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Chapter 381 Be My Woman For A Month

"As long as I don't admit to it, he won't get a confirmation even if he has doubts about it."

"But... what if he's already confirmed it even without your admission?"

Liu Yan asked

worriedly.

Struck by suspicion, Wu Nian thought of a question. "Gu Mingchen came looking for Shen

Yiyan today. Could it be that he's trying to find out if I'm Bai Rong?"

"Gu Mingchen did ask that, but Shen Yiyan denied it," Liu Yan explained.

Wu Nian lowered her gaze.

I knew it! The way Gu Mingchen behaved and spoke yesterday was totally out of the

ordinary. Now that I think about it, he's probably suspecting that I'm Bai Rong. He has his

suspensions, that's why he's keeping a distance from me.

Liu Yan watched as Wu Nian fell silent, but she soon lost her patience and went on a rant,

"So what if he does know? You don't like him anymore and that's not likely to change.

Besides, the two of you are divorced, so what are you afraid of? Just let him know. After all,

he's treated you badly in the past."

Wu Nian said nothing as she got lost in her own thoughts.

The minutes ticked by. half an hour later, Wu Nian finished her transfusion. "Come on, let's

go shopping for presents."

"What should we buy for her? We can't get jewelry since she's in the business. We can't get

her clothes either since we don't even know her size. I'm guessing she comes from a rich

family, so she must have them tailor-made. Lipsticks and other cosmetic products won't do.

They'll come off as shabby. Gosh, what else does she like besides men?

She seems to have

everything!" Liu Yan sighed.

“Let’s get her an LV bag. The latest design. There’s always room for one more bag in every

woman’s closet!” Wu Nian suggested.

“Bingo! Good thinking! Let’s go get one right now. Shopping for bags is a remedy for many

illnesses, after all. Haha!” With that, Liu Yan locked arms with Wu Nian, and off they went to

the most high-end shopping plaza in Xenhall.

They were heading to the elevator on the first floor when they just so happened to come

across Su Xuyan buying perfume.

Liu Yan grabbed Wu Nian and hurried past him.

However, Su Xuyan spotted Wu Nian out of the corner of his eye. He called out to her, “Nian,

how nice to see you here, of all places. I was just thinking of getting a bottle of perfume for

you as a token for saving me the other day. Come and take a look, will you? Tell me which

one you like.”

“Nian never uses perfume. So thanks, but no thanks. Besides, she didn’t save you. She

saved her boyfriend. You just happened to be there,” Liu Yan gave a blunt statement and led

Wu Nian into the elevator.

As for Wu Nian, she refused to meet Su Xuyan’s gaze. She simply looked straight ahead.

A smirk curled up the corners of Su Xuyan’s mouth. Tucking his hands in his pockets, he

followed them.

Liu Yan saw Su Xuyan following them and stepped in front of him. “I’ll say, you’re one heck

of a rascal, aren’t you? Why are you following us? You did the same thing to Bai. She said

she didn’t like you, but you were so persistent. You know, if you keep pestering others,

people are just going to get disgusted by your actions.”

A cold glint flashed in Su Xuyan’s eyes. “You should be lucky that you’re Shen Yiyang’s

woman. Otherwise, with that personality of yours, you would have died many times over.”

“Are you saying that you would have killed me many times over? Su Xuyan, you’re nothing but a ruthless killer,” Liu Yan said sternly.
“If I were a ruthless killer, you wouldn’t have lived to talk about it right now.”

“Seeing that you’d even kill the woman you like, I ought to thank you for sparing me, then.”

With that, Liu Yan rolled her eyes at him before dragging Wu Nian away.
“If Bai Rong hadn’t left me, I wouldn’t have let her die,” Su Xuyan said as he watched Wu Nian leave.

Liu Yan did not turn around. Instead, she quickened her steps. “Su Xuyan’s so annoying. It was wise of you to divorce him back then. I think he’s dated more than a dozen girlfriends within the year. He’s nothing but a player and a piece of trash!”
“Just don’t argue with him from now on. He’s a menace. If you ignore him, he’ll give up the pursuit,” Wu Nian reminded her.

“I have a bad temper. I can’t help it.”

They entered the LV specialty store.

“Hey boss, are there any new products this month?” Liu Yan asked.

“Yes, we do. Unfortunately, it’s a limited edition. Someone ordered it last month,” the clerk apologized. “Would you like to take a look at other designs? Some are quite popular too.”

“When you say limited edition, do you mean there’s only one?” Liu Yan asked in disappointment.

“Each specialty store only gets one, I’m afraid. Sorry about that. If you want, you can try your luck at other specialty stores.”

Liu Yan glanced at Wu Nian. “Even if other cities have it, the birthday party’s tomorrow. I don’t know if we can make it in time.”

“Do you have that customer’s contact number?” Wu Nian asked the shop assistant.

“Well...” Just then, the assistant saw Su Xuyan entering the shop. She welcomed him with a broad smile. “Mr. Su, have you come to collect your bag?” Su Xuyan nodded.

The shop assistant then respectfully handed the pre-packaged limited edition bag to him. Su Xuyan accepted the bag, turned to Wu Nian, and passed the package to her. “You want it, don’t you? Here you go.” Liu Yan slapped his hand away. “Who the hell would want your stuff? Get lost.” Su Xuyan frowned, displeasure evident in his gaze as he stared at Liu Yan. Wu Nian’s heart sank when she noticed Su Xuyan’s sharp gaze landing on her friend. She was all too familiar with that look. Su Xuyan was someone who would try every trick in the book, and he had many methods to go about his deeds. Once initiated, he could let his victims walk into his traps unknowingly. They would not even know what hit them. “Yan...” Wu Nian called out to Liu Yan to get her to stop. The woman glanced back at Wu Nian. Wu Nian took the bag from Su Xuyan and expressed her gratitude in a polite, albeit distant, manner. “Thank you so much, Mr. Su. It just so happened that I need this bag.” “Is it a gift for Ai Wei’er?” Su Xuyan asked knowingly. Wu Nian’s lips twitched. “So, you don’t intend to compete?” Su Xuyan shrugged. “A bag won’t change anything, but I’m confident that Mo Xue will accept my partnership. Do you believe me?” Wu Nian studied his expression. He seemed very sure of himself. “If Mr. Su managed to snag the partnership, I shall admit my defeat.” “Well, if you promise to be my woman for one month, I’m willing to pass the partnership

opportunity to you, and ensure your success,” Su Xuyan proposed deviously.

“Su Xuyan, how shameless of you! How could you make such a request! No matter, we don’t need your generosity. We can secure the partnership ourselves,” Liu Yan countered furiously.

“Rest assured, I promise you won’t get it,” Su Xuyan gave his arrogant remark, his gaze never left Wu Nian. “My business card is in the bag. You have twenty-four hours to think about it.”

“I will,” Wu Nian said casually.

“Think about what? Don’t take that bag!” Liu Yan snatched the bag from Wu Nian and threw it onto the ground.

Su Xuyan turned to leave.

Wu Nian picked the bag up on the floor.

“Nian, are you crazy? You want to offer yourself to a demon like him?”

Liu Yan could not understand it.

Wu Nian gave her the side-eye. “If Bai Rong were in this situation, how do you think she would answer him?”

“She would tell him to get out of her sight!” Liu Yan exclaimed without hesitation.

Wu Nian’s lips quirked up. “Exactly.”

Comprehension dawned on Liu Yan. “You just want to show that you’re different from Bai Rong, when in fact you’ll definitely reject him. Is that right?”

“I can’t possibly jump into the fire pit again, knowing what’s in there.

However, Su Xuyan

must be quite confident if he could boast about it. Now that Stephen is on our side, I wonder

what kind of plan he has conjured.” Wu Nian narrowed her eyes, deep in thought.

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Chapter 382 Working Hard During The Day

“Whatever he has up his sleeves, I would rather give up this partnership than have you

involved with him. Even if it doesn't work out, it doesn't mean that I can't travel with Bao," Liu Yan said with certainty.

"Let's just take one step at a time."

They went back after dinner.

Wu Nian went back to her room for some shut-eye, and Liu Yan was about to do the same.

Shen Yiyang had been a pain the night before. She lost sleep because of him.

As soon as she returned to her room, the butler blocked her way.

"Madam, Mr. Shen would like you to come to the lake."

"What? Shen Yiyang hasn't left? I thought he's gone back to A City?" Liu Yan said what was on her mind.

The butler grinned. "The master arranges his own schedule. We don't interfere."

Liu Yan shrugged. She thought about Su Xuyuan's speech earlier and decided to tell Shen

Yiyang about it.

She went to the lake to meet Shen Yiyang and saw that Gu Mingchen was there, too.

It seems Gu Mingchen hasn't left yet. Or did he come back again?

The two men seemed to be having a good time fishing by the lake, without a care in the

world, while here she was sulking over Su Xuyuan.

Just thinking about it made her flare up in anger.

"Shen Yiyang, you should know that kings who do not hold their morning court usually set

their nations up for ruin far quicker than others. You've been here for two days. Don't you

have work to do?" Liu Yan questioned him bluntly.

Shen Yiyang was not angry at her critique. Instead, he chuckled. "Since you brought that up,

you should know that I have annual leave at my disposal."

"You seem to have quite a lot of it, then. You've taken twenty days off this year, haven't you?"

Liu Yan walked toward him.

“Well, weekends are off by default, and business trips are a necessity. In total, I’ve only taken three days off my annual leave so far,” Shen Yiyan replied her in all seriousness.

Liu Yan noticed there were more than a dozen fish in his bucket. She commented in disgust, “If you have the time to fish, why don’t you use it to think about what you can do to secure a partnership with Mo Xue?”

“It’s my strategy to fish with my competitors and leave the plotting to you,” said Shen Yiyan with a smile.

Liu Yan gave Shen Yiyan’s chair a good kick. “You have more than one competitor, you know? Nian and I bumped into Su Xuyan at the mall today. He was confident he could get Mo Xue to work with him. He even proposed for Nian to be his woman.” Gu Mingchen arched his eyebrows and pressed his lips tightly at that. “Oh, he’s confident, isn’t he?” Shen Yiyan chewed on that information before turning to Gu Mingchen, “What do you think?”

“There won’t be any problems,” Gu Mingchen said solemnly, admiring the lake from a distance.

Liu Yan felt that they had become partners somehow. She was beginning to feel uneasy.

“Hey, Gu Mingchen. Why are you helping Shen Yiyan?”

Gu Mingchen glanced in her direction, his eyes were as dark as ink.

“There are some things in life where the less you know, the better.”

Liu Yan felt that those words were spoken with resentment toward her. She felt her dignity had been trampled on. Anger boiled within her, but she did not know how to let it out.

“So, Shen Yiyan, why are you looking for me?” Liu Yan said, displeased.

“Care to join us?” Shen Yiyan handed a fishing rod to Liu Yan.

Liu Yan forced him to get up from his chair. “Not interested, but I have something to tell

you.”

Shen Yiyang rose, his good temper still intact. Then, Liu Yan dragged him a hundred meters away.

Liu Yan eyed Gu Mingchen and, when she supposed he was not within hearing distance anymore, proceeded to interrogate Shen Yiyang, “Why is he still here?” “We were talking about military affairs.”

Liu Yan pointed at him, “Don’t lie to me. Do you take me for a fool? You guys are obviously not talking about the military. You’re fishing! You didn’t tell him that Wu Nian is Bai Rong, did you?”

Shen Yiyang smirked and held her finger, “We’ve gone over them. I invited him to stay and fish with me.”

Liu Yan withdrew her hand. “Why do you bother keeping him around?” Shen Yiyang pinched her nose. “To help you complete your mission, what else? Haven’t you always wanted to travel?”

Liu Yan scrutinized his face.

Shen Yiyang, Gu Mingchen, Su Xuyang, and Bai Rong were all smart and sensible people, which led Liu Yan to believe that she was the fool among them. They might talk the talk, but they might not necessarily walk the walk. They could start with Plan A, which could then become Plan B, and somehow morphed into Plan C.

“Whatever, just don’t pick on Wu Nian,” Liu Yan requested.

Shen Yiyang grinned. He put his arms around her waist. “Come home with me tomorrow morning,” he said.

“What? Tomorrow morning? Mo Xue’s throwing a birthday party for her daughter that night.

Stephen will be there and he’s going to introduce them to me. It’s not right if I go back

tomorrow morning,” Liu Yan explained, puzzled by his request.

“Is he introducing them to you or to Wu Nian?” Shen Yiyan asked as though he already knew the answer.

A sense of awkwardness loomed over her. She cleared her throat and spoke despite the discomfort. “Introducing them to Nian means introducing them to me too.”

“Wu Nian can handle herself at the party tomorrow. You’ll only cause trouble if you go.”

Liu Yan pushed away his hands on her waist. She sneered, “Hey, Shen Yiyan! I bet that in your eyes, I’m just an idiot who knows nothing, right?”

“Hmm...” Shen Yiyan gave it some serious thought and then said, “Actually, you just need to know how to do one thing.”

“What?” Liu Yan retorted, confused by his words.

“Have my baby.”

“Hah!” Liu Yan scoffed, giving him an icy glare. “Any woman can do that.”

“But only you can be my son’s mother,” Shen Yiyan stated with certainty.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Liu Yan stared at Shen Yiyan. You’re acting awfully strange today. Only I can be your son’s mother? What, your wife can’t do that?

“Come on, come home with me. I don’t like the idea of you staying in Xyperia. Be good, okay?” Shen Yiyan coaxed her as he smiled, his eyes burning into hers. Liu Yan shuddered. “What if I don’t want to? After we discuss the partnership in the next few days, I want to go traveling.”

Shen Yiyan’s face fell upon hearing that. His gaze turned grim. “Liu Yan, do you know why you get to stay by my side all this time?”

He said that as though being able to stay by his side was an honor few could have.

“Thank you, but I couldn’t care less,” Liu Yan replied roughly.

Shen Yiyang pursed his lips. His eyes darkened even more as his tone turned unpleasant. He barked a command, "You're coming back with me tomorrow whether you like it or not!" Liu Yan turned around to leave, but he forcibly picked her up and carried her into the room. Two hours later, Wu Nian woke up and went looking for Liu Yan. She was stopped by the butler. With a broad smile on his face, as though hiding a secret, the butler said to her, "Mr. Shen and Madam are busy inside." Wu Nian did not want to know what they were doing in there. Gu Mingchen happened to walk in when she turned around. Wu Nian lowered her head on sight. She greeted him with respect while still keeping her distance, "Mr. Gu." Gu Mingchen took Wu Nian by the arm. He glanced at the butler and said in a stern voice, "They've been at it for almost two hours. They should be done. Please tell them that their presence is needed." "Uh... Yes, sir." The butler nodded and headed to Liu Yan's room. Wu Nian was appalled by the interaction. She swore to remember that butler and his differential treatment. She stood beside Gu Mingchen unwittingly. "You've gotten much thinner," he said. "I've been rather plump before this. I have a mind to lose weight," Wu Nian replied.

"It doesn't matter what size you are, as long as you're healthy. Shen Yiyang and I caught quite a lot of fish by the lake just now. We shall have a feast tonight. I recall from the last time we met that you'd make a good cook. I really do miss your cooking," Gu Mingchen said casually.

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Chapter 383 Wonderfully Sweet And Simple

Wu Nian enjoyed talking to people like Gu Mingchen. Their conversation was relaxed, at ease, and free of conflict, providing a glimpse into a wonderfully sweet and simple life.

Occasionally, he would speak, and she could feel the sweet sensation flowing in her veins just by listening to his voice.

“Oh, yes, I do cook. What about fish tofu soup? The wild crucian carp from the lake would be perfect for that dish,” Wu Nian replied with a smile.

Gu Mingchen glanced at her and smiled, too.

He rarely smiled, and when he did he looked quite dashing.

“Other than crucian carps, we also caught a silver carp and a herring. Let’s see what you can do with them.” Gu Mingchen posed a challenge.

Just then, Shen Yiyan walked out of the room, well-dressed as always, He smiled at them as

he joined in the conversation, “It seems I’m in luck today. Chief Gu’s an expert at fishing,

while I’ve only caught a dozen small crucian carps. Ah, the shame!”

“You deserve it, idiot!” Liu Yan came out of the room with her cheeks flushed, unsure if it was due to anger or shyness.

She approached Wu Nian and grabbed her by the arm. “Nian, you’ll be cooking tonight, and I shall assist you.”

Shen Yiyan pursed his lips, holding back a chuckle.

Liu Yan glared at him. And what the heck are you laughing at?

After that, she led Wu Nian to the kitchen and shut the door behind them. She reported her

findings to Wu Nian. “Nian, when you weren’t here just now, I told them about Su Xuyan. Gu

Mingchen said there would be no surprises. I’m guessing he has an idea on what’s going to happen, but I can’t figure out how he intends to make it work.”

“Gu Mingchen can be quite reliable when it comes to getting things done. Let’s just wait and see. Most of the time, the best-laid plans tend to go awry.”

Knock, knock, knock. Someone was knocking on the door.
Wu Nian went to open it.
The butler stood grinning at the door, carrying two buckets of fish.
Wu Nian took the buckets from him, and Liu Yan closed the door after he left. The latter
looked into the containers and was disgusted by the sight. “No compare, no despair. If you
ask me, Shen Yiyan’s really lame. He caught so many fish but none are as useful as Gu
Mingchen’s only catch.”
“Everyone’s a master in their own field. Besides, fishing requires luck, more or less,” Wu Nian
said, as she began cleaning the fish.
Liu Yan looked toward the door. When she was sure no one would interrupt them, she
lowered her voice and spoke to Wu Nian, “Shen Yiyan wants me to go back with him
tomorrow. You’ll have to negotiate on my behalf. The condition I put forward is that if the
partnership falls through, I want to take one week off next month to go traveling with Bao.
He’s agreed to it.”
“That’s great. That way, even if it comes to naught, you can still go traveling.” Wu Nian
expressed her happiness for Liu Yan.
“Yeah, I think so too. That leaves us with Aaron when it comes to travel plans. By the way,
why didn’t he contact you today?”
“His plane took off at eight o’clock this morning. He should be in Ustrana by now.” Wu Nian
took out her phone to check. There were no calls from Aaron yet.

Liu Yan snatched the phone from her. “If he doesn’t call, then you do it. Gosh, you shouldn’t
be so passive.”
As she said that, Liu Yan dialed the man’s number.
Wu Nian failed to stop her in time.
The call went through.
Liu Yan placed the phone by Wu Nian’s ear.

“Hey.” Wu Nian spoke first.

“Hehe, I feel much better after getting your call. What are you doing now?” Aaron gave a gentle reply.

“I’m making dinner. You must be tired from your journey. You should get some rest,” Wu

Nian said, intent on ending the phone call.

“Oh my, I’m getting hungry just hearing that. Haha. I wish to get a taste of your cooking.”

“You’ll get your chance,” Wu Nian said. Not knowing what to say next, she fell silent.

But Aaron was a brilliant conversationalist. “That’s settled, then. If I ever get to visit A City,

you’ll prepare dinner for me. Don’t go back on your word now.”

“Sure.”

Wu Nian fell silent again.

The sudden silence was quite eerie. Wu Nian found herself in an awkward position, not

knowing whether she should hang up or not.

Aaron paused for five seconds as well before he spoke. “Nian, I’m facing a little problem

here, but there’s nothing to worry about. I’ll get it fixed soon. It’s just...

you’ll have to wait a

little longer.”

Wu Nian understood. After all, an arranged marriage was no trivial matter. It could change

the fate of two families.

“That’s okay. Even if you change your mind, I’m fine with that. Don’t force yourself to take up

too much burden and stress. Whenever you feel conflicted and can’t find the way out, just

think of your expectations, both the good and the bad. Write them all down. Add one point

for every positive situation you can think of and deduct one point for every negative one.

You’ll get a sensible answer eventually,” Wu Nian suggested.

Over the phone, Aaron chuckled. “To be honest, it doesn’t matter to me how many negative

points I end up with. Because I want to be with you, and I'll work hard toward that goal. I'm pretty much set for life. I'm just worried that if you wait too long, you won't give me a chance. "

Wu Nian lowered her gaze. Her long eyelashes hid the spark in her eyes. For a while, she went silent, not responding to Aaron.

Aaron chuckled lightly. "I guess God is really fair and just. I've always felt that I didn't score well in the health department, but I seem to handle relationships with ease. And now, it

seems karma has come for me. It's okay though. You can hang up."

Feeling bittersweet, Wu Nian responded, "Can we start as friends?"

Aaron grinned. "I am willing to be your knight."

"Well... I have to get cooking now. So I'll talk to you later."

"Okay."

Wu Nian looked at Liu Yan, who took the cue and ended the call. Then, with a smile, she

gave her comment. "I think Aaron's a really nice guy. He's quite a gentleman and, from what I gather, I think he's crazy about you."

"He's a good friend. I'm just worried he'll get too serious about this, and I can't return his

feelings if that happens. But, all in all, I think he's just new to this. He doesn't seem like an irrational person," Wu Nian deduced.

Liu Yan wanted to speak, but whatever advice she thought of ultimately fell short.

She knew Wu Nian had her own ideas and would not listen to her.

That night, Wu Nian made fish tofu soup, boiled fish with pickled greens, steamed fish head,

stir-fried fish with green pepper, braised crucian carp, and steamed herring.

Gu Mingchen stayed for dinner. They talked about random subjects and avoided sensitive topics.

Liu Yan and Shen Yiyan had to return to the country the morning after, so they left after dinner.

Wu Nian saw Gu Mingchen out.

“Do you need me to fetch you to the party tomorrow?” Gu Mingchen asked.

“No, I can drive.” Wu Nian rejected his offer.

“Alright. Drive safe, then,” Gu Mingchen urged her.

“Of course. You take care, too.” Wu Nian nodded respectfully.

Gu Mingchen glanced deeply into her eyes.

After they completed their task, they would return home for real. Then, she should be

staying at his place in the long run. He looked forward to that. He could not wait to be by her

side again. But, for now, they would have to part.

“Did Yanny call you?” Gu Mingchen asked.

Wu Nian shook her head. Speaking of Yanny, she was beginning to miss him.

“Kids. Their enthusiasm doesn’t last long. Once you’re not by his side, he’ll forget about you

in a jiffy. These things take time. When you are better acquainted with him, maybe in two or

three years, he’ll be able to remember you,” Gu Mingchen said while giving her a knowing

look.

“Yes. Rest assured, Mr. Gu. I will take care of your children.”

“Hey, I don’t doubt your abilities. That’s why I’m taking you on the job.

Well, I’ll see you

tomorrow, then,” Gu Mingchen said solemnly, his gaze never left her.

All he really wanted was to see her every day.

“See you tomorrow,” Wu Nian said.

“See you tomorrow,” he repeated, as though seeing her tomorrow was of high priority.

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Chapter 384 I Am Not Dying Until You Do

Liu Yan left for the airport at eight. Shen Yiyan’s private jet had docked at the private airport.

Wu Nian went to see them off.

Liu Yan was reluctant to leave her. She gave her instructions again. "Remember, it doesn't matter if you can't strike a deal with her. Shen Yiyan has promised to give me a week off to travel. It's not much, but there's still enough time to run away. So don't force yourself. Come back soon."

Wu Nian grinned back at her. "I know. You have to be careful, too. I don't think Shen Yiyan's men have the guts to kill you, but there may be others out to get you."

Liu Yan shrugged. "Anyway, I'm leaving soon. Those people came because of Shen Yiyan. I'll be safe after I leave him."

"Best of luck!" Wu Nian wished her in a gentle voice.

Liu Yan turned to leave, walked a few steps, before looking back at Wu Nian.

Wu Nian was smarter and more sensible than her, and she was much better at putting pieces together. Liu Yan had little to worry about, but somehow, she just felt anxious about the whole thing.

Wu Nian waved at Liu Yan as the latter boarded the plane.

She watched Liu Yan's plane take off before she turned around and left the airport.

In the afternoon, she went to the beauty salon.

Ai Wei'er had invited upper-class socialites to her birthday party, whereas she was attending

the event mainly to discuss a collaboration with the woman. It would not do if she went in shabby clothes.

It took her a whole afternoon but she eventually got her hair done and put on exquisite

makeup. The princess dress she got for the party was a bright saffron color, the style of

which left her fair nape exposed to display the diamond necklace she bought that day.

She attended the party at six o'clock.

Wu Nian thought she was early, but it seemed a crowd of fifty had already arrived.
She instinctively searched for Gu Mingchen and Stephen.
However, she could not locate either of them. Mo Xue was nowhere to be seen as well.
She approached Ai Wei'er and presented the LV bag to her. "Happy birthday!"
But Ai Wei'er was arrogant as always, and she was evidently disinterested in her. She
passed the bag to the maid next to her and greeted Wu Nian lazily, "Help yourself."
Wu Nian nodded. She fetched a glass of wine and went to stand in a corner. Men came to
strike up a conversation with her but she rejected them all.
More and more people entered the banquet hall. Wu Nian had yet to spot either Gu
Mingchen or Stephen. Thus, she decided to wait outside.
Just then, an elegantly dressed lady walked out from the private room next to theirs. She
was talking excitedly on the phone, "Xuyan, where are you? Okay... I'm coming now."
Xuyan? Does she mean Su Xuyan?

Wu Nian recalled how confident Su Xuyan had been the other day.
Strung by curiosity, she
trailed behind the lady.
She saw the lady enter the parking lot and into a black Maybach.
Suspicious, Wu Nian bent over and approached the car quietly.
"Oh... Xuyan, be gentle."
Wu Nian blushed when she heard the voice. She glanced at the Maybach, which was rocking
up and down.
Still bending over, she hung her head and was about to leave when a pair of bright, leather
shoes entered her line of vision.
She lifted her head, still blushing, and found herself face to face with Gu Mingchen.
"What are you doing here?" he asked her quizzically.
"Um..." Wu Nian could not find the words. "See for yourself."

“See what?” Gu Mingchen responded in confusion.
Wu Nian pushed him away and walked into the hotel.
Gu Mingchen looked toward the parking lot, took note of the horribly shaking car, and understood at once. His Adam’s apple bopped up and down provocatively before he turned around and entered the hotel.
Wu Nian was still waiting for the elevator when she noticed Gu Mingchen approaching.
Images of the Maybach still lingered in her mind, making her feel self-conscious.
“Did you enjoy the view?” Gu Mingchen asked, gazing at her.
“I saw a lady coming out from the private room next door. She was on the phone, and she mentioned Xuyan, so I thought it’s him. I followed her to find out what he’s plotting, but... well,” Wu Nian explained.

“That Maybach belongs to Su Xuyan. There’s no doubt about it. As for the lady you spoke of... she should be Mo Xue,” Gu Mingchen answered solemnly.
For a moment, Wu Nian was dumbstruck.
She knew that Su Xuyan was quite a player, having multiple girlfriends, but his targets were usually young and beautiful women. Not that Mo Xue was not pretty, but she should be well over fifty years old. Su Xuyan had quite incredulous tastes and methods, to say the least.
“So, I guess there’s no way we can get the partnership now, huh?” Wu Nian surmised.
Gu Mingchen smirked. “Trust me. When I say there won’t be any problems, I mean it. Don’t you believe me?”
“Well...” He said that to Shen Yiyang and Liu Yan, didn’t he? How’s he so sure that I know?
Ding! The elevator door opened.
Gu Mingchen allowed Wu Nian to enter first. “Once Stephen arrives, just pretend that you

don't know what's going on between Mo Xue and Su Xuyan. Talk to them as though nothing happened. I'll assist you."

"Alright," Wu Nian replied, for no reason other than placing her trust in Gu Mingchen. When he said he could do it, he certainly could.

They entered the banquet hall together. When Ai Wei'er saw Gu Mingchen making his appearance, a change came over her. No longer disinterested, she rushed over to him almost fanatically and extended her hand. "Where's my present? Today's my birthday, you know. I've been waiting so long for your gift."

Gu Mingchen took out a small jewelry box from his pocket and placed it in Ai Wei'er's hand.

Ai Wei'er opened the box excitedly. Inside was a beautiful hairpin with her alias carved on it, made of platinum and embedded with diamonds.

"It's gorgeous. This is the best gift I've received today. Thank you so much, Chen. Can you put it on for me?" Ai Wei'er handed the hairpin to Gu Mingchen.

Gu Mingchen took the hairpin and put it on for her.

Ai Wei'er smiled like a flower in full blossom and gave him a quick kiss on the cheek.

Wu Nian bit her lip. She turned around, feeling strange all of a sudden as her eyes began to water.

Once again, she stepped out of the banquet hall. She got to the corridor entrance, leaned against the wall with her head hung low, and stared at the ground in silence.

Letting go of someone and giving them your blessing were two of the most difficult things to do in life.

She had made a clear decision to forget about him and wish him happiness, but seeing him being intimate with another girl still rubbed her the wrong way.

Humans are indeed strange creatures that often contradict themselves.

It took Wu Nian ten minutes to calm down, to convince herself, and to adjust her mood.

When she got back to the banquet hall, she found Stephen.

He was having a chat with Gu Mingchen and seemed to be in a good mood.

Wu Nian walked up to him, smiling. "Good evening, Stephen."

Stephen gave her a once-over and liked what he saw. He showered her with praises. "Wow, you seem to have lost some weight in just a few days. You have become prettier."

"Thanks," Wu Nian returned in kind.

"I haven't seen Mo Xue. But when I do, I'll introduce her to you,"

Stephen said with a smile.

He turned his attention back to Gu Mingchen, a twinkle glinting in his eyes.

They waited for another twenty minutes before Wu Nian spotted the lady, the one who had a

tryst with Su Xuyan, entering the scene.

When Wu Nian saw her leaving a while ago, she had her hair tied up in a bun. Currently, she had her hair down.

"She's here," Stephen said as he walked toward Mo Xue.

"It's been a while, Xue'er." Stephen grinned at her.

Mo Xue chuckled softly. "It has, hasn't it? Why, I even thought you might be dead."

"Well, you aren't, so naturally I won't. At least, not until you die first."

Stephen snorted.

Wu Nian was not sure what to think about this.

Is this really the right way to go about when two long-lost lovers finally reunite?

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Chapter 385 The Impossibility Of Letting Go And Wishing Others Well

"You're overthinking it. See, I still have a whole head of black hair, but yours is starting to

gray. And you say you want to live longer than me? Hah, that's absurd!"

Mo Xue was not

being nice about it.

“Fine. We’ll agree that you’ll live a long life. Happy now? Anyways, I have a proposal for you.”

Stephen stirred them back to the main topic.

“What is it? Judging by your face, I don’t think it’s any sort of good news.” Mo Xue rolled her eyes at Stephen.

“Didn’t you say that when you get older, you want me to paint a portrait of you, and name it

‘Dream Come True’? Well, let me do it while I’m still living and breathing,” Stephen said.

Mo Xue was tempted. The sharp glare in her eyes softened. “Not today. It’s Ai Wei’er’s

birthday, after all. I have time tomorrow. We can talk about the specific time and place later.”

“Before we do that, I’d like to introduce a friend to you,” said Stephen.

Mo Xue looked toward Wu Nian, who was standing next to the man.

“Your lover?” she assumed.

“Nonsense, Xue’er. She’s currently Aaron’s girlfriend, from A city, and she wants to be your

business partner there,” Stephen explained upfront.

Mo Xue dropped her gaze and crossed her arms. “I’m afraid that I already have a partner in A City.”

“Do reconsider, please.” Stephen softened his tone.

Mo Xue knitted her brows. “Who is she to you? Why are you so willing to regard money as dirt and plead on her behalf?”

“Ollie and Lisa were the murderers who killed Kyle. And then she helped me locate Casey,

the murderer who killed Ollie and Lisa. She also saved my life at the most critical moment.

Xue’er, can you help me just this once?” Stephen said softly.

“She saved you? Then doesn’t that make her my enemy?” Mo Xue scoffed in disdain.

“If that’s what you think, then consider this my mistake. I shall take my leave, and I hope I

don't have to see you again in this lifetime." Stephen strode toward the door after dropping that statement.

Mixed emotions crossed Mo Xue's face at that. "Wait!" she called out. Stephen whirled around and gave her a side-eye.

"I.. I'll think about it," Mo Xue said in a solemn tone.

Stephen smiled. "It's your daughter's birthday, and your lover's here too.

I won't stay long to

build your resentment. When you have time tomorrow, give me a call."

Mo Xue watched Stephen go and her eyes darkened.

Wu Nian did not quite understand Mo Xue.

She spotted reluctance in Mo Xue's eyes, but the older woman clearly just had a sexual

encounter with Su Xuyan.

Perhaps, for her, sex and love can be managed separately, was what Wu Nian thought.

She had a classmate from the United States who once did a survey. If a man told his

girlfriend that he had five girlfriends in the past, how would she react?

The answers that turned up vary among the Chanaeans, the Americans, and the Jetroinians.

The American girlfriend did not get mad. She would even joke with the man, acting as

though she cared very little, if at all. The Chanaean girlfriend was furious.

She would

question him, doubt him, feel disappointed and unbearable, cry, and even get hysterical. The

Jetroinian girlfriend would commend him on the surface and then suffer in silence behind

his back.

Many developed countries were becoming less and less sensitive when it came to sex.

Similarly, more relationships tended to fail as feelings weakened, while marriage became

just another mode of interaction.

"Mo Xue! Who's Mo Xue?" a woman yelled.

Wu Nian snapped out of her trance and turned her attention to the woman.

The woman charged aggressively toward her target and gave Mo Xue a slap on the face.

Outraged, she barked at Mo Xue, "Spill it! You're the one who infected Su Xuyan, aren't you?

Because of you, I have AIDS now!"

Mo Xue cupped her cheek. She should be mad about it, but when she heard what the

woman said, her mood shifted to one of surprise and panic. "You mean Su Xuyan has

AIDS?"

"I've checked all the women he slept with in Xyperia. All of them didn't have AIDS, so you're

the only possibility, you slut!" The woman burst out in anger.

All the color drained from Mo Xue's face. "You must be mistaken. I don't have AIDS either."

"What do you mean you don't have AIDS? Are you saying Su Xuyan is the carrier, then?" the

woman bellowed.

"What nonsense are you spouting here?" Su Xuyan appeared. His sharp gaze fell on the

woman causing the ruckus.

"Su Xuyan, you've ruined me!" The woman rushed toward Su Xuyan with a hand raised.

However, before she managed to land an attack on him, Su Xuyan grabbed her by the wrist.

"What the hell are you saying? Tell me! Who sent you?" Su Xuyan barked at her.

"No one sent me! I just found out I have AIDS and you're the only one I've slept with recently.

It has to be you! Are you denying it?" The woman accused him with bloodshot eyes.

Su Xuyan let go of the woman's hand. "I know myself very well, thank you very much. If you

continue to spread your nonsense here, I will make you regret it."

"Are you threatening me now? You muttered sweet nothings to me during that night we

shared together, but I see now it's all bullsh*t! Su Xuyan, you're nothing but a piece of trash.

Trash, I tell you!” the woman spat at him.
Su Xuyan’s face turned grim as he dragged the woman out.
It was then that Mo Xue’s cell phone rang. Someone had sent her a short video. She clicked on it.
The video was a recording of Su Xuyan’s sexual encounter with another woman. Mo Xue shut her phone off immediately, her face went pale and her blood began to boil. Then, she stormed out of the banquet hall.
Su Xuyan blocked Mo Xue’s path. “It’s all a misunderstanding. She’s here to smear my good name. I can go to the hospital to prove to you that I don’t have AIDS.”
Mo Xue slapped him across the face. “You’re the filthiest man I’ve ever been with, and you can forget about the partnership!”
She left the scene after that, still purple with rage.
Su Xuyan frowned. He turned to Wu Nian, hatred flashing across his eyes.
Wu Nian returned the gaze, her eyes drooping.
As the saying goes, a leopard cannot change its spots. How right that is!

If a man cheated once, he would cheat a second time. Once a womanizer, always a womanizer. Old habits die hard.
She considered herself lucky. To date, she had not let Su Xuyan have his way with her.
Ai Wei’er noticed that the situation was spiraling out of control when she saw that everyone was murmuring among themselves.
As such, she got on stage and addressed her audience, “Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming to my birthday party. I’m honored to announce that I, Ai Wei’er, have found the love of my life, and he’s none other than Gu Mingchen!”
Ai Wei’er pointed at Gu Mingchen before the spotlight fell upon him. Taking center stage amid the crowd, he appeared more dazzling than the light itself.

Ai Wei'er approached Gu Mingchen with a sweet smile plastered on her face.

Wu Nian's heart tightened as she filled in sweet images of the couple on her own. She was finding it difficult to breathe.

The crowd went wild as people began to clap their hands and cheer them on. "Woohoo!

Looks like we have a new couple tonight! Go on, kiss already!"

Wu Nian turned away and sprinted toward the exit.

She saw Su Xuyan waiting for the elevator to descend. She did not want to deal with him yet,

so as not to cause unnecessary trouble.

She decided to head up the stairs toward the top floor for some fresh air.

A beautiful night sky hung over Xenhall. Neon lights illuminated the streets below like a sea

of stars.

Wu Nian lay on the railing, taking in the view with all the time she had.

She supposed that the partnership between Su Xuyan and Mo Xue had fallen through.

Tomorrow, Stephen would meet with Mo Xue. She might have to stay here for a few more days.

Suddenly, she felt warmth on her shoulders as a familiar scent drifted into her nose.

Someone had wrapped a coat around her.

Wu Nian whipped her head around to find Gu Mingchen standing next to her in a suit and

vest, gazing gently into her eyes.

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Chapter 386 I Did Not Ask For Your Opinion

"You..." Wu Nian wanted to ask how Gu Mingchen knew she had gone to the top of the

building.

Then, she thought that he might have come here on a whim, too. That their meeting was

purely a coincidence.

"Fancy meeting you here," she proclaimed.

“Not by chance. I’ve been looking for you,” Gu Mingchen confessed.
“Oh?” Wu Nian muttered in surprise.
“I watched you come up here. It should be impossible for Su Xuyan to compete with you now. Stephen is staying at this hotel. So, just spend the night here. Tomorrow, Stephen will paint a portrait for Mo Xue. He’ll bring you along,” Gu Mingchen instructed.
“Oh, thank you,” Wu Nian responded.
“If all goes well, you’ll be signing a contract with Mo Xue the day after tomorrow. I’ll have a lawyer go with you to avoid any unwanted incidents,” Gu Mingchen added.

Wu Nian had an odd feeling in her gut. “If everything goes the way it should, you should be the one who gets the partnership. So I’m curious, Mr. Gu. Why are you handing it over to me?”
“Haven’t we agreed that I’ll let you have this partnership and that I’ll help you ensure its success? You’ve always had a bad memory,” Gu Mingchen said, devoid of any shame or guilt.
She remembered that part, but she was unsure why Gu Mingchen had been willing to give her the job. Is it just so I could work for you? If she gave too much thought to it, she might get the wrong idea.
“You...” she began, working up a wry smile, “You don’t think I’m Bai Rong, do you?”
“If you’re Bai Rong, you would have told me. After all, we have experienced life and cheated death together. We had some good times. And when we separated, it was by force. I don’t see any reason why you won’t tell me that you’re Bai Rong,” Gu Mingchen answered knowingly.
Wu Nian lowered her eyes. “If your wife is still alive, and sees you so eagerly waiting for her

to return, she'll definitely come back to you."

"You're really hypocritical," Gu Mingchen blurted.

Wu Nian did not respond to that.

She looked at him with a guilty conscience, her brows in a twist.

"The truth is, everyone knows that she's dead. It's been two years. If she's alive, I figured she

would've come back a long time ago," Gu Mingchen added.

Wu Nian had a feeling that Gu Mingchen would not listen to whatever she had to say, so she

decided to ignore him. She checked her phone for the time and realized that it was already

ten minutes past eleven. "Well, it's getting late. I should get going."

"When do you plan to start working for me?" Gu Mingchen asked, his eyes fixed on her.

"After I go back. Do we need to sign a contract?" Wu Nian asked.

"You really do have a bad memory. You have forgotten everything we've agreed on. We've

talked about this at Stephen's place. You'll come to work for me and take care of my

children until my wife comes back." Gu Mingchen was rather aggressive as he spoke. It was

as if he was in a bad mood and chose to vent his anger on her.

"Mr. Gu, by saying you want me to take care of your kids until your wife returns, doesn't that

mean I'll be doing it for a lifetime? Since you've admitted that she's dead," Wu Nian retorted.

"That was what we agreed on last time."

"What happens after your kids get married, then? I can't possibly stay at your house after

that. I'm a tutor," Wu Nian reminded him.

"Then you'll take care of my grandchildren. I'll buy a villa when I get back. They won't leave

my side. Even after they marry, I'll want them to stay close to me."

Wu Nian was rendered speechless again.

She had the feeling that he was deliberately arguing with her, but she could not beat him. "I

see. If you don't mind, I'm retiring for the night."

She walked toward the door and pulled the handle before finding that it would not budge.

She tried pushing it. Nothing happened. She got anxious. “Gu Mingchen, did you shut the door behind you when you came up just now?”

With his brows quirked, Gu Mingchen went over to help Wu Nian with the door.

His palm touched the back of hers. Wu Nian withdrew her hand instinctively.

A burst of irritation came over him. Furious, he glared at her. “I didn’t close the door. The wind must have done that.”

“Well, what do we do now?” Wu Nian pushed hard, but the door still would not budge.

“It should be able to open from the inside, right?” Wu Nian asked.

“I don’t own the hotel. How should I know?” Gu Mingchen answered sternly.

Wu Nian recalled that Stephen was staying in the hotel. She gave him a call immediately.

Unfortunately, his phone was switched off.

She looked to Gu Mingchen for help.

Liu Yan had returned to the homeland. It would take three hours for the people from the manor to get here, and it was already midnight.

“Well, Ai Wei’er is hosting her party downstairs. Maybe you can call her and get her to open the door for us,” Wu Nian requested.

“You really don’t like the idea of sharing a space with me, do you?” Gu Mingchen asked a rhetorical question.

“What? I’ll be working at your house after we get back, for God’s sake. It’s just that we’re currently at the top of this building, and it’s getting cold. Not to mention it’s getting late,” Wu Nian explained in frustration.

Gu Mingchen placed his hands on her shoulders and wrapped her in an embrace, “There, it’s

not so cold now. I'd like to add that it's not appropriate for me to call Ai Wei'er. Some people can't do things, but they'll make things worse. If she sees us together, she won't want her mother working with you."

Wu Nian gave it some thought and eventually agreed. She recalled Ai Wei'er confessing her love to Gu Mingchen. She immediately pushed him away and said, "Then, do you know anyone else who can open the door for us?"

Gu Mingchen looked at her in resignation. "Fine. I'm calling Stephen." "I tried that. His phone is off," Wu Nian said, exasperated. "Then we'll just have to wait." Gu Mingchen turned around and walked toward the attic. With a little push, he found that the door was unlocked. "Come here," he called out to Wu Nian.

Wu Nian pulled his coat tighter around her. She hesitated and did not heed him.

Gu Mingchen was uncertain what she was fidgeting about. Does she think I'm going to take advantage of her? We already have kids!

He grew frustrated. Nevertheless, he turned on the flashlight on his phone and successfully located the switch on the wall. They were lucky that the lights worked. The attic was filled with cleaning supplies and cardboard boxes. He bet that the cleaning staff would come here to pick up their tools early in the morning.

He gathered the mop and other cleaning supplies and placed them outside the door, he then ripped the boxes apart and spread them on the ground.

Wu Nian came over to help without saying a word.

Gu Mingchen peered at her.

She blushed but continued the work at hand.

They spent fifteen minutes making a makeshift bed from cardboard.

"Get some sleep," he said. "The workers should be here to open the door at around six. I'm heading out for a smoke."

“You’re such a heavy smoker,” Wu Nian uttered with concern.
“So? I didn’t ask for your opinion,” he said with little emotion and stepped out.
Wu Nian dropped her gaze.
He’s right. I’m not in the position to care.
She lay down on the cardboard and closed her eyes.
But she could not fall asleep at all.

Ten minutes later, Gu Mingchen got back in and lay down beside her.
Wu Nian detected the scent of smoke on him and cringed.
So, Gu Mingchen believes that Bai Rong is dead. That’s fine. He can start life anew.
Wu Nian slowly opened her eyes, only to meet Gu Mingchen’s captivating pair. Her heart skipped a beat.
Gu Mingchen rolled over, had her pressed against the cardboard, and then kissed her on the lips.
Wu Nian’s eyes widened in shock as she instinctively pushed against his shoulders.
Gu Mingchen held her leg firmly, his palm facing upwards, and touched her sensitive spot.
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Chapter 387 I Will Take Responsibility
Wu Nian’s eyes widened in shock.
She never expected Gu Mingchen to do this. She pushed at his hand in panic.
But the more she resisted, the rougher he became.
Since she couldn’t overpower him, she turned her face away, trying to free her lips from his.
She thought that by doing so, she would at least be able to talk some sense into him because at that moment, he looked like he had lost all sense of reason.
Despite her efforts, however, he didn’t allow her to break free. Holding the back of her head with his free hand as he continued ravaging her lips, his breath came in fast, short pants.
The strength of his other hand increased.

Her face heated up with embarrassment when she felt her body reacting to his relentless teasing.

When God created women, He must have forgotten to create a lock for their most treasured area. I can't believe I had no control over my body's treacherous reaction.

After five minutes of kissing Wu Nian, Gu Mingchen did not look like he was going to stop any time soon. Instead, he deepened the kiss, as though pouring all the pain, worry, and resentment he felt during these two years into this very kiss.

Wu Nian struggled until the last shred of energy left her. Taking advantage of this, he ripped off her underwear.

Before she knew it, he lifted her hips and entered her in one fell swoop. Wu Nian let out a muffled gasp, to which Gu Mingchen finally released her lips.

She looked at him with red-rimmed eyes and tightly pursed lips.

It took all of Gu Mingchen's willpower to keep still as he solemnly stated, "Since I took you by force, I'll take responsibility."

Wu Nian punched him on the shoulder.

She was no longer an eighteen-year-old girl. On one hand, it was useless crying over spilled milk. On the other, it was unrealistic to ask him to take it out.

Besides, unless there was a compelling reason, men would be unwilling to pull out until they got their release.

Gu Mingchen held her hand in his.

Since she doesn't want to admit that she's Bai Rong, I won't force her to. I'll just treat her as Wu Nian and pursue her all over again.

With that thought in mind, he brushed a feathery kiss on her hand.

Wu Nian instinctively withdrew her hand and when he targeted her lips again, she quickly turned her face away.

Even so, he had already invaded her body in the most intimate way possible.

Wu Nian swatted his wandering hand away.

Clearly, they had already reached a point of no return. Yet, she found herself trying to do something just to make herself feel better.

Gu Mingchen grabbed her restless hands and pressed them down by her sides. He

murmured in a hoarse and sensuous voice, "You're very responsive."

Wu Nian justified, "It's just my body's defensive mechanism going against your invasion."

Then, she gulped and said in a small voice, "You're too big. You're going to hurt me like this."

The corners of Gu Mingchen's mouth curved into a smile. "I'll be gentle. Just stop pushing me away."

Wu Nian's heart fluttered in her chest, his words offering her a strong sense of familiarity. "I can sue you, you know."

Gu Mingchen kissed her lips and calmly replied, "Mm."

Wu Nian narrowed her eyes at him. He was neither afraid nor angry, as though already determined to have his way with her.

Indeed, she wasn't going to sue him. For starters, he was Yanny's father and Yanny needed him. Secondly, she regarded his reputation as even more important than her own life.

Hence, she wouldn't be able to bring herself to do something that could harm him. Be that as it may, she still felt greatly aggrieved to be forced into such a situation.

Another smile graced Gu Mingchen's lips. He hadn't even gotten his release yet, but his body and soul already felt satisfied. The clouds that were hanging over him seemed to have vanished along with the negative air that often enveloped him, and he became incredibly

gentle. Reaching behind her back, he slowly pulled her zipper down.

"Don't. I'm cold," Wu Nian stopped him.

"Hug me tight, then. I'm burning up," Gu Mingchen whispered deeply.

Wu Nian was tongue-tied.

Afraid that she might really feel cold, he decided not to take off her dress. He simply pulled down the top of her dress, revealing the silicone gel bra covering her bosom.

Wu Nian blushed furiously. "Don't take them off."

"Mm." He wasn't planning to anyway, as female apparel remained a mystery to him.

He kissed a path from her neck down to her collarbones as he slowly pulled out of her.

Well aware of what was coming next, Wu Nian grabbed his arms.

"Not that. I haven't showered."

Gu Mingchen chuckled deeply.

And she says she's not Bai Rong. She knew his habits, so the moment he pulled out, she

already knew what he was about to do.

"I'm coming back in, then," Gu Mingchen warned in a gruff voice.

Wu Nian avoided his gaze, not knowing how else to respond.

He grasped her chin and turned her face back, confessing, "Wu Nian, I like you. What I said

before is the absolute truth."

Wu Nian's heart raced. She could feel him slowly but surely breaking through her defenses

with his patience.

Right then, she realized why she only felt burdened by Aaron's kindness and affection.

It was because her heart still belonged to Gu Mingchen. Deep down, she knew that she

couldn't bring herself to accept Aaron. Hence, she felt guilty and sorry toward him.

However, she was a hex and would only bring Gu Mingchen trouble by staying. She did not

want history to repeat itself.

All she wished was to watch him from afar.

After they were both sated and spent, Gu Mingchen continued hugging her tightly, as though

afraid she might disappear at any second.
Wu Nian's brows knitted together.
Now that we've slept together, I doubt I can be a simple home tutor at his house now.
But I can't just turn down the opportunity to spend time with Yanny. If I do, I might never get another chance. Things are going to get complicated from now on. Perhaps it was the sex that was fogging up her mind, or perhaps her mind was merely shutting down due to the time. All things considered, she felt frustrated. Thus, she closed her eyes for a few minutes to calm herself.
"Are we considered... friends with benefits?" Wu Nian queried.
Glancing at her, Gu Mingchen covered their bodies with their own clothes and answered resolutely, "To me, you're my girlfriend."
"I don't want that," Wu Nian emphasized.
Gu Mingchen gazed at her intently. "Then, how do you propose I make it up to you?"
"You can't let anyone else know about us. Otherwise, I'll move out of your house at once and terminate our contract as well. And..." Wu Nian trailed off, pressing her lips together.
And you can't stop me from seeing Yanny.
However, she was afraid that making such a specific request might arouse Gu Mingchen's suspicions.
"And what?" Gu Mingchen probed gently.
"You have to agree to my three requests unconditionally." Wu Nian changed her statement.

A smile appeared on Gu Mingchen's face. "Sure. I'll agree to anything you want."
Wu Nian bowed her head.
She could hardly believe that she had gotten involved with Gu Mingchen again. Everything seemed like a dream—surreal and completely beyond her imagination and control.
Indeed, changes ran faster than plans.

“Break things off with Aaron,” Gu Mingchen urged.
Wu Nian nodded without putting up a fight. I’ve already slept with Gu Mingchen. It won’t be fair to Aaron if I keep stringing him along. It’s time I sit down and renegotiate things with him. As if reading her mind, Gu Mingchen reassured her, “You don’t need to worry about Liu Yan. I can keep her safer than Aaron can.”
Wu Nian looked at him with astonishment. “How did you know?”
“Liu Yan isn’t an entrepreneur, so the fact that she’s involved in the collaboration this time indicates that she made an agreement with Shen Yiyang. She wants to leave him more than anything. That’s why she decided to take matters into her own hands. I can see how determined she is, seeing as she even visited Stephen’s island.”
Wu Nian lowered her gaze.
I believe in Gu Mingchen. With his intervention, Liu Yan would be able to escape and go somewhere no one will ever disturb her. But this would undoubtedly start a feud between him and Shen Yiyang.
He’s different from Aaron.
Aaron is a nobleman from Ustrana. Even if Shen Yiyang finds out that it was his doing, he’d refrain from laying a finger on Aaron for the greater good.
But it’s not the same for Gu Mingchen.

He’s a citizen of A City. His company, family, and friends are all in A City as well.

As A City’s commander-in-chief, there are too many ways for Shen Yiyang to deal with Gu Mingchen.

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Chapter 388 Locking The Door Will Get You Into Trouble My Dear

I can’t drag him into my mess right after sleeping with him.

Wu Nian inhaled deeply and said, “Mr. Gu.”

“What did you call me?” Gu Mingchen frowned.

“There’s no need to get mad at me. You promised that you’d keep this between the two of us, so I don’t see a problem with this form of address,” she retorted. Gu Mingchen softened his tone as he explained, “I’ll be mindful when there are others around, but right now, it’s just the two of us. Don’t you think this form of address makes us sound like we’re strangers to each other? It makes me feel like there’s a huge gap between us.”

Wu Nian found herself nodding in agreement before changing the form of address.

“Mingchen, you’ve misunderstood that matter regarding Liu Yan. It’s not like that. Ever since she got together with Shen Yiyao, she and her family had a falling-out. Anyway, don’t intervene in this matter. After all, whoever started it should end it as well.”

“Really? Then, why did you approach Aaron?” Gu Mingchen was slightly doubtful.

“Shen Yiyao told us to look for Aaron if we failed to get that painting at the auction because he and Stephen are close friends. It just so happened that I saved Aaron’s life on the flight here, so I approached him to ask if he could take us to the island.” Wu Nian omitted the rest of the details.

“Well, you’ve been on the island and Aaron is also back in his country now. He even has a fiancée, so it’s best that you don’t contact him anymore,” Gu Mingchen stated.

Wu Nian averted her gaze. “I’m tired. I’m gonna sleep for a bit.” Seeing as she had closed her eyes, Gu Mingchen said nothing more. Feeling uneasy, she turned around so that her back was facing him. Now that things have turned out this way between Gu Mingchen and me, I can’t drag Aaron along and make him wait for nothing. But there are still some things I need his help with.

She initially thought that sleep wouldn't come to her, but she slept straight until the sun came up the next day, waking up only when someone opened the door. "Hey, what are the two of you doing in here?" demanded the cleaning staff.

When memories of what they did the previous night flooded Wu Nian's mind, her cheeks flushed with embarrassment. From the look in the cleaning staff's eyes, Wu Nian could tell she had guessed what transpired here.

Gu Mingchen took out a hundred from his wallet and handed it to the cleaning staff. "We were accidentally locked up here yesterday. Keep this matter between us."

The cleaning staff accepted the money and readily agreed, "Sure."

Gu Mingchen pulled Wu Nian up and walked toward the exit with her hand in his.

She subconsciously drew her hand out, to which Gu Mingchen glanced at her.

"It's still early. I don't think Stephen is awake yet. I'll book a room here for you to rest while I go out and buy you some clothes."

"The malls aren't open this early. I'll go back first to pack my luggage since I'm returning to the country after the negotiation tomorrow," Wu Nian rejected his offer with her head bowed.

"You should still rest. You got up so early yesterday to send Liu Yan off and slept so late last night. Look at how prominent your dark circles are. Besides, if Mo Xue calls Stephen while

you're back at the manor, there'd be a few hours delay. It's not a good idea to make Mo Xue wait," Gu Mingchen said gently.

Seeing as this was a losing battle, Wu Nian relented. "I'll book a room myself."

Gu Mingchen didn't try to push it.

While booking a room at the front desk, Wu Nian's phone pinged with a message. She fished

it out and saw that it was from the bank, notifying her that ten million had been transferred into her account.

Right then, Gu Mingchen's message came in: Tell me if it's not enough. Looking at the message, Wu Nian was at a loss for words as the man was standing right beside her.

Wu Nian: I already have enough money. I don't think it's appropriate for me to take yours. I'll return it to you after I go back.

Gu Mingchen: How much savings can a tutor at an orphanage have? The cheapest room

here is more than three thousand. Where did you get so much money?

Wu Nian pursed her lips and glanced at Gu Mingchen.

He tucked his phone away and met her gaze as well.

Wu Nian looked down and typed another message: I won more than one million from Su

Xuyan in a poker game last time. That alone can last me an entire lifetime.

Gu Mingchen: In that case, just help me keep my money safe and transfer it to me when I

need it. He then added another sentence: We'll continue this topic in a bit. I'll go out and buy you some clothes now.

Wu Nian: It's fine, I can buy it myself. You don't even know what style I like.

She quickly hit the send button, but Gu Mingchen had already left through the doors, leaving her utterly speechless.

Wu Nian went back to her room and took a hot shower before temporarily putting on the

hotel's bathrobe and threw herself onto the bed to take a nap.

She wasn't sure how long she slept, but she was roused from her sleep by her ringtone.

Rummaging through her bag for her phone, she saw Stephen's caller ID flashing across her screen and hurriedly swiped to answer.

"I'm really sorry. I didn't want to be disturbed by that b*tch, so I turned off my phone. Were you looking for me to discuss the collaboration?" Stephen asked with a smile in his tone.

"Um..." Wu Nian released a dry laugh, uncertain of how to answer him. She had called him to open the door to the rooftop, but it was obvious that his assistance was no longer needed. Hence, she did not know what to say as she was too ashamed to let others know that she had spent the night on the rooftop with Gu Mingchen.

"You don't have to worry about this. I've already told Gu Mingchen that I'll bring you along when I paint for her. How is your proposal going? Is everything settled?" Stephen asked, completely unsuspecting.

"Oh, the proposal?" Wu Nian hesitated.

"Haha. It's alright. Only businessmen understand these things. Mingchen should know. Ask him when you're free and make sure you prepare earlier. Mo Xue is a very particular person.

Alright, that's all for now. I'm going to have my breakfast first. I'll give you a call after she calls me." With that, Stephen hung up.

Wu Nian glanced at the time and found that it was already eleven o'clock, so it was more of a brunch than breakfast.

She called Gu Mingchen right after.

"Just woke up?" he asked.

"Yeah. Do you know about the proposal?" Wu Nian inquired.

"Come and open the door," was Gu Mingchen's answer.

Wu Nian's heart leaped into her throat. She got down from the bed and put on a pair of disposable bedroom slippers before walking to the door. Then, she looked through the peephole and confirmed that Gu Mingchen was waiting outside. She opened the door and was surprised to see Gu Mingchen carrying several shopping bags

in his hands.

“Did you wait long?” Wu Nian asked with concern.

“No. I just arrived,” Gu Mingchen answered, walking in to place the shopping bags on the sofa before looking at her.

Only then did Wu Nian remember that she was still wearing a bathrobe with nothing else

beneath. Flustered, she pulled the bathrobe tighter around her.

“I’ve prepared the proposal. Put on some clothes first. I’ll bring you out to eat,” Gu Mingchen

instructed as he lowered himself onto the sofa. Then, he took out a stack of documents

from one of the bags and placed it on the coffee table.

Wu Nian picked it up and flipped through it, noticing that it was filled with the technical

terms for jewelry. The only things she could comprehend were some branches and data.

“Have you and Shen Yiyang agreed to a fifty-fifty split excluding the cost?”

“Yep.”

“What if Mo Xue doesn’t agree? Will we make any further concessions?”

“No.” Gu Mingchen studied her. “Aren’t you going to get changed?”

“Oh.” Embarrassed, Wu Nian brushed her hair away from her face, picked up the clothes

from the sofa, and went into the bathroom.

Gu Mingchen was dumbstruck when he heard the sound of the door being locked.

He went over and rapped his knuckles on the door.

Wu Nian opened the door a crack and poked her head out, asking him with a wary look on

her face, “What is it?”

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Chapter 389 You Should Know What I Think

“I need to wash my hands,” Gu Mingchen replied curtly.

“Oh.” Wu Nian opened the door and stood to the side.

Gu Mingchen turned on the faucet and washed his hands while watching her through the

mirror.

She stood there quietly with slightly downcast eyes, giving off a submissive vibe.

Recalling her obstinance, his gaze sharpened. "Why did you lock the door? Are you afraid that I'm going to eat you?"

"Um, it's just a habit," Wu Nian explained.

Gu Mingchen turned around to look at her directly. "Have you called Aaron?"

"It was too early when I came back. And I just woke up, so I haven't had the time to call him yet."

"Is that really it, or are you having second thoughts?" Gu Mingchen questioned, his eyes locked onto her as he tried to gauge her reaction.

Wu Nian squirmed under the weight of his gaze. "Don't you trust me?"

"I'm just afraid that you'd run away or undergo plastic surgery then come back and pretend not to know me. You're six years younger than me, so you're still in your youth. I, on the other hand, have two kids. I don't have the luxury of waiting," Gu Mingchen said in an enigmatic tone.

Wu Nian's eyes flickered as she couldn't help but feel like he was talking about Bai Rong.

Despite her nerves, she managed to keep her cool. "Even though you have two kids, you have plenty of admirers. Didn't Ai Wei'er just confess her feelings for you last night?"

"My admirers can't possibly be more than yours, can it? Su Xuyan, Aaron, and others I don't even know about. Am I the backup, or are they?" Gu Mingchen reprimanded angrily.

Backup?

He was obviously the one who forced himself onto me like the tyrant that he is.

I never even planned to get into a relationship with him. Now, he's making it seem like

everything's my fault? That I'm a promiscuous woman who plays on other people's feelings?

Wu Nian's eyes turned cold and her expression hardened. "If you think you're a backup, so

be it. Since you're so certain of it, there's nothing I can do to change your mind. I need to

change my clothes now. Please leave."

Gu Mingchen grabbed her shoulders and pushed her against the wall, his eyes darkening

with frustration. "Do you really not care about me? Aren't you going to at least try and

explain instead of letting me think this way?"

"Since you don't trust me, no amount of explanation can change that."

"How do you expect me to trust you?" There was a hint of accusation in Gu Mingchen's tone

as he looked at her with a piercing gaze.

Wu Nian stared back at him coolly. "Since you don't trust me, there's nothing left for me to

say. If you want to end this thing between us, then end it."

Gu Mingchen studied her with his lips pressed into a thin line. His eyes flashed and his

breathing gradually turned erratic, the puffs of hot air blasting her cheeks.

"End it, you said?" Gu Mingchen reiterated.

Wu Nian's heart clenched painfully in her chest, but since she never wanted it to begin,

ending it wouldn't be so difficult. Hence, she nodded in response.

"Stop dreaming. That won't ever happen. I'll wait for you outside." Gu Mingchen went out, his

figure looking slightly disheartened.

Wu Nian was lost in a daze for a moment. Finally, she heaved a sigh as tears blurred her vision.

How much does one have to suffer because of the sins of their lover before finally being liberated?

She wiped her tears and looked at herself in the mirror.

Wasn't undergoing plastic surgery and changing my name supposed to help me alter my fate and path in life?

Why does it feel like a vicious cycle and that I'm right back where I started?

She brushed away another stray tear from the corner of her eye and splashed cold water onto her face. After wiping her face dry, she noticed that her eyes were slightly red. She

closed her eyes and took in a deep breath to calm her emotions. Once she recomposed

herself, she opened her eyes, changed into some clothes, and went out. Gu Mingchen had smoked three cigarettes and was currently on his fourth one.

Wu Nian strode over and snatched the cigarette from his hand, snubbing it out while chiding

him, "Smoking is bad for your health."

Gu Mingchen grabbed her waist and pulled her into his arms before lowering his head to

capture her lips with his. It was a vicious and punishing kiss, packed with a maelstrom of emotions.

When his familiar masculine scent mixed with the smell of tobacco permeated Wu Nian's

senses, all traces of resistance left her body.

According to her understanding of Gu Mingchen, if she tried to push him away, he would

deepen the kiss and render her completely immobile. Hence, she had no choice but to let

herself be kissed senseless.

Gu Mingchen only released her after a full five minutes. With a hint of pain peeking through

his eyes, he asked, "You studied psychology. Tell me, what should I do now?"

"There two kinds of love in this world—unrequited love, and love that is lost. The truth is,

once you free yourself from the shackles of your own illusion, you will find that there are

many better people in the world.”

“Is that what you think? So, you’re saying that I should forget about my past love even though it’s already engraved on my heart? Wouldn’t I have to rip out my heart, then?” Gu

Mingchen questioned harshly.

“It doesn’t matter what I think. What matters is what you think,” Wu Nian said softly.

“I want to be with you and live an ordinary life together. We don’t have to do much every day.

I’ll be happy with just having all three meals together, sharing the same bed, discussing our children’s progress, and about the mundane problems in life. Of course, I would also like to

grow old together. That’s all I ask for,” Gu Mingchen said earnestly with reddened eyes.

He really wasn’t asking for much. He just hoped that she wouldn’t make him wait forever.

Wu Nian’s eyes reddened as well. The dam of emotions she had struggled to contain ruptured and tears flowed down her face.

She longed for the life that Gu Mingchen described. That was a real home, where one would

want to return to no matter how far they drifted away.

Everyone started off alone, searching for someone they could love. That way, they would no

longer be alone and their soul would have a sense of belonging. Hence, when they passed,

they wouldn’t feel that their life was in vain.

However, she was afraid that staying by his side would only lead him to his demise.

And if he perished, her entire world would crumble.

Hence, she would rather stay quietly by his side, taking care of him and Yanny on the

sidelines because to her, that was more than enough.

At the sight of her tears, all his anger, complaints, and resentment morphed into heartache.

He kissed away her tears and whispered, “Nian, we can make it.”

Wu Nian nodded.

Gu Mingchen kissed her again. "You must be hungry. Let's go have something to eat."

Wu Nian shook her head. "I'll call room service. It's too risky to eat out together."

"What do you mean by 'risky'?" Gu Mingchen was perceptive as always.

"I don't want others to find out about us," Wu Nian explained.

"Let's say someone does find out, what kind of risk will we face?" Gu Mingchen prodded.

"I don't wanna talk about this." Wu Nian was about to get up from his lap, but he tightened

his arms around her, preventing her from moving.

"You're a coward, Wu Nian. You always retreat into your shell whenever you encounter a minor hiccup."

"That's because you don't know what I've been through or what shaped me into the person

that I am. Yes, I'm a coward, but what's so wrong with that? Those who die on the frontlines

are the brave ones who didn't know any better. This is the way I am. You can accept it, or

not. Either way is fine by me."

Gu Mingchen loosened his grip on her.

She rose to her feet, but didn't dare to look at him.

Picking up the hotel's built-in phone, she called the front desk to order room service.

In the middle of the call, a loud bang reverberated through the room.

She instinctively

glanced toward the door and found that Gu Mingchen had left.

Her heart sank to the pit of her stomach. After hanging up the call, she lay on the bed and

stared at the white ceiling as sorrow washed over her.

You Owe Me, My Love Chapter 390

Chapter 390 What Does It Have To Do With Me

Gu Mingchen was a proud man.

But Wu Nian had used his love for her against him, trying her hardest to exhibit her wayward,

assertive, petulant, and crude personality so that he could see how difficult it was to get along with her.

She was confident that she would be able to repel him very soon if she kept this up until one day, he would finally exhaust all his love for her.

But it wouldn't matter to her. She could love him enough for the two of them and she knew that this was the right thing to do.

Gu Mingchen had sacrificed enough for her.

She could still remember how he looked in his military uniform—upright, plainspoken and dignified, able to win wars before they even begin. His lofty presence was the kind that was profound and inherent.

She could also remember the first time they met. He had said, "I'm a soldier. I will protect you."

He had attended military school at a young age and started from Special Forces, making outstanding accomplishments and working his way up without the help of his family. He went deep behind enemy lines, disregarding his own life, and achieved victory. Protecting his country was his dream. He wasn't forced, and it was truly his passion. But because of me, he had almost been labeled a spy who betrayed his country.

Because of me, he had almost died on a deserted island.

Because of me, he had left the military.

How could I ever bear to put him in danger again?

Wu Nian wiped her tears away and turned on her side. She had completely lost her appetite.

She curled into a ball.

Perhaps he'd feel sad and tormented for a while, but after he overcomes this period of time and all those feelings have disappeared, he would finally be free.

After lying on the bed for half an hour, Wu Nian heard a knock on the door.

She got up from the bed and opened the door only to see that it was a hotel staff.

“Ma’am, this is the steak you ordered,” the staff said respectfully.

Wu Nian was perplexed. “I didn’t order this. You’ve come to the wrong room.”

“This is the right room. A gentleman with the surname Gu placed the order. He didn’t want

you to go hungry,” the staff explained patiently.

Realization dawned on Wu Nian. Gu Mingchen was the one who ordered this.

But how did he know I didn’t order room service?

“I see. Thank you.” Wu Nian nodded.

The staff pushed in the cart and took off the lid to reveal a piece of juicy steak, some salad,

Foie Gras, and a glass of red wine.

Wu Nian cut into her steak while studying the proposal Gu Mingchen had prepared.

She searched through Baidu whenever she came across something she didn’t understand

and made sure to memorize the key points, paying special attention to the points that were

crucial in convincing Mo Xue to collaborate.

She had just finished eating when her phone rang.

Seeing that it was from Stephen, she swiftly picked it up.

“Where are you? Mo Xue just called me over,” Stephen stated.

“I’m at the hotel. I’ll meet you in the lobby.” Wu Nian kept the proposal in her bag, tidied up

her hair, and applied simple makeup onto her face, which included foundation cream,

eyeliner, mascara, lip balm, and lipstick. Deeming herself presentable, she went downstairs

in a flurry.

Stephen was already waiting there. Dressed casually, he was accompanied by his butler

who helped carry his painting tools.

“Sorry that I’m late,” Wu Nian apologized.

“It’s fine. We just arrived anyway.” Stephen gave her a once-over before remarking, “You

looked really beautiful yesterday. No men would've been able to resist your charm."

Wu Nian wasn't sure what to make of this.

In other words, he's saying that I'm not beautiful today.

When Stephen mentioned yesterday, her mind was immediately transported back to the rooftop. Recalling about what happened there, her face turned crimson red and she quickly lowered her head to conceal it.

Just then, a Rolls-Royce pulled over in front of the hotel's entrance.

Stephen's butler opened the car door courteously for them.

Stephen slid into the backseat and Wu Nian took the seat next to him, while the butler sat in the front passenger seat.

Stephen looked Wu Nian up and down again.

Unsettled by his scrutiny, Wu Nian asked, "Is there something on my face?"

"Your dress is very pretty. It suits you very well," Stephen commented with a grin.

"Thank you," Wu Nian answered politely.

Stephen released a chuckle. "Aaron called me this morning and asked about your situation."

"Indeed, you know my situation better than I do."

"You didn't call him?" Stephen queried.

"I woke up too late and I was having my meal just now, so I didn't have the time," Wu Nian explained.

"Oh, is that so?" Stephen chuckled again.

Wu Nian couldn't help but feel that she was missing something. Feeling upset, she didn't

strike up a conversation and turned to look out the window instead.

One way or another, I have to settle matters with Aaron, just not now.

I'll think more about it

after dealing with Mo Xue.

After about half an hour on the road, the car arrived at Mo Xue's castle.

There were two expressionless guards standing on duty at the gates.

Because the driver was sent by Mo Xue to pick up Stephen, after going through a brief

inspection, they were allowed passage.

Mo Xue's castle had a dreamy vibe to it. Beyond the gates lay a rose garden. Usually, roses wilted in September, but the roses here were in full bloom and emitted a pleasant fragrance.

After passing through the garden, they came upon a vintage courtyard and a lake. The car drove on for another three minutes before arriving at the majestic and ancient-looking castle.

Mo Xue's butler was already waiting by the front doors.

Wu Nian followed Stephen in and walked along a very long corridor before finally reaching the doors to the main hall.

Before entering, she could already hear a young girl's laughter coming from inside.

As soon as the guard in the main hall opened the doors, she saw Mo Xue, Ai Wei'er, an unfamiliar man, as well as Gu Mingchen.

Surprise flashed across Wu Nian's face as she did not expect Gu Mingchen to be here. She bowed her head and entered the hall.

Mo Xue glanced sideways at Stephen and remarked contemptuously, "You brought someone with you? Since when did you switch careers from a painter to a lobbyist?"

"I was afraid you'd be tricked, so I thought I'd introduce a reliable person to you." Stephen

took the seat across from Mo Xue unceremoniously.

"You're probably the one who tricked me the most."

"Let's not get into whether it was me who tricked you, or the other way around. You should

discuss business with her first." Stephen picked up an orange from the table and started peeling it leisurely.

Mo Xue rolled her eyes at him before speaking to Wu Nian in a flat tone, "Come with me.

There are too many irrelevant people here."

It didn't take a genius to know that Mo Xue was specifically referring to Stephen.

Stephen showed no reaction as he continued enjoying his orange.

Wu Nian followed Mo Xue into the latter's study.

Mo Xue sat on her chair gracefully and spun it one round before peering at Wu Nian with a

lazy expression. "Since Stephen introduced you, I'll give you a chance. I want a nine-to-one

split. Nine for me, one for you. If this isn't the ratio, you can forget about having a

collaboration."

Wu Nian curved her lips into a smile. "Do you know how many jewelers there are in A City?"

"What does that have to do with me?" Mo Xue raised a brow, looking arrogant.

"Mo Xue, since you've taken an interest in A City's market, it's probably because you've

witnessed its citizens' spending power. In the past two years, A City has been developing at

breakneck speed. The annual sales of luxury goods exceed eight hundred billion and jewelry

occupies sixty-five percent of the market. In A City, the profits reaped from jewelry are very

objective."

"So?" Mo Xue shrugged.

"My company can grab eight percent of the market because my boss is a pinnacle figure in

A City's political and socialite circles. We hope to settle with a fifty-fifty split. The details are

all here in this proposal." Wu Nian handed the proposal to Mo Xue.

Mo Xue took it and swept her gaze over it before scoffing. "The pieces of jewelry are mine.

Even the designers are mine. All your company would be doing is buying them from me. Yet,

you're asking for fifty percent of the profit? That's a little too high, don't you think?"

"When a movie is released, the sales team generally takes sixty percent of the sales," Wu

Nian pointed out.

Mo Xue put the proposal aside and stared at Wu Nian coldly while emanating an imposing aura. "Before we get further into this, I have a question for you. What's your relationship with Gu Mingchen?"