room instead.

Downstairs, Zong Yanxi stood where she was and collected herself. She hadn't seen her parents for a year. Despite getting constant updates from Zhuang Jiawen about them and having seen recent photos, she still felt a bout of reluctance.

No matter how old she was, she was still a kid in the eyes of her parents.

At that moment, she didn't dare face them because of the mistakes she made.

However, she was cognizant of them and didn't want history to repeat itself, so that her parents would not have to worry.

Gathering her courage, she headed to her parent's room.

At the door, she took a deep breath before knocking.

However, no one opened it.

She announced softly, "Dad, Mom, I'm home."

In the room diagonally opposite, Su Zhan and Qin Ya were also awake. When he heard Zong Yanxi's voice, Su Zhan quickly jumped out of bed.

However, Qin Ya maintained her composure better than he did. But that was only on the surface. When she heard Zong Yanxi's voice, her heart was equally jolted.

She too watched Zong Yanxi grow up and treated her as her own daughter. After her near-death experience, everyone was both worried and heartbroken for her. Although she returned home safe and sound, Qin Ya knew that it was just superficial and that Zong Yanxi's heart had been scarred.

When she was young, she went through a similarly traumatizing experience. Hence, she understood exactly what Zong Yanxi was going through.

It was precisely because their experiences were similar that her heart ached for Zong Yanxi.

Subconsciously, her eyes had already turned red.

Su Zhan poured her a glass of water and asked softly, "What's wrong?"

Receiving the glass, she shook her head. "Nothing."

Su Zhan held her hand. "It's all in the past now."

He figured that Qin Ya must have thought about the past.

She too had suffered a lot then.

Because of him, she lost the ability to bear children which was one of the regrets he had in his life. When he saw that Shen Peichuan and Zong Jinghao had their own children, he was envious and that was all he felt.

He was already grateful for the fact that Qin Ya forgave him and gave him a second chance. Furthermore, he greatly appreciated the opportunity to live out the rest of their lives together peacefully.

When Grandma Su was still alive, she would alternate between being present and spacing out. However, she was often difficult most of the time.

For his sake, Qin Ya had tolerated her. Now that she had passed on, he and Qin Ya could finally live in peace.

Qin Ya suddenly looked up at him. "Are you angry at me?"

Very often, she would vent her frustrations at Su Zhan over the past. She would make things difficult on purpose or give him the cold shoulder.

Su Zhan understood her feelings. Hence, he never complained about it.

“Go back to sleep.” Su Zhan patted her on her shoulders.

Qin Ya sighed. “Finally, the worst is over.”

Given that Zong Yanxi was willing to return and face them, it meant that she had gotten over the past which was a good thing.

Meanwhile, outside the room.

After knocking a second time, no one responded. Zong Yanxi turned the knob and pushed open the door slowly.

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The room was covered in darkness. As the light from the opened door gradually illuminated the room, she saw a shadow of a figure.

Her hand that was holding onto the knob tensed up. She thought that she would be strong enough to face her parents. But when she came face to face with them, emotions overwhelmed her. She greeted with a choking voice, "Dad."

Zong Jinghao didn't intend to reprimand her. After the incident, he knew that she had matured and learned from her mistakes.

"Dad, I was wrong." Zong Yanxi threw herself into his embrace. She had planned not to cry in

She couldn't control herself. Just like a movie, everything she had suffered during the past year flashed across her mind. The images were so clear that she felt as if she was reliving them.

Zong Jinghao patted her on her shoulder and murmured. "It was all my fault."

The biggest mistake he made in his life was misreading Jiang Mohan. He was so confident that his daughter's qualities would cause Jiang Mohan to fall in love with her. However, he didn't expect it to end in such a disaster.

"No, I chose to walk that path myself." Zong Yanxi wiped the tears off her face.

Realizing that no one else was to blame other than herself, she willingly admitted her mistake and prepared to bear the consequences. The last thing she wanted was for her parents to blame themselves.

As Zong Jinghao wiped the tears off the corner of her eye, he felt extremely grateful that she was alright.

Sitting by the bed, Lin Xinyan looked out the window with her back facing the door. She wasn't dressed in her pajamas yet and neither was Zong Jinghao. They obviously hadn't slept and were waiting for her instead.

They didn't get the door because they were blaming themselves for not protecting their child. They too were hesitant to face her and were equally worried about losing control of their emotions.

Zong Yanxi sat down beside the figure by the bed. Despite being covered by the shadows, she could still see the slight tremble of the woman's shoulders.

She called out in a choking voice, "Mom."

Lin Xinyan didn't respond because it would then be obvious to all that she was crying.

She was heartbroken over all that her daughter had suffered.

However, she wanted to hide sorrow she felt.

Zong Yanxi went over to hug her. She wanted to apologize but the words just wouldn't come out. However, words no longer mattered at that very moment.

The only thing that could comfort them now was the warmth of a hug and crying their hearts out.

Upstairs, Shen Xinyao was still awake and she figured that no one would be able to sleep that night. Hence, she got up and pushed open Zhuang Jiawen's door.

Although the light wasn't on, the curtains were left open. Hence, the room was dimly illuminated by the light from the streetlamp outside.

Hugging her pillow at the door, she murmured, "I can't sleep."

Zhuang Jiawen was awake and aware of his door being opened. He looked at her in the dim light. "Why don't you count sheep?"

"I already did but it didn't work," Shen Xinyao grumbled coquettishly.

Zhuang Jiawen shifted himself in bed and made a space. He then motioned her over. "Come, I'll coax you to sleep."

Shen Xinyao hurried onto the bed with her pillow and snuggled up to him under his blanket. By then, she had thrown her pillow to a corner and laid her head on his shoulder instead.

Zhuang Jiawen patted her on her back. "Good baby, sleep baby..."

Shen Xinyao covered his mouth. "I'm not a child. You're the one who's a baby. Even Yanxi called you Baby today."

He's already an adult and it's really amusing to still be called Baby.

Holding that thought in her head, she burst into laughter.

Annoyed that she touched his sore spot, Zhuang Jiawen warned sternly, "Don't ever call me that."

"That's your nickname since you were young. Everyone calls you that anyway..."

Before she could finish, her mouth was sealed just like how she covered Zhuang Jiawen's. Except he wasn't using his hands, but his lips instead.

Both of them began kissing passionately as they embraced each other.

Both were of the same age and equally youthful. Hence, the lust within them was set ablaze. Fully aware that one thing would lead to another, they quickly pushed each other aside and stopped.

Both of them lay back on the bed and were panting heavily.

When they finally calmed down, Zhuang Jiawen looked at the ceiling and remarked, "When you barge into my room in the middle of the night, aren't you worried that I would lose control?"

"I trust you," Shen Xinyao declared with conviction.

Zhuang Jiawen smiled wryly. "I don't even trust myself."

"But I still do." Shen Xinyao lay on her side and hugged him. "Do you think Yanxi will cry when she sees Mom and Dad?"

"I don't know." Zhuang Jiawen patted her. "It's getting late. Let's sleep."

"I don't know what's gotten into me today. I just can't sleep." Shen Xinyao looked at him. "Can you?"

Zhuang Jiawen replied. "No, I can't."

Tonight was fated to be a sleepless night.

"Then why did you still ask me to sleep?" Shen Xinyao grumbled.

Zhuang Jiawen chuckled in response. While stroking her hair, he asked, "Aren't you worried the elders might see you leaving my room in the morning?"

Shen Xinyao had a conservative upbringing and always obeyed her elders. Hence, she would never do anything that they would disapprove of.

Furthermore, she was a kind and filial girl.

After a while, Shen Xinyao sat up. "I just wanted to see if you were asleep or not. I'm going back to my room now."

In truth, her real intention was to stay by Zhuang Jiawen's side as she knew he was feeling anxious over his sister's return. Now that she was back, his emotions would likely be volatile like a rollercoaster.

Hence, she just wanted to be there for him.

When she prepared to leave with her pillow in hand, Zhuang Jiawen stopped her by tugging her pajamas. "Don't go."

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Shen Xinyao turned around and looked at him. "Why?"

Zhuang Jiawen continued to pull her back without saying a word. It looked like he was just being a baby.

Shen Xinyao bent down and shook his hand off. "Stop fooling around."

"Stay with me a while longer." Zhuang Jiawen lifted his gaze to look at her. Worried that she would refuse him, he even gave her sleeve a child-like tug.

Despite finding it amusing, Shen Xinyao had no choice but to agree. "Fine."

She put down her pillow and lay on the bed. Hugging her, Zhuang Jiawen told her stories from his childhood. Before he knew it, he had already fallen asleep.

By the time Zhuang Jiawen awoke, he was alone in the room. Shen Xinyao had left sometime in the night.

After washing up, he went downstairs and saw that everyone was already up.

Zong Yanxi and Shen Xinyao were in the kitchen preparing breakfast while Su Zhan was watering the plants on the balcony.

"Where's everyone? Where did they go?" Zhuang Jiawen asked as he descended the steps.

Su Zhan turned around and glanced at him. "They're already up. Both your fiancée and sister are in the kitchen."

"I meant Mom and Dad."

"Your Mom and Qin Ya went out for a walk. They probably have something to talk about. As for your Dad, he went out early in the morning. But I'm not sure what for." Su Zhan put down his watering can and came over. "When are you going pick up your parents-in-law?"

Zhuang Jiawen poured a glass of water before slumping on the sofa with his legs crossed. "It's still early. They told me over the phone that I don't have to. Instead, they will travel here by themselves. They mentioned that it's too troublesome for me to do so."

Su Zhan sat on the sofa and looked at him. "Your parents-in-law are really considerate."

Just as he spoke, he let out a sigh. "It would be good if your brother could make it back."

"I've already called Uncle but he said that he couldn't get in contact with brother and is still trying."

Wen Xiaoji and Lin Xinyan were cousins. Hence, Zhuang Jiawen addressed him as Uncle as they were close.

"Sigh, your parents have plenty to worry about with regards to the three of you," Su Zhan remarked.

Zong Yanxi had just gone through a traumatic incident while Zong Yanchen was in the special forces, which was dangerous by nature.

To pray for her children's safety, Lin Xinyan built an altar in their home in Thailand so that she could pray often.

Regardless of whether her prayers would come true, she found some solace in doing so.

"Uncle Su, what did you just say?" Zong Yanxi asked as she walked out.

Her eyes were still red and it was obvious that it was from crying last night. However, no one mentioned it as everyone knew full well what had happened.

Su Zhan smiled. "You have really sharp ears to even hear me from the kitchen. Were you eavesdropping?"

"I wasn't eavesdropping. You were simply talking too loudly." Zong Yanxi looked at Zhuang Jiawen. "You should help your fiancée, I'm going to inform Aunt Qin Ya and Mom that breakfast is ready."

Zhuang Jiawen stood up. "Right away."

"A good man knows how to pamper his wife." Su Zhan remarked with a smile. Zhuang Jiawen turned around and shot him a glance. "I learn from the best."

Su Zhan burst into a hearty laugh.

Outside the house, Qin Ya and Lin Xinyan had returned. The reason they went for a stroll was to prevent Zong Yanxi from hearing their discussion.

Other than Zhuang Jiawen's upcoming wedding, Zong Yanxi's matter was the only other topic at hand. They were worried that she might still feel sensitive over it.

When both of them saw Zong Yanxi approach, they stopped their conversation. "Breakfast is ready, please come back in."

"Alright," Qin Ya replied with a smile. She didn't ask about last night, let alone other personal details of her life.

It was as if nothing happened between Zong Yanxi and Jiang Mohan at all.

Zong Yanxi threaded her hand around Lin Xinyan's arm. There was a tinge of guilt in her tone. "Mom didn't sleep well last night."

In truth, she didn't sleep a wink.

Lin Xinyan held her daughter's hand and didn't say a word. None were needed at all.

When they entered the house, breakfast was already served. After taking their seats, everyone knowingly avoided talking about Zong Yanxi and Jiang Mohan.

"Did Dad go out first thing in the morning?" Zhuang Jiawen placed a glass of milk in front of Lin Xinyan.

Lin Xinyan replied. "He went out to look for someone."

“Who?” Zhuang Jiawen asked.

“Tawan.”

Zong Jinghao knew that it was Tawan who took care of Zong Yanxi in Thailand. Given that both of them were already close and Tawan was visiting the country, he invited Tawan out for breakfast first thing in the morning.

They were due to meet at the hotel restaurant.

“I want to thank you for the care you have shown my daughter.”

Both of them were sitting by the window inside. The aura Tawan emitted was similar to that of Zong Jinghao’s during his younger days. Sitting opposite him, Tawan’s presence was in no way diminished by Zong Jinghao’s.

“I should be the one to thank you.” Tawan paused for a moment before he continued, “If not for your help last time, I wouldn’t have survived unscathed.”

The Thitipoom family had not only gathered immense wealth but also owned many businesses. Despite being focused on politics and doing well in his career, he was still prone to the occasional mistake.

However, it wasn’t a mistake that cost him the last time. Instead, it was sabotaged by a political adversary. Only with Zong Jinghao’s help did he manage to salvage his businesses and emerge unscathed.

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As for the purpose of his trip, Tawan was upfront about it. He told Zong Jinghao what happened in Thailand before they came. "I believe he will escape very soon."

He was worried that Jiang Mohan would come looking for Zong Yanxi again.

Although Zong Jinghao wasn't there, he seemed to be informed of everything that had happened.

Tawan was direct. "I hope you can do something about it."

So that Jiang Mohan would be deterred.

Zong Jinghao was deep in thought as if he was thinking of what Tawan had just told him. However, he was reluctant to discuss his daughter's personal matters with Tawan. Even though Tawan was in the loop, Zong Jinghao was still unwilling to talk about it.

Tawan realized that he may have said something wrong. After all, it was a private family matter that related to Zong Jinghao's own daughter. Therefore, it was understandable that he wasn't keen on discussing it with an outsider.

He apologized immediately. "I'm sorry. I..."

Zong Jinghao raised his hands and motioned him to stop.

Realizing that he didn't want to continue with the topic, Tawan talked about his company matters instead. In truth, he didn't like managing a business but he was the only heir in the family. Hence, he had to shoulder all the responsibilities alone.

As he had gone to a military school for his undergraduate studies, he wasn't familiar with managing a conglomerate. Prior to this, he had appointed a professional executive to run the family businesses for him. But after what happened the last time and how that person was involved, the arrangement no longer worked and he had no one else to help him.

As he knew all about Zong Jinghao's background, Tawan wanted to seek his opinion or perhaps have someone recommended to him.

To him, the family business was very much part of the family. Therefore, he was responsible for protecting and preserving the legacy left behind by his forefathers.

"I heard the joint venture you made with Mr. Guan in D Nation was very successful. You are indeed surrounded by talented men," Tawan remarked.

Guan Jing was an elderly man who was Zong Jinghao's trusted subordinate. Or else, Zong Jinghao wouldn't have delegated everything to him.

As time went by, Guan Jing became more and more adept at running the company and did a marvelous job.

Although Zong Jinghao had mostly stepped back from the daily operations, he still kept himself up to date with all the major projects.

The last project was indeed executed brilliantly with both sides reaping handsome returns.

Tawan was hoping that he could learn how to manage a business from Zong Jinghao. Hence, he shared the problems he encountered and sought Zong Jinghao's advice on how to resolve them. Time flew by as they talked.

Meanwhile, Zhuang Jiawen headed to the office while Shen Xinyao and Zong Yanxi went to the mall. They were shopping for things that the bride needed for the wedding. Since Zong Yanxi was there, Shen Xinyao invited her along as a form of distraction.

As Shen Xinyao was going to become her sister-in-law soon, Zong Yanxi pampered her a lot.

Behind them was a driver who doubled up as a trained bodyguard.

He could help them carry their bags and also protect them too.

"Aren't you supposed to buy the things you need for your wedding? Why are you only buying things for Baby?"

After going through many shops, all Shen Xinyao bought were gifts for Zhuang Jiawen.

"I find that they suit him," Shen Xinyao laughed.

Zong Yanxi laughed together as she felt happy for her brother.

It was obvious that Zhuang Jiawen was everything to Shen Xinyao.

"I'm going to the ladies. You should continue browsing and I'll look for you when I'm done," Zong Yanxi said.

Shen Xinyao agreed.

After using the ladies, Zong Yanxi sat down on a bench to rest as her aching legs.

She massaged them to ease the discomfort.

When she was about to look for Shen Xinyao, a dark figure loomed over her. Looking up, she saw Jiang Mohan standing right in front.

She stepped back in horror.

Her sudden reaction felt like an insult to him.

Once upon a time, she just couldn't get enough of him. But now, she was simply repulsed by the sight of him.

"Let's talk," he told her calmly.

"What's there to talk about? I have made it clear that we're no longer related to each other in any way. I'm sure you're aware that I have a boyfriend now. He's Tawan; you met him before, haven't you?" Zong Yanxi tried her best to suppress her emotions. "Jiang Mohan, I have known you to be proud and aloof. Since when have you become so pathetic to stalk me like that?"

Jiang Mohan didn't mind her insult. In fact, he maintained his humble tone. "I just want to have a proper talk with you."

"Fine. Speak then." Zong Yanxi didn't want to ever see him again. Hence, she compromised, "Once we're done talking, can you disappear from my life?"

Another reason she agreed was that she didn't want him to show his face in front of her parents. If they saw him, they would be reminded of the past.

She didn't want the people close to her to worry.

If Zhuang Jiawen knows that Jiang Mohan is in C City, he will definitely have beaten him to pulp.

Jiang Mohan gradually balled his hands into a fist. "Fine, but let me choose the venue."

Zong Yanxi sneered, "I didn't expect you to end up like that."

"Tonight at eight. Room 806 at Double Tree Hotel. I'll be waiting." He left the moment he spoke.

Zong Yanxi froze as she watched the silhouette that she had once chased after. She had lost the passion she felt from those days and cold indifference was all that was left.

"Yanxi." Shen Xinyao ran over.

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“Yanxi, who was that?” While she was browsing some bedroom accessories for her wedding, she saw Zong Yanxi talking to someone from afar. However, her view was blocked by someone else so she couldn’t get a good look. By the time she rushed over, the person was gone.

“It’s nothing. Let’s continue shopping. What do you think I should give you for your wedding?” Zong Yanxi pulled her along as they walked.

Unconvinced, Shen Xinyao turned to take another look. She was sure that she saw someone.

But where is he? Did I make a mistake?

Filled with suspicion, Shen Xinyao pondered about it.

“Come, let’s check out that shop.” Zong Yanxi dragged her into a ladies’ clothing store and talked to her on purpose. “Why don’t I buy you some clothes?”

Shen Xinyao asked with a grin. “As a wedding gift?”

“Of course not.” Zong Yanxi looked at her. “Since you’re getting married to Baby, I must give you the best and most valuable thing that I have.”

Shen Xinyao joked, “Aunt Qin Ya, Mom, and now you will all give me precious gifts. Won’t I be a rich woman then?”

“Aren’t you already a rich woman? Everything Baby has belongs to you too.”

“Actually, you’re right.”

As both of them bantered, Shen Xinyao seemed to have forgotten that she saw someone just now.

After shopping, they went to see a movie before heading home.

However, Zong Yanxi didn't return with Shen Xinyao as she told her that she was meeting a friend. The reason they watched a movie was so that she could stay out till the evening. After that, she would make an excuse to not head home together.

Shen Xinyao didn't suspect anything as the driver sent her home.

Since it wasn't eight yet, she strolled along the lively streets of C City alone. As night fell, the streets became more crowded.

There were many street vendors selling trinkets, attracting children who would then pester their parents to buy. Some were playing with fireworks, filling the place with smoke.

There was a bridge in front, where a young man was basking with his guitar. He was bespectacled and kept his hair long. With a husky voice, he sang a love song and poured all his emotions into it.

"I'll be your dream, I'll be your wish, I'll be your fantasy.

I'll be your hope, I'll be your love, be everything that you need."

"I wanna stand with you on a mountain, I wanna bathe with you in the sea, I wanna lay like this forever, until the sky falls down on me."

Subconsciously, Zong Yanxi stopped in her tracks and was listening intently to every word of the song. They were both beautiful and sad, causing her to tear. After wiping off her tears, she took out a hundred from her purse and prepared to give it to the young man. However, someone beat her to it. Looking up, her eyes met with a deep obsidian gaze. At that very moment, their eyes locked.

Time stood still. Both of them didn't react for a long while as if their soul had left them. Finally, Zong Yanxi was the first to regain her senses. She gave the young man the money and stood up.

Jiang Mohan looked at her. "Shall we walk?"

Zong Yanxi raised her hand to check her watch. She replied with a distant tone, "It's not eight yet."

"I'll buy you dinner." Jiang Mohan suggested calmly. "You still need to eat."

"I've eaten." Zong Yanxi's gaze was cold and distant.

Jiang Mohan didn't utter another word. Instead, he had to catch up with her when she walked away.

"Stop following me," she turned around and warned him.

Jiang Mohan replied calmly, "I'm heading the same way."

Zong Yanxi changed directions. "Don't tell me you're still going the same way..."

Before she finished, Jiang Mohan pulled her into his embrace and hugged her tightly. "I'm sorry."

Zong Yanxi pounded her fists on him hysterically. "I don't need your apology. What you owe me is your life!"

Jiang Mohan stayed still as he allowed her to vent her frustrations. After a long while, she began to tire out. "Let me go."

She sneered, "By doing this, you're just making me hate you more. Do you not dare accept the responsibility for your actions?"

"If we could do it all over again, I wish I would be the first one to meet you and to fall in love with you," Jiang Mohan declared softly.

The biggest mistake in his life was that he didn't understand himself well enough.

He understood the pain that she had suffered because he had now experienced the same.

Acknowledging his mistake, he knew he had no excuse for what he did.

Furthermore, he wasn't looking for pity or sympathy. All he wanted was to salvage their relationship.

To spend the rest of his life appreciating and treasuring the one he loved.

"You are my only family."

Not wanting to hear any of it, she averted her gaze and looked beyond the river. As the gentle breeze brushed through her hair, she could hear her heart throbbing. However, it wasn't for Jiang Mohan's sake, but for the passion she once had instead.

As the saying goes, experience is the best teacher in life.

She was more conscious of her feelings than she ever had been.

She checked the time on her watch. "It's eight. Go ahead and say what you want to."

Her tone was absolutely hostile.

Jiang Mohan maintained his composure and suggested, "Have dinner with me."

"I only promised you to talk," Zong Yanxi insisted.

"This is part of the talk too."