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Lin Xinyan walked in with a grim expression. She patted her back and asked, "Are you okay?"

Qin Ya shook her head. "I'm fine. Perhaps it's something I ate but recently..."

She suddenly stopped. It looked as though a thought had just struck her.

Lin Xinyan had prior experience and could read between the lines. She quickly suggested to Qin Ya, "Let's get you checked out at the hospital."

The latter's hands were trembling slightly. She seemed to have difficulty processing the situation.

Lin Xinyan wrapped her arms around her friend and patted her shoulder gently, quietly showing her support.

"Ms. Lin, can you promise me one thing?" Qin Ya's voice was hoarse.

"Go ahead," Lin Xinyan replied.

"Maybe... Just maybe, if I really am pregnant, can you promise not to tell Su Zhan?"

I don't want to be with someone due to societal pressures. I know exactly what I want.

Lin Xinyan understood her friend's point of view and nodded. "I won't say a word. But if you really are pregnant, you'll eventually have to plan for your future."

It was necessary for every parent to consider the environment in which their child was going to grow up. A wholesome and complete family was imperative to a child's development.

Lin Xinyan drove Qin Ya to the hospital.

As the sun had already set, the check-up at the emergency room went by quickly. Qin Ya took an ultrasound and a urine test. The ultrasound showed that she was indeed seven weeks pregnant. The urine test corroborated the ultrasound with a positive result.

Qin Ya sat by the hospital's pond. Her eyes were trained on the test results as she wordlessly hung her head.

Lin Xinyan did not know how to comfort her friend. If only her relationship with Su Zhan is stable. The existence of this child would be a blessing then. But it's clear that they aren't doing well.

"I don't want it." Qin Ya had been silent since the completion of the tests.

The first words out of her mouth floored Lin Xinyan.

Lin Xinyan did not dissuade her. She's just emotional and impulsive at the moment. I know all too well how it feels to be a mother.

The moment she tries to step into the operating room, she'll definitely regret it.

It's human nature.

Qin Ya expected Lin Xinyan to talk her out of it and was surprised when she did not. She looked up at Lin Xinyan and asked, "Do you think I should abort it?"

Lin Xinyan answered in an extremely serious tone, "I know you won't."

Qin Ya was momentarily speechless. She's right. The moment I said I didn't want it, I felt something jab at my heart. What should I do now?

"It's cold outside. Let me take you home." Lin Xinyan helped her up.

The moment she rose to her feet, Qin Ya embraced Lin Xinyan. "I'm so grateful to have you in my life."

She has always a reliable and objective voice in my life. But she never tries to interfere with the way I live. She never crosses the line yet still makes the people around her feel comfortable.

When Lin Xinyan sent Qin Ya home, she assured warmly, "Don't worry. I won't tell Su Zhan. You can just focus on resting."

Qin Ya nodded. "I'm heading in."

Lin Xinyan waved and urged her friend to take shelter from the cold.

Only when she saw Qin Ya enter the building did Lin Xinyan drive off to the office.

When the car drove into the metropolitan financial district, there was a noticeable difference even in the walking pace of the pedestrians. Every person was used to being a participant in the rat race, and they knew time was money.

Lin Xinyan parked the car in the basement carpark of the office building.

She had worked there for a few days previously. Although she was not completely familiar with its dynamics, she was still better prepared. She walked into the lift and pressed the button for the top floor.

On the sixteenth floor, someone entered the lift. The person pressed a button before standing off to the side. He would leaf through the documents in hand and appeared to be doing final preparations.

When they arrived at the top floor, the lift doors glided open. It was only then that the man seemed to notice Lin Xinyan. "Which department are you from?"

Regardless of department, company employees would usually cross paths at least once. However, Lin Xinyan was a fresh face.

At this moment, Guan Jing strolled in. Lin Xinyan flashed him a smile and said, "I'm looking for him."

Realization dawned on the man. "So you're here to see Mr. Guan."

Guan Jing hastened his pace when he caught sight of Lin Xinyan.

"Hi. It's been too long," she greeted.

"I hope you're not still holding onto any grudges." Guan Jing replied, grinning.

He was referring to the matter of him going to Country A in order to investigate her.

Lin Xinyan's contemplative demeanor unsettled Guan Jing.

"You... you know I wasn't the one calling the shots. I was just following orders."

He punctuated the last two words with heightened emotion, as though to remind her he was blameless. The one to blame was the person behind all of it.

The man was a member of the upper management who was on his way to bring Zong Jinghao some documents to sign. When he came across Guan Jing, he asked, "Is this your girlfriend?"

Guan Jing held an executive position at the company. This was the first time he appeared to be intimidated by a woman.

Look at how he's squirming.

Guan Jing's expression hardened. He was taken aback by the audacity of the man and was about to explain himself, but the latter had already started knocking on the office door.

A deep voice boomed from the other side of the door, "Come in."

The man entered and handed the documents to Zong Jinghao.

The company was in the midst of buying over an electronics company that used to be a major player in the market with clients worldwide. However, due to ill management, its revenue had been declining for years. Zong Jinghao planned on breaking into the electronics industry and decided to use this company as a start.

Their previous proposal failed, so they drafted a new one.

The door of the office was left open. The man was waiting for Zong Jinghao to finish going over the proposal when he glimpsed Guan Jing talking to the woman.

Lin Xinyan knew Zong Jinghao was working. Thus, she decided not to go in.

After scanning the proposal, Zong Jinghao found himself pleased with its contents. He signed his name, lifted his head, and also saw the pair outside.

He rolled his eyes when he saw Lin Xinyan. Zong Jinghao pursed his lips. Why didn't she just come in?

He tossed the documents aside, causing the man to scramble in order to pick them up. The man muttered, "Mr. Guan's girlfriend sure is pretty."

Zong Jinghao's eyes narrowed. Guan Jing's girlfriend?

The man assumed Zong Jinghao was intrigued and pointed at Lin Xinyan. He continued, "I'm talking about her. When I was in the lift with her, she mentioned she was here to see Guan Jing. They've been talking since then."

Zong Jinghao leaned back in his chair and unbuttoned his cuffs. His expression grew stern and he murmured, "Call him in."

The man sensed that the atmosphere in the room had become cold. He walked over to the door and called out to Guan Jing, "Mr. Zong wants you to come in."

Guan Jing glanced at Lin Xinyan. "Shall we go in together?"

She saw the man carrying the documents backed out and figured that Zong Jinghao was done with his work. She nodded.

Guan Jing and Lin Xinyan strolled in. The man was not the nosy type. His comment came from a slip of the tongue.

"I'll be headed back to work, Mr. Zong," the man said.

"Stop." Zong Jinghao rose to his feet. He was dressed in a shirt with its sleeves rolled back, revealing his muscular forearms. He tugged at his tie and ordered, "Tell them what you just told me."

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The man was caught off guard. What did I just say?

His memory quickly returned to him and he addressed Guan Jing, "Oh. I told Mr. Zong that your girlfriend is pretty."

Guan Jing jumped slightly, almost losing his balance. His eyes widened to the size of saucers and he barked, "Are you blind? Since when did I have a girlfriend?"

Lin Xinyan was standing next to Zong Jinghao. She caught the subtle twitches in the vein in his temple and leaned in toward him discreetly.

A stranger misunderstood because he doesn't know any better.

Is it really worth getting angry over?

The man was dumbfounded by Guan Jing's response. What's going on?

He looked at Guan Jing, then at Lin Xinyan.

Did I say something wrong?

Sweat pooled on the man's forehead. "I... I was..."

Lin Xinyan was well aware of Zong Jinghao's temper. I chose not to come in because I didn't want to disturb him. I can't allow him to take his anger out on someone who formed a reasonable misunderstanding.

She turned to the man. "I'm actually here for Mr. Zong. You can go back to work."

The man did not dare to move on her command. He looked at Zong Jinghao, awaiting his order.

The president growled, "Didn't you hear what she said?"

The man's jaw fell open. I think I just stumbled upon something.

This woman...

"Why are you still here?" Guan Jing spat at him.

The man anxiously scuttled out. In his haste, he failed to notice the door and collided headfirst into it. A small bump swelled on his forehead. Guan Jing turned to face him. "If there's something wrong with your eyes, you should get it checked out at the hospital."

"I am due for an eye checkup." The man placed a hand over his bump and scrambled out.

Guan Jing erupted into sniggers. Serve you right for making such a blunder.

Zong Jinghao did not join him. Instead, he stared at him blankly.

His tepid reaction irritated Guan Jing, who threw a pleading expression toward Lin Xinyan.

This is my fault. Don't aggravate him.

Lin Xinyan was about to speak when Zong Jinghao beat her to it. "You want to ask me to go easy on him?"

She immediately sealed her lips.

Guan Jing appeared to be resigned to his fate.

Today's really not my day.

Lin Xinyan reached out to clasp his hand and asked, "What time do you get off work?"

Zong Jinghao was still fuming and did not reply her.

Lin Xinyan snaked her arms around his neck and whined, "I'm hungry. Can we go eat now?"

Behind Zong Jinghao's back, she gestured at Guan Jing who received her message and quietly sneaked toward the door.

Zong Jinghao lowered his gaze at her. She flashed him a wide grin. Without lifting his head, Zong Jinghao muttered, "This acquisition will be headed by you."

Guan Jing let out a sigh of relief. "Yes, Sir."

He marched out of the office quickly, shutting the door behind him.

Lin Xinyan released her grip and was about to back away when she felt Zong Jinghao wrap his arms around her waist. With one yank, she found herself pressed up against him. His lips curled up and he purred, "Trying to leave after you've used me?"

Their bodies were plastered together. Lin Xinyan hung her head and whispered, "You're too petty."

He lifted her face by her chin and planted a light kiss on her lips. "How am I petty?"

I'm extremely normal. Which man could tolerate their beloved being called someone else's girlfriend?

Men and their machismo, Lin Xinyan lamented inwardly.

Her next words came out slow and strained, "Can you call Su Zhan for me? I need to see him."

Zong Jinghao did not respond.

"Why did you call me here?" Lin Xinyan asked.

He had been busy recently, leaving for work early and only returned late at night. It had been some time since they last sat down for a meal together. He instructed his secretary to make a reservation so he could have a private dinner with Lin Xinyuan.

Instead of answering her question, Zong Jinghao asked, "Why do you need to see Su Zhan?"

Lin Xinyan thought back to Qin Ya's tortured expression. She let out a small sigh and raised her head to meet Zong Jinghao's gaze. "I want to punch him."

Her reply stunned him. His eyebrow twitched, and he massaged his temples. He did not know whether to laugh or cry.

“Call him.” Lin Xinyan snuggled deeper into his embrace and tugged on his tie. She rarely acted in such a coquettish manner around him.

Zong Jinghao tried to hide his delight by remaining quiet.

Lin Xinyan pulled him nearer to her by his tie. Their noses touched. With such close quarters, he could practically map out every detail of her face.

She put on a mock display of fierceness. “Are you going to call him or not?”

Lin Xinyan knew there would be a difference between her calling and him.

If I call and end up showing my displeasure, I’ll have to handle it on my own. But if he calls, and I end up acting on my anger, I’ll still be able to say that Zong Jinghao feels the same way.

He’s the one who called after all.

Zong Jinghao blinked, his eyelashes getting caught in a few loose strands of her hair. He smiled ruefully and said in a defeated voice, “Whatever you want. But only on one condition.”

“What condition?” Lin Xinyuan asked warily.

He narrowed his eyes and pondered for a moment. “How about you take the initiative for once?” Zong Jinghao asked hopefully.

Lin Xinyan was speechless.

A blush bloomed on her cheeks and Zong Jinghao hugged her tighter. While keeping one hand wrapped around her waist, he used the other hand to dial on his office desk phone. He called Su Zhan and asked him out to dinner.

Su Zhan agreed cheerily.

After he hung up, Zong Jinghao turned his attention back to Lin Xinyuan. “Are you satisfied?”

She made an inaudible sound of agreement.

However, Zong Jinghao still had some work to attend to and sat Lin Xinyuan down on his lap. He kept one arm around her as he perused various documents. She did not understand most of the contents and gradually dozed off to sleep. Zong Jinghao allowed her to lean against him as she slumbered. “I’ll wake you later.”

In her barely awake state, she made mumbled an acknowledgment.

Zong Jinghao woke her as he carried her into the car. She asked if he was done with his work.

He grabbed her jacket and grunted in response, "Are you hungry?"

She nodded.

It was long past dinnertime. If they ate now, it could be considered supper.

The luminescent moon painted an iridescent glow across the night sky.

Zong Jinghao stopped the car in front of a fine dining restaurant.

Lin Xinyan looked out the window and caught sight of Su Zhan conversing with a woman by the side of the road.

She lowered the window, allowing a gust of chilly air to rush in. She put on her jacket and scrutinized the woman. Is that Su Zhan's ex-girlfriend?

Are they still in contact?

She narrowed her eyes in disapproval.

From the moment Liu Feifei left the hospital, she hired someone to follow Su Zhan. She intended to find the right opportunity to drive a wedge between them.

She knew Qin Ya had left the Su family, and the elderly lady had become mute.

This is the perfect time to get Su Zhan to come back to me.

She knew she needed to use a soft approach. This meeting was all part of her scheme. Although she did not approach Su Zhan, she put on a compelling performance of a damsel in distress who was harassed by a pervert.

Naturally, even the pervert was stationed there by her.

Since I can't speak to him of my own accord, I'll get him to come to me instead.

There's no way he could ignore seeing me being harassed. We might not be together anymore, but he used to love me.

He has to care more about me than a stranger, right?

She carefully calculated the time and just as she expected, Su Zhan rushed in to rescue her.

While grappling with the "pervert", she accidentally sprained her ankle.

Liu Feifei intentionally thanked him without lingering. She limped away pitifully.

The last thing Su Zhan wanted was to reconnect with her, but her unstable gait forced his hand.

“Where are you going? I’ll send you there.” He supported her by her arm.

Liu Feifei lowered her gaze. “Forget it. I don’t want to trouble you.”

“I would help strangers in such a situation as well.”

Liu Feifei stopped objecting.

“I’m really sorry about this. I wanted you back so badly in the past, which led me to make many mistakes. I apologize for causing so much inconvenience to you with my actions.” Liu Feifei’s sincere body language reminded him of who she used to be, who she was a long time ago.

Su Zhan was momentarily stupefied.

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Liu Feifei hung her head but peered at Su Zhan using her peripheral vision.

Although he displayed little emotion, she knew she did not abhor him. I came on too strong in the past, which turned him off.

I forgot to consider the fact that we were apart for too long. We drifted apart and all feelings between us dissipated.

If I want him back, I would have to start by reclaiming his heart.

I need to let him experience joy while I’m by his side. We have so much history between us and that’s something Qin Ya can never replace.

She smiled faintly. “Do you hate me?”

Without waiting for Su Zhan to reply, she went on, “It’s fine if you resent me. It’s my fault, after all.”

Su Zhan had nothing to say.

They walked over to the car, where he unlocked the door and opened it. "Get in. I'll send you home."

Liu Feifei cracked a smile. "You haven't eaten, right? I'll call a cab. There's no need to bother you."

Just when she was about to turn and leave, Su Zhan stopped her. "Your leg is injured. Let me drive you."

Liu Feifei continued to protest, "There's really no need. You're already married. It won't look good if someone sees us so close together. I don't want to repeat old mistakes."

Liu Feifei limped to the sidewalk.

Su Zhan stood rooted to the ground as he watched her.

"If you want to go, just go. What's with the hesitation?" A derisive voice chimed out from behind him. Su Zhan turned to see Lin Xinyan there.

He was startled by her appearance. Did she see everything?

He anxiously explained himself, "We met by coincidence. A pervert was after her. Was I supposed to leave her in the lurch?"

Lin Xinyan chuckled. "A knight in shining armor. You acted as any man would. You did nothing wrong. I'm the one who's wrong. I must have been crazy to have wanted to set you and Ya up. She was right. You're a womanizer through and through."

Su Zhan stepped nearer to her. "This really is a misunderstanding..."

"What misunderstanding? You were so sympathetic that you absolutely had to drive her home. In what way did I misunderstand?" Lin Xinyan glowered at him.

"Her leg is injured..."

"Doesn't she have any other friends who can help? Does it have to be you?" Lin Xinyan interrupted him.

She finally understood why Qin Ya was unwilling to keep the baby.

Does he not understand what I'm getting at?

Lin Xinyan snapped her mouth shut in an attempt to calm down. She sucked in a deep breath. "Su Zhan, if you still have feelings for your ex-girlfriend, just promise me you'll stop seeing Ya."

Su Zhan was alarmed by her words. He reached out to touch her but stopped himself after one stern look from Zong Jinghao. "Qin Ya is the one I like."

Lin Xinyan wanted to laugh but could not bring herself to in front of the ignorant Su Zhan.

"You like Ya?"

"Yes, I do."

"Have you seriously considered this though, if she loves you, why would she leave you? She was away for some time, yet you don't seem to be curious about what she was up to all that time. Don't you want to know about the people she met? The possible relationships she forged?" Lin Xinyan hissed.

As a lawyer, shouldn't he be smarter than most people?

But he seems to be even dumber than the average Homosapien right now!

He's an absolute disappointment.

It was true that Su Zhan had never thought about those questions. But Liu Feifei mentioned why she left him.

"She said she was just deadweight since she couldn't conceive. So she left."

Lin Xinyan found his response ridiculous. If you really love a person, how could you leave them without so much as a warning?

A love like that is just selfish.

She wasn't doing this for them. If she loved him, she wouldn't have been able to leave. If she left, it would have been excruciating for her. Su Zhan is right. She left because she felt bad about not being able to conceive.

After being gone for so long, why did she come back?

Does she not feel like a burden anymore?

Highly unlikely. This is just plain illogical!

"I now support every one of Ya's decisions. You've let me down!"

Lin Xinyuan immediately spun around and climbed into the car without speaking so much as another word to Su Zhan.

She was fraught with worry over Qin Ya and detested Su Zhan's attitude.

Zong Jinghao had his hands in his pockets as he strolled over. He solemnly reminded Su Zhan, "She rarely treats people this way. You should reflect on yourself."

His hand landed heavily on Su Zhan's shoulder. When he heard Lin Xinyuan's request to meet Su Zhan, Zong Jinghao knew something was off.

Something must have happened to Qin Ya. That's the only reason she would ask to see Su Zhan. She's definitely trying to push both of them together. But seeing him with his ex-girlfriend must have greatly disappointed and angered her. That's why she ripped into Su Zhan.

Su Zhan was dealing with his own troubles. Qin Ya might be willing to see me now, but she's so distant. No matter what I say, she reacts in such a subdued manner.

Even the hottest of fires burn out after being drenched repeatedly.

Matters of the heart were solely between the involved parties.

It was up to Su Zhan to comprehend its meaning.

Zong Jinghao entered the car but did not start it up. Instead, he twirled her hair with his fingers. "Let's go eat."

Lin Xinyuan was still fuming over Su Zhan.

The solution to the problem couldn't be more simple. If he loves Qin Ya, he should sever all ties with his ex-girlfriend. At the very least it'll give Qin Ya a sense of security.

If he still has feelings for his ex-girlfriend, then he should just leave Qin Ya alone.

Yet he claims to love Qin Ya, while at the same time meeting with his ex-girlfriend.

She snapped her head toward Zong Jinghao and blurted, "Qin Ya is pregnant."

Zong Jinghao had guessed as much after seeing her outburst.

He smiled warmly at her. "What do you plan to do? Do you want me to hire someone to beat Su Zhan up?"

Lin Xinyan shook her head. I can't do something so impulsive. Beating him up will just temporarily quell my frustration. It wouldn't be a long-term solution.

"I want to investigate his ex-girlfriend. I want to know where she's been and why she's suddenly back." If she really left Su Zhan because she couldn't conceive, it means she really loves him. I need to get Qin Ya out of the country for now.

Whether Su Zhan gets back together with his ex-girlfriend or not is up to him.

All I can do is keep Qin Ya from getting hurt even more than she already has.

Zong Jinghao heaved a sigh. She might be nosy, but it can't be denied that she's righteous as well.

Lin Xinyan seemed to read his mind, and her lip curled into a bitter smile. "Ya has been with me all this time. She only returned to the country because of me. If she didn't come back, she wouldn't have met Su Zhan and landed herself in this situation."

This is my responsibility.

Zong Jinghao tried to keep himself from grinning. If she didn't come back, what would have become of me?

He helped her out of the car. "Let's get something in our stomachs for now."

Lin Xinyuan followed him distractedly. As Zong Jinghao made a reservation beforehand, the waiter immediately led them to a table. Once they were seated, Zong Jinghao fished out his phone to send a text to Shen Peichuan and instructed him to look into Liu Feifei. Guan Jing was going to be too busy to help.

He could only turn to Shen Peichuan, who had the resources and worked efficiently.

The waiter served the food.

Zong Jinghao preferred lighter food. This restaurant specialized in nutritious cuisine and did not serve many oily or meat forward dishes.

He spooned some soup for Lin Xinyan. The main ingredient in the soup was chicken, with an assortment of healthy ingredients. It was light, fresh and nourishing.

He remembered Lin Xinyan mentioning her body was not in the greatest condition. When he was ordering, he asked the waiter which soup was most suitable for women and was recommended this dish.

Lin Xinyan put a spoonful into her mouth. The ginseng flavor was especially salient. Every ingredient added had its purpose.

It was light but perfectly suited her palate.

Zong Jinghao still had not touched his food. He leaned back and let his gaze drift to her abdomen.

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He wondered what it would be like if she were pregnant.

Perhaps it was too pleasant even to fantasize, and the corners of his lips curved into a tiny smile.

Lin Xinyan didn't notice anything odd about Zong Jinghao while she slowly drank the soup he had scooped for her. Although it was already spring, the weather was still cold. The hot soup warmed her body gradually.

Afterward, she went to the bathroom. When she came out of the bathroom, she was stopped by a waitress in the restaurant. "Hello. Are you Ms. Lin?" the waitress asked.

Lin Xinyan didn't immediately reply. Thinking that she was very strange, she asked vigilantly, "Is anything the matter?"

The waitress took out a letter from her pocket and said, "A gentleman in a wheelchair asked me to give you this letter."

When Bai Yinning paid the waitress to deliver the letter to Lin Xinyan, he had pointed her out.

The waitress knew that she was Lin Xinyan, but she asked her for confirmation just in case she made a mistake. She didn't expect the woman to be so vigilant. Hence, she had no choice but to take out the letter.

Lin Xinyan glanced around instinctively, and the waitress said, "That man has already left."

Bai Yinning is here in B City?

She took the letter from the waitress and hesitated for a moment before opening it. There was not much content in it. There were only a few sentences: I live in Contine Hotel, Room 608. Find me. I have something to tell you.

Lin Xinyan frowned and thought he was strange and didn't intend to go.

She was not interested in what he had to say.

She tore up the letter, threw it into the trash can, and then walked toward the hall. Zong Jinghao was on the phone, looking very serious. Lin Xinyan sat down and waited until he hung up the call before asking, "Who is it?"

Zong Jinghao told her Li Jing and Wen Qing had a car accident and were now in the hospital. Their son was not in the country at that moment, so he had to go and check on them.

He got up and said, "Let me send you home."

Lin Xinyan suddenly tensed up. Inexplicably, she felt that this matter had something to do with Bai Yinning. She received his letter and the next moment Wen Qing had a car accident? It was too much of a coincidence.

She looked up at Zong Jinghao and said, "You should go to the hospital first. I can take a taxi and go home by myself."

Zong Jinghao's pursed his lips together, obviously worrying about her safety.

Lin Xinyan held his hand and assured him, "Don't regard me as a child. Didn't I live well before I met you? I am an adult, and I can take good care of myself."

Zong Jinghao was silent for a while before saying, "Call me when you get home."

Lin Xinyan quickly nodded her head. "Go ahead."

After Zong Jinghao left, Lin Xinyan got up and left the restaurant. She stood by the side of the road while waiting for a taxi. Although it was already February, the weather was still a bit cold, so she wrapped her coat tightly around herself.

A black car drove up and stopped in front of her. Gao Yuan got off the car, opened the door, and gestured to Lin Xinyan, "Ms. Lin, please."

Gao Yuan was Bai Yinning's personal assistant. Lin Xinyan was sure that Wen Qing's car accident was definitely related to Bai Yinning.

Otherwise, how could there be such a coincidence?

As soon as Zong Jinghao left, Bai Yinning's man came.

Now, she was interested to hear what Bai Yinning had to say.

She got into the car, and very quickly, they drove to the hotel.

The car came to a stop, and Gao Yuan got out of the car to open the door for her. He gestured for her to enter the hotel, and she glanced at him before stepping inside.

Gao Yuan led the way, crossing the lobby, and got on the elevator to the sixth floor. They walked to Room 608. Gao Yuan stood by the door and said, "Please enter, Ms. Lin. Mr. Bai is waiting for you inside."

Lin Xinyan twisted the door handle and opened the door.

The room was heated. Bai Yinning was sitting in front of the French windows with his back to the door. He seemed to be admiring the night view, waiting for someone.

She walked into the room, and without turning his head to look at her, Bai Yinning said, "You're here."

"Mr. Bai, you went to great pains to invite me. Can I not come?" Lin Xinyan stood beside him, and like him, she looked outside the windows at the beautiful night view. B City was shrouded in neon lights, rendering the night view brilliant and colorful.

"No wonder you want to return to this place so badly. It is lovely," he said.

"No. The reason I came back is not because of the city, but because of the people living in the city," she replied.

Bai Yinning finally turned his gaze to her.

However, Lin Xinyan didn't look at him.

"If Wen Qing did not get into an accident, would you have come?" he asked.

"No," she answered curtly.

Bai Yinning smiled helplessly. "Aren't you afraid that I would feel hurt by your answer?"

"I presume you would have already felt hurt," she answered.

After all, he knew about her relationship with Zong Jinghao in Baicheng, and she chose not to see him exactly because she didn't want to hurt him.

"I have been here for two weeks now," Bai Yinning said.

Lin Xinyan turned to look at him. He has been in B City for two weeks?

What has he done in this period of time?

"Don't you think it's too easy to get Wen Qing into a car accident?" he suddenly asked.

Lin Xinyan was puzzled. In fact, he could have just find her instead of going to such great lengths to invite her here.

Bai Yinning didn't intend to keep anything from her and said, "I found out."

"What did you find out?" Lin Xinyan had an awful premonition.

"Wen Qing was the one who cut my adoptive father's finger." He stared at her intently and continued, "You knew everything, but you promised someone to keep it a secret, right?"

Lin Xinyan clenched her hands into fists and asked, "Are you here for revenge? Did you orchestrate Wen Qing's accident?"

Bai Yinning had convinced Cheng Yuwen to tell him the truth, and found out that the person who cut Bai Hongfei's finger was Wen Qing.

He didn't want to disclose anything more to Lin Xinyan. He had only revealed his plans to Cheng Yuwen, seeing how the latter also hated Wen Qing.

However, he could understand Cheng Yuwen's hatred for Wen Qing. After all, his sister was also imprisoned back then, and he wanted to seek justice for her hardships with his own hands.

"This is what you wanted to say to me?" Lin Xinyan knew she could not stop him from taking revenge, nor could she tell Zong Jinghao that Bai Yinning was behind Wen Qing's accident.

"I wanted to see you," Bai Yinning said and looked at her.

Lin Xinyan pretended to be calm. "I have a husband."

He lowered his head and smiled. "Can you not sprinkle salt on my wound?"

Lin Xinyan did not lead him on. Instead, she said, "This is B City, not Baicheng. It is not easy to deal with him. I know everyone has their own position. If you have made up your mind, I will not talk you out of it. I just want to say this: If revenge breeds revenge, will there ever be an end to it?"

Even if he took revenge against Wen Qing, could Bai Hongfei be resurrected?

Could he turn back time and change the fact that he was imprisoned?

He couldn't.

Revenge was but something the living does to seek solace.

"I should go," Lin Xinyan said, then she turned and walked out.

Bai Yinning stopped her. "If it was your relative who suffered such harm, would you still be able to forgive?"

Lin Xinyan paused in her footsteps, but she did not answer. She didn't know the answer either. It seemed difficult not to resent, as she thought of how much she resented Lin Guoan.

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After the meeting, Gao Yuan sent her back. When she returned home, Zong Jinghao was not back yet. The two children had already taken a bath and were about to go to bed.

Seeing Lin Xinyan entering the door, Lin Ruixi rushed over, hugged her leg, and said, "Mommy, you're back!"

Lin Xinyan picked her up and kissed her on her cheek. "Why aren't you sleeping?" she asked.

The little girl thought for a while and said, "I'm waiting for you."

"What are you talking about? You were obviously staying up because you were drinking milk." Lin Xichen exposed her unceremoniously.

The little girl blinked and glared at him. "Xichen is so annoying!"

The boy was wearing a set of fleece pajamas. He put down his glass of milk and glanced at his sister, "I merely told the truth."

The little girl buried herself in Lin Xinyan's arms coyly while saying, "Mommy, Xichen is bullying me."

Lin Xinyan patted her on the back. "Alright now, he didn't mean to bully you."

Thinking that his sister was childish and only knew how to act like a baby, Lin Xichen went back to the room to sleep.

He slept alone now, and Lin Ruixi slept with Cheng Yuxiu.

She could not sleep alone because she was afraid.

Lin Xichen wondered what there was to be afraid of.

After washing the glasses that the two children used, Cheng Yuxiu walked over, looked at Lin Xinyan, and asked, "Did you come back alone?"

She hadn't seen Zong Jinghao.

Lin Xinyan put Lin Ruixi down. "Go and play with your brother for a while."

"I want Mommy to carry me." Lin Ruixi clung onto her arms reluctantly.

Lin Xinyan coaxed her, "Ruixi is a good girl. If you wait till the weekend, Mommy will take you and Xichen out to play."

"Really?" the little girl exclaimed excitedly.

In fact, she was easy to coax. She just needed to be given food, drinks, and playtime.

Lin Xinyan patted her head and assured her before she was willing to go to Lin Xichen.

"Do you have something to tell me?" Cheng Yuxiu asked.

She wouldn't have sent the child away otherwise.

"Let's go to the room and talk."

"Let's go to my room," Cheng Yuxiu offered. After she took over caring for Lin Ruixi, she and Zong Qifeng slept in separate rooms. There was no one in her room at that moment.

Lin Xinyan nodded.

After entering the room, Lin Xinyan closed the door. Cheng Yuxiu gestured for her to sit.

Lin Xinyan sat down near the edge of the bed. After thinking for a while, she said, "Wen Qing had a car accident."

"Is his condition serious?" Cheng Yuxiu asked.

Lin Xinyan shook her head. "I don't know. Jinghao went to check on him."

Cheng Yuxiu sighed, "Fate is unpredictable."

"This is not an accident," Lin Xinyan said as she wondered if Cheng Yuxiu hated Wen Qing.

The latter's eyes widened in disbelief. If it was not an accident, that meant it was premeditated. Who would dare to do this?

"Bai Hongfei's adopted son, Bai Yinning, came to B City. He did this to avenge Bai Hongfei."

Cheng Yuxiu lowered her eyes thoughtfully and said, "It has been so long since. Why bother?"

"No matter how much time has passed, the damage is done. Don't you feel any resentment?" Lin Xinyan asked the question that she had wondered for the longest time.

Cheng Yuxiu got up, walked to the window, and looked outside.

"How do you differentiate right from wrong? I was the one who made Wen Xian a promise, and though what happened was unexpected, I have to bear the consequences. If I think about it carefully, what did Wen Qing do wrong? If I really ruined Wen Xian's marriage, what he did was justified," she said.

"But you did not ruin her marriage." Lin Xinyan looked at her.

"Things happened because of me, nonetheless. If I refused Wen Xian when she came to me, things wouldn't have progressed the way they did. Maybe fate was toying with us, or maybe it was predestined. I had already seen through the matter."

She felt that she was currently at the pinnacle of her life, living happily and harmoniously with her family. This was something which she didn't dare to imagine before. Even though Zong Jinghao still refused to speak to her, she was contented that she could still see him frequently.

"Please help me persuade Bai Yinning." Cheng Yuxiu knew it wouldn't be easy to get revenge on Wen Qing. Besides, Bai Yinning was Bai Hongfei's adopted son. She didn't want to see him get into trouble.

"I'm afraid no one can persuade him," Lin Xinyan knew very well that Bai Yinning was set on getting revenge.

Cheng Yuxiu sighed. The younger generation should not bear the grudges of the older generation.

"If he succeeds, would you be happy?" Lin Xinyan asked as she walked toward her.

Cheng Yuxiu shook her head. "No, I won't. Wen Qing is in the wrong, but it is true that he regards Jinghao as family."

She didn't want Zong Jinghao to know the truth because she was afraid that he would not be able to accept it. He had always respected Wen Qing, and the latter cared about him as much as he cared about his sister.

Moreover, she didn't want her son to be involved in a matter of the past.

She was satisfied enough to see him from time to time. It was fine for her, even if he would never acknowledge her as his mother in this lifetime.

"Where is Bai Yinning?" Cheng Yuxiu suddenly asked.

She couldn't just watch him get into trouble. Even if it was for Bai Hongfei's sake, she should persuade him.

Lin Xinyan told her where Bai Yinning stayed.

After visiting the Wen family once, she felt that Cheng Yuxiu's approach was right. Since the truth had been hidden for so long, and the matter had passed, it was only right not to uncover it because it would surely do more harm than good.

Amongst them, the one who would be hurt the most was Zong Jinghao. The person who he had always respected was his enemy, while the person he had always treated indifferently and even hated was his biological mother. How could he accept this turn of events?

How could he face it?

She was worried that Bai Yinning would break the current peace.

"Alright, rest early," Cheng Yuxiu said.

Lin Xinyan responded softly in agreement, then turned around and walked out of the room.

However, as soon as she walked out, Zong Jinghao came in through the front door. His eyes flickered when he saw her coming out of Cheng Yuxiu's room.

With his coat in her hand, she asked, "Is it serious?"

"It's not life threatening, but he has a broken arm and needs to recuperate." Zong Jinghao finished and went upstairs to the second floor, while Lin Xinyan hung his coat before following him upstairs.

Lin Xinyan entered the room, and Zong Jinghao was unbuttoning his shirt by the side of the bed. With his back to Lin Xinyan, he asked, "What were you doing in her room?"

Lin Xinyan closed the room door, saying, "Ruixi is sleeping with her. I went in to check on my child. Can't I do that?"

Zong Jinghao didn't answer her. He undressed and went straight into the bathroom.

Soon, the sound of running water came from the bathroom.

Lin Xinyan knew there was still a barrier between him and Cheng Yuxiu.

She couldn't help but sigh. It was a pressure to have too much knowledge, and she would rather not have known too much.

That way, she could think from his perspective without feeling troubled over Bai Yinning's affairs.

On the one hand, she couldn't decide whether to tell him, but on the other hand, she was afraid that Bai Yinning would resort to other methods if she didn't.

Based on Zong Jinghao's smarts, he would definitely connect with time.

She was so absorbed in her thoughts that she didn't realize the sound of running water from the bathroom had stopped.

"What are you thinking about?"

She looked up.

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He only had a white bath towel wrapped around his lower body. She had an unobstructed view of his firm muscles. Drops of water slid down the curves of his abdomen and hips.

That look, matched with his cool and handsome-looking face, succeeded in him exuding a strong hormonal scent.

Lin Xinyan swallowed subconsciously and turned her head aside as she asked, "How did he get into the accident?"

She wanted to know if Wen Qing had found anything amiss.

If Bai Yinning orchestrated the accident without leaving behind any trace, then she would hold the truth from him for the time being. If Cheng Yuxiu could persuade Bai Yinning to put aside his grievances and leave B City, then she could treat the matter as if it had never happened.

Zong Jinghao narrowed his eyes. "It was not an accident."

"It was an intentional act?" Lin Xinyan raised her voice suddenly. She tried to compose herself with a smile and said, "I was just worried."

Zong Jinghao fell silent and faintly stared at her.

Not daring to look at him, Lin Xinyan lowered her head. "I'm going to take a bath."

As soon as she made her way to the bathroom, Zong Jinghao grabbed her wrist and commanded, "Look at me."

Lin Xinyan kept her head lowered as she tried to break free from his hold. "You're hurting me," she said.

"Look at me," he repeated. He didn't raise his voice, but it was intimidating.

Lin Xinyan panicked for a moment, then slowly raised her head as if it were very heavy. Every second that she met his eyes was pure torture.

His gaze and his voice became deeper. "Why are you so nervous?"

"I'm not." Lin Xinyan pretended to be calm.

Zong Jinghao pushed on. "You seem to be very concerned about whether the nature of the accident. Perhaps you know it was not an accident?"

“No, I don’t know,” Lin Xinyan answered.

A look of disappointment flashed across his eyes, but Lin Xinyan didn’t catch it.

“I don’t like you hiding things from me. It means you do not trust me.”

He let go of her hand, hoping that she could be honest with him instead of him forcing her to do so.

As soon as Zong Jinghao turned around, she spoke, “I saw Bai Yinning today.”

He turned around with narrowed eyes. Very quickly, he grasped the situation. Bai Yinning had said before that he would find out who imprisoned Bai Hongfei and avenge him.

After he came to B City, Wen Qing had a car accident.

In other words, he found out that it was Wen Qing who imprisoned Bai Hongfei back then, so he came to B City and premeditated the car accident.

Lin Xinyan hugged him and pressed her face against his chest. “Taking into account that Uncle is not in a life-threatening condition this time, let’s not pursue it. Give me some time. I will persuade him to leave.”

Zong Jinghao frowned. He didn’t like Lin Xinyan pleading for that man.

“When did you meet him?” he asked with clenched his teeth.

“When you went to the hospital,” Lin Xinyan told him honestly. Her relationship with Zong Jinghao was not stable now, and she didn’t want to create any distance between them by lying.

Zong Jinghao recalled the situation in the day. She had taken the initiative to leave, not to get him to the hospital as soon as possible, but because she was going to see Bai Yinning.

“Where?” he asked.

“At a hotel.”

“What did he talk about?” he asked again.

Feeling a little hurt by his interrogation, Lin Xinyan lifted her head to look at him. “He just said he found out who caused his adoptive father’s death and that he came to B City for revenge.”

With that, she let go of him. She felt he did not trust her too.

Lowering her gaze, she blinked profusely and asked, "Do you not trust me?"

Zong Jinghao pulled her into his arms again, pinching her chin, saying, "I do. I just don't like him pestering you, and I don't like you meeting him."

He locked his lips with hers. As he bit down on her lips, he said, "From now on, you are not allowed to see him."

"But..." She had wanted to speak, but he suddenly increased his strength, causing her to frown in pain.

As he pressed her onto the bed, Lin Xinyan struggled. "I haven't taken a shower yet."

"I do not disdain you for that."

When Lin Xinyan woke up, the room was still dark, but there was no one around. She grabbed the phone on the table. It was already 11.25 a.m.. she abruptly sat up. It is almost noon?

Maybe she moved too fast because she felt pain all over her body, especially on her waist and her lady parts.

It was obviously deliberate of him for what happened last night.

Lin Xinyan got out of bed. She put on clothes, pulled opened the heavy blackout curtains, and the sunshine entered the room instantaneously. The weather was perfect.

After washing up, she went downstairs. There was no one at home. The two children went to kindergarten while Zong Qifeng went to see an old friend, and Cheng Yuxiu went to the hotel.

When Bai Yinning saw Cheng Yuxiu at his door, he was surprised. He didn't expect that she would take the initiative to look for him, but thought it was good timing since he also wanted to speak with her.

"I hope you don't mind that I took the liberty to look for you," Cheng Yuxiu said.

Bai Yinning smiled. "Don't worry. You are family to me. Come on in."

Holding on to her bag across her shoulder, Cheng Yuxiu walked into the room.

Bai Yinning ordered Gao Yuan to stand guard at the door. "No one is allowed to disturb us."

Gao Yuan bowed in response to his acknowledgement.

Bai Yinning rolled his wheelchair into the room, closed the door, and said, "Please sit down."

Cheng Yuxiu sat down on the sofa. "I won't beat around the bush. I don't want you to seek revenge on Wen Qing for what happened in the past."

Surprised, he couldn't understand why she would ask him of this.

"You are very important to my adoptive father. Naturally, I also respect you very much, but I cannot accept what you just said. Back then, he imprisoned you and my adoptive father. Both of you were once in love, and I think you know very well that he had his finger chopped off. I don't understand why you are trying to stop me now that I want to avenge him."

Cheng Yuxiu clenched her hands tightly, causing her nails to dig into her palms. However, she did not feel the pain at all.

She will never forget how Wen Qing forced her to call Zong Qifeng. Bai Hongfei was pressed on the table by two strong men. If she didn't make the call, he threatened to cut off Bai Hongfei's finger.

Forced into a corner, she had no choice but to do as he said.

"Did you care about my adoptive father?" Bai Yinning asked. He wanted to know if she ever loved Bai Hongfei.

However, Bai Hongfei had been dead for many years, and Cheng Yuxiu was not young anymore, so he refrained from asking her.

"I did care about him. That's why I came to see you today. If he were still alive, I'm sure he wouldn't want you to put yourself in danger. Let it go."

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Bai Yinning was stumped. There was reason in her words.

"But I'm his son. How can I be indifferent to his suffering?" He was so obsessed with avenging Bai Hongfei. The man raised him and gave everything belonging to the Bai family to him when he was not related to him by blood.

Bai Yinning was grateful yet also heartbroken that such a devoted man lost his lover and was tortured. More than anything, he felt unfair on his behalf.

Even though he knew that B City was not his territory, he still wanted to reclaim justice for Bai Hongfei!

Cheng Yuxiu fixed her gaze on Bai Yinning for a long time. She had to admit that what he said made sense too. If the latter was indifferent to the suffering of someone he cared about, then he must be cold-blooded.

“I have said everything I came here to say, and I cannot stop you if you insist. However, this is B City, not Baicheng. They are out in the open while you are in the dark. You may have the upper hand this time, but I’m afraid it might not end well.”

Bai Yinning came to B City and premeditated the car accident without Wen Qing’s and Zong Jinghao’s knowledge. He understood that once any of them found out his identity, it would be difficult for him to make a move again.

“I can’t leave any regrets.”

Cheng Yuxiu could tell that Bai Yinning had made up his mind, and she couldn’t persuade him further. She could only let him be.

The least she could do for Bai Hongfei was to watch over him.

She stood up.. “I should go now.”

However, Bai Yinning did not give any response.

As Cheng Yuxiu twisted the door handle and was about to open the door, Bai Yinning stopped her. “My adoptive father said he hoped I would marry your daughter.”

Cheng Yuxiu paused and looked back at him while Bai Yinning turned her wheelchair to face her.

“You have given birth to a child. I really want to know where your child is now. If it is a girl, I would like to follow my adoptive father’s wish and marry her.”

Cheng Yuxiu tightened her fingers around the door handle and said, “I have never given birth to a child.”

“That’s impossible!” Bai Yinning replied with force and conviction. If Cheng Yuxiu had never given birth to a child, why would Bai Hongfei’s last wish be for him to marry her daughter?

There was only one possibility. Bai Hongfei knew Cheng Yuxiu was pregnant, but he didn’t know whether she was carrying a boy or a girl. He might have wanted it to be a girl so that Bai Yinning could marry her.

Cheng Yuxiu was flustered for a moment, but she quickly calmed down. "I married into the Zong family afterward. Everyone knows that I have never had a baby in my life."

Bai Yinning looked at her with a sharp gaze and guessed, "Your child is Zong Jinghao."

Cheng Yuxiu's heart sank. "Do you have evidence?"

"I don't. I have no way of finding out what happened back then. However, some things could not be disputed. For example, why did my adoptive father give up on you and stayed single throughout his life for you? The reason was simple. You had a child with another man; he had no choice but to let you go. Even if he were reluctant, even if his heart ached, he could only let you go. He knows how important a child is to a mother. Maybe you didn't really love the person who impregnated you, but you would stay for the sake of the child..."

Cheng Yuxiu cut him off and said, "I don't want to hear your wild guesses anymore! Go back to Baicheng."

"Forgive me for being rude," Bai Yinning apologized. "Since I am here now, I won't leave that easily. Even if I have to leave, I will do so after achieving my goal."

Seeing how she avoided the topic, he could affirm his guess. What he lacked now was evidence.

If he could find proof that Cheng Yuxiu gave birth to Zong Jinghao, it would be easier for him to deal with Wen Qing. Maybe he would have another helping hand.

After all, Cheng Yuxiu was also imprisoned for six years.

Cheng Yuxiu stared at Bai Yinning. For Bai Hongfei's sake, she wanted very much for him to leave B City safe and sound. Even if he insisted on his ways, she would not simply sit by and watch him get into trouble.

Above all, she would allow no one to uncover her secret. She knew very well who would hurt the most if the truth were revealed.

"Don't blame me for not warning you. Even if you are Bai Hongfei's adopted son, I will not let you off if I find out that you are looking into the past." With that, Cheng Yuxiu opened the door and left.

Since she came to see Bai Hongfei without telling anyone, she had taken a taxi to the hotel instead of taking the family car. At the hotel entrance, she hailed for a taxi and returned home.

Zong Jinghao had asked Aunt Yu to prepare nutritious foods for Lin Xinyan to replenish her health. Lin Xinyan was currently eating what she had prepared for her.

Aunt Yu had stewed sea cucumber soup for her, but she didn't add many ingredients, so it tasted very bland.

Furthermore, the sea cucumber was left whole in the soup, and it looked creepy.

Aunt Yu scooped several sea cucumbers into her bowl. "Sea cucumbers contain iron, vitamin B, and folic acid, which have the effect of nourishing blood." She then leaned closer to her and said with a smile, "It is said that eating sea cucumbers can also beautify your face."

Although Lin Xinyan was very beautiful, looks had to be maintained.

Lin Xinyan scooped around her bowl with a spoon. "I can't finish this much."

"You must. Mr. Zong said that you are in poor health and asked me to prepare it for you," Aunt Yu said.

The sea cucumbers were wild-caught, which had matured for at least eight years with a long growth period. Specialized fishers only caught those that had matured for five to nine years. If they caught one that matured for less than five years, they would throw it back to the sea and let it continue to grow.

On the other hand, farmed sea cucumbers were sold once they mature after a year. The effects would vary accordingly.

Moreover, wild sea cucumbers grew naturally on the seafloor. They fed on algae and aquatic animals rich in nutrients, and accumulated the nutrients in their bodies for a long time. In contrast, farmed sea cucumbers fed on artificial feed, which accelerated their growth but was harmful to the human body.

Because of the high price sea cucumbers could fetch, wild ones were caught in large quantities. There were few left in the sea. Currently, most of the sea cucumbers on the market were farmed.

Needless to say, wild sea cucumbers that had such a long growth period were very few.

How could Lin Xinyan refuse the kind thought?

Even though it was unpalatable, she bit the bullet and ate it.

Cheng Yuxiu overheard Aunt Yu as soon as she walked into the house. She lowered her eyes as she hung up her coat.

She should be happy that Zong Jinghao treated Lin Xinyan so well, but she felt a tiny bit of envy and jealousy.

She had never had that kind of treatment.

She walked into the kitchen and asked, "Why are you only eating now?"

She had left early in the morning and had no idea that Lin Xinyan woke up late.

Lin Xinyan lowered her head as she answered, "I was drawing a design last night so I got up a bit late today."

Cheng Yuxiu didn't think much about it, as she was preoccupied with her own matters. Then, she looked at Aunt Yu and asked her to go ahead with her work.

The housekeeper understood her intentions. "There is no more food at home. I'll go on a supermarket run."

She took off her apron and left the room.

Another maid was outside the house, overseeing workers pruning the plants and the lawns. That happened monthly because the flowers and plants would grow out of shape without pruning.

Lin Xinyan put down the spoon in her hand. "Have you met Bai Yinning?"

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Cheng Yuxiu replied in the affirmative with a faint hum.

"Then is he willing to stop?" Lin Xinyan asked eagerly.

Cheng Yuxiu took a deep breath and shook her head. "No. He seems to be aware of Jinghao's identity, but I will not let him continue to investigate."

Before Lin Xinyan could tell her that Zong Jinghao found out about Bai Yinning, her phone vibrated on the dining table.

It showed Shen Peichuan's number.

Lin Xinyan looked at Cheng Yuxiu and said, "Excuse me while I answer the call."

She walked to the window and pressed the answer button. "Hello?"

"It's me. I investigated what Jinghao asked me to."

Lin Xinyan's nerves tensed, and she straightened her back. "Go ahead," she prompted.

“It might not be clear over the phone. Let’s talk about it when we meet.”

Lin Xinyan thought for a while and said, “Okay.”

After hanging up the call, she put her phone in her pocket and walked back to the dining room. Seeing that Cheng Yuxiu was looking at the sea cucumber in her bowl, she smiled and said, “Mom, you must be hungry too.”

She took a bowl from the kitchen and transferred some sea cucumbers from her bowl. “Please don’t mind it. I haven’t touched it yet.”

Cheng Yuxiu grabbed her hand to stop her. “I’m not hungry. Look how thin you are. You should eat more. And don’t get involved with Bai Yinning. He is trouble personified.”

Lin Xinyan agreed to her request.

Knowing Zong Jinghao’s temper, she didn’t want to be involved with Bai Yinning, anyway.

Cheng Yuxiu returned to her room, and Lin Xinyan forced herself to finish the sea cucumbers. After downing the last of it with a mouthful of water, she put on her clothes and went out.

She drove to meet Shen Peichuan at the designated location.

They were meeting at a bar, and because it was daytime, there weren’t many people. Shen Peichuan was sitting in a booth, drinking.

Lin Xinyan entered the bar, and he asked, “What would you like to drink?”

“Just give me juice. She sat down.

Shen Peichuan asked the bartender to pour a glass of juice. Lin Xinyan glanced at him and asked, “Why did you choose this place?”

“It’s quiet and I want to have a drink,” he said and took a sip of alcohol.

He put down the glass on the table, but continued to fiddle with it. “The words ‘despicable’ and ‘shameless’ cannot describe humans’ nasty and insidious nature.”

Lin Xinyan asked cautiously, “Did something upset you?”

He wouldn't have been so emotional otherwise.

Without replying to her, Shen Peichuan handed Lin Xinyan the file he had placed on the table. "See for yourself."

Lin Xinyan had a rough idea of what was in the file.

Seeing how Shen Peichuan was behaving, she had a bad feeling about it.

Nevertheless, she opened the file with curiosity and unease.

It contained more than a dozen pages of information about Liu Feifei's past, as well as a few photos. There were photos of Liu Feifei alone and her with a man appearing at high-end venues.

Lin Xinyan put down the photos and read the pages of information, but her heart sank deeper as she read page after page.

Su Zhan shared that Liu Feifei told him she left him in the past because she couldn't give birth and didn't want to hurt him. But she went to the hospital for numerous abortions in these years?

"How can she be so shameless? Is she still a woman?" Shen Peichuan grimaced. If it weren't for his remaining sense of logic telling him not to fight a woman, he would have gone to beat up Liu Feifei.

She had left for a rich man and was even willing to be his mistress!

The more he thought about it, the angrier he became.

He wasn't angry about the things Liu Feifei did. He was angry that she returned to look for Su Zhan after doing those things. How could she?

Why should Su Zhan be the scrap picker?

After reading the last page, Lin Xinyan threw the documents on the table. She knew why Liu Feifei was back. The latter was aging, and her beauty was declining. Moreover, the man had a new wife. Seeing that there was no hope of staying with him, she returned for Su Zhan.

Shen Peichuan packed up the documents. "I have to look for Su Zhan lest he is deceived."

"Wait." Lin Xinyan stopped him.

"It won't hurt as much if you tell him about it!" Lin Xinyan squinted her eyes in thought. The man in the photos must be rich. Otherwise, he won't be able to keep a mistress for such a long time. It takes a lot of money to keep a woman on the side.

Zong Jinghao is acquainted with some rich people, and he might be acquaintances with that man.

She quickly thought up a countermeasure. "I'm leaving now."

Shen Peichuan called out, "Don't forget to call me!"

He also wanted to see how Su Zhan would look when he finds out about Liu Feifei's true colors.

Lin Xinyan nodded and left.

She was back inside her car/ Instead of going back to the store, she went to find Zong Jinghao.

He was in a meeting, so she went to his office to wait for him.

His office was spacious and well-lit, which made people feel comfortable. She walked to the French windows and looked outside. It was the city's most bustling area, and it was still as brilliant in the daytime even without the neon lights that lit up at night.

The sun started to set outside. Lin Xinyan reached out to catch the last rays of sunshine. Unfortunately, no one could catch ever catch it.

Zong Jinghao ended his meeting and returned to his office. As he pushed open the door to his office, he saw her standing in a halo of light. Her slender silhouette resembled a heroine in a comic.

He approached with light footsteps, encircled her waist from behind, and rested his chin on her shoulders. "Miss me?" he asked.

Without moving, she ignored his question and instead asked, "Do you know someone named Lu Yuan?"

Zong Jinghao didn't know Lu Yuan personally, but he knew the man was acquainted with his dad.

He buried his face in her hair and asked in a dull voice, "Why are you asking me about him?"

Lin Xinyan turned to look at him very seriously. "I want him to meet Liu Feifei."

They had been together for a long time. Naturally, he understood her intentions.

If Su Zhan saw them with his own eyes, it would be more convincing than any other evidence.

“Did Peichuan finish his investigation?”

Lin Xinyan responded affirmatively and recounted what Shen Peichuan had found out. After Lin Xinyan finished, Zong Jinghao didn't have any change in his expression. He simply said, “I'll arrange it.”

He didn't like to deal with such matters, but it concerned Lin Xinyan's friend and his buddy, so he had to intervene.

Lin Xinyan trusted he would make the arrangements and thanked him earnestly.

Zong Jinghao put his hand into her clothes and gently squeezed the flesh on her waist. He said hoarsely, “How do you want to thank me?”

Lin Xinyan felt ticklish and shifted her body uncomfortably. She reminded him in a serious tone, “This is your company, your office. What if someone sees us?”

Zong Jinghao smirked, “No one will enter casually. Are you willing to do it with me here?”

Lin Xinyan was speechless.

How could he be so thick-skinned?

She pushed him away. “You have no shame, but I have it.”

Zong Jinghao deliberately bit down on her neck with force, causing Lin Xinyan to scream, “Ah!”

Very quickly, she closed her mouth, clenched her fists, and pounded on the chest. Zong Jinghao stood still like a mountain and did not budge. Suddenly, he caught both her hands, raised them over the top of her head, and pressed her against the French windows. As if he was possessed, he kissed her passionately.

When Lin Xinyan struggled, he bit her with force, causing her to moan in pain.

He laughed. “Wail all you want.”

She glared at him, knowing that it was deliberate on his part.

Zong Jinghao kissed her eyelids and licked them, leaving wet trails around them.

Meanwhile, Qin Ya had a severe bout of nausea. She vomited almost everything that she ate and threw up gastric juice when she had nothing left in her stomach. Left with no strength, she had no choice but to go to the hospital and ask the doctor for a prescription.

The doctor prescribed her vitamin B6 and anti-nausea medication. When she was heading to the pharmacy to collect the medicine, she saw Su Zhan helping Liu Feifei walk out of the orthopedics clinic.

The corridor was empty, and there was no place for her to hide or avoid them.

“Does it still hurt?” Su Zhan asked in concern.

Liu Feifei shook her head. “Sorry to trouble you...” She paused when she saw Qin Ya and held more tightly onto Su Zhan’s arm.

Su Zhan saw that she was looking ahead and raised his head to find Qin Ya standing there.

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Su Zhan’s body tensed. He didn’t expect to meet Qin Ya so suddenly. Almost instinctively, he wanted to let go of Liu Feifei. However, as soon as he let her go, Liu Feifei held onto him, pretending that her feet were hurting, as though she would fall.

He didn’t push her away. At that moment, he also wanted to see if Qin Ya would be angry at the sight of him and Liu Feifei together.

Although Qin Ya occasionally went to visit Grandma, her indifference toward him made him feel that she had no feelings for him.

Now that Liu Feifei was by his side, he wanted to take this opportunity to test her. If Qin Ya were angry, it would prove that she cared about him.

Liu Feifei glanced at Su Zhan secretly. She didn’t expect that he didn’t push herself away. She was delighted but pretended to look sad. “Ms. Qin, don’t get me wrong. I hurt my leg, and I can’t walk, so Su Zhan accompanied me to the hospital.”

“There is no misunderstanding,” Qin Ya said as she clenched her fist, crumpling the prescription. Her nails pierced through the paper and sunk into the flesh of her palm. She could only stay sane by inflicting pain on herself.

She smiled lightly and said, “We... I mean, Su Zhan and I, we are not in a relationship. It’s his freedom to be with whoever he wants to be with.”

Su Zhan’s pressed his lips tightly together, and his muscles were also tense. He couldn’t accept how calm Qin Ya was.

The calmer she was, the more it showed that she didn't care about him.

On the other hand, Liu Feifei was elated, but she didn't dare to express it on the surface. After all, she was still unsure if Su Zhan had given up on Qin Ya.

This time, she must capture his heart.

Su Zhan suppressed the hurt he felt, put his arms around Liu Feifei's waist, and simply said, "Let's go."

When he passed by Qin Ya, whether intentionally or unintentionally, he bumped into her shoulder.

Qin Ya vomited so severely that she had no energy left and almost fell over due to the impact. Fortunately, she supported herself against a window.

Slowly, she knelt as she clasped her hands to her chest, trying to suppress the overflowing pain. His action cut her deeply.

She wondered if she would die from the pain.

Maybe she had been too agitated, as she felt a violent roll in her stomach. Immediately, she covered her mouth and ran to the bathroom.

Outside the hospital, Su Zhan put Liu Feifei in a taxi and sent her back without him.

Liu Feifei wanted to hold on to him, but she didn't dare to. She was afraid her eagerness would turn Su Zhan off, ruining her efforts of building herself a good impression in front of him.

"Do you still have some other matters to tend to?" Liu Feifei took another approach.

Su Zhan hummed in response and didn't say more. As he shut the car door, Liu Feifei panicked. It was obvious that he wanted to go back to find Qin Ya.

She immediately lowered the window and asked, "Are you going back to explain to Ms. Qin? Do you want me to make it clear to her? After all, there is really nothing between us."

Su Zhan grew impatient. "No need."

With that, he sent Liu Feifei on her way.

He turned and walked into the hospital lobby back to the corridor where he met Qin Ya earlier, but she was nowhere to be found. He frowned and went to the lobby while looking for her in the crowd to no avail. He couldn't help but be disappointed.

Just as he was about to give up, he saw Qin Ya coming out of the bathroom. She was clasping her abdomen, looking very sick.

He quickly walked over to her and held her. "What happened to you?"

Qin Ya raised her head to look at the person in front of her, but her sight was fuzzy. Soon, she got a clearer sight. After seeing that it was Su Zhan, her throat suddenly tightened, and she was on the verge of tears. She lowered her head. "Why are you back? Are you here to see what a joke I've become?"

Su Zhan was also stubborn. He replied to her in the affirmative, instead of telling her honestly that he was worried she was sick since she came to the hospital.

Qin Ya laughed until tears escaped from the corners of her eyes. "Aren't you afraid that your ex-girlfriend... No, your current girlfriend, who you got back with, would be angry that you came to look for me?"

"She's not that petty," he replied.

Is he implying that I am? Qin Ya scorned, then laughed bitterly. Was I wrong to care and get angry? Am I supposed to be generous and tolerating to show my love for him?

Haha.

She felt that her values were being dissolved by Su Zhan.

"Go. I don't need you," Qin Ya said and broke away from his grip.

However, Su Zhan didn't let go. "Are you sick? What did the doctor say? What is the problem? What is the treatment?"

After being bombarded by a series of questions, Qin Ya froze for a moment before recovering her senses. She looked up at Su Zhan and suddenly laughed. "The doctor said I was injured here. Do you know how it was hurt?" she asked, clutching her heart.

Su Zhan looked at her and asked, "Is it because of me?"

Qin Ya stopped laughing and said, "No, it's because of myself. I used to think that I was not stupid, but after meeting you, I found that I was stupid indeed. I believed your honey words and trusted you to love me forever. Haha... You are good. You successfully deceived me."

Su Zhan shook his head and said, "They weren't lies. I really love you..."

"Save that for your girlfriend," Qin Ya cut him off. She was really hurt by Su Zhan and didn't want to have anything to do with him anymore.

She pushed him away, but he was unwilling to let her go like this and grabbed her wrist, saying, "But I want to say it to you."

“Let me go!” Qin Ya tried to shake his hand away, but he firmly grasped it. She didn’t have the strength too, and she was obviously struggling in vain.

Su Zhan grabbed the prescription from her hand and pushed her into a chair. “Sit here and wait for me,” he said.

He was afraid she would leave without saying anything and warned, “If you dare to leave, I will go to the store to pester you.”

Qin Ya didn’t even have the strength to get angry. “Su Zhan, when will you grow up? Don’t you find yourself childish?”

Su Zhan smiled. Indeed, he was the most relaxed in front of this woman, and he could be himself in front of her. Even when he was with Liu Feifei in the past, he did not feel as relaxed as when he was with Qin Ya.

“Wait for me,” he repeated before taking the prescription to the pharmacy for the medicine.

After collecting her medication, Su Zhan looked at it and asked the pharmacist, “Excuse me, what are these for?”

There were too many people in the hospital, and the pharmacist did not hear him.

He raised his voice and asked again, “Excuse me, what are these for?”

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This time, the pharmacist heard him. Before attending to Su Zhan, she tended to another patient. Then she took the medicine from his hand. After examining it, she told him it was for nausea.

For nausea?

Su Zhan frowned and wanted to ask what illness caused nausea, but the pharmacist walked away to attend to the other patients, so he also walked away with the medicine. He already had a guess. After all, he was already an adult. Even if he hadn’t experienced it, he had heard about it.

He approached Qin Ya with each step and his eyes swept across her abdomen as he asked solemnly, “Are you pregnant?”

Qin Ya’s heart skipped a beat. “What are you talking about?”

Su Zhan handed the medicine to her with no haste, saying, "This is for nausea. Isn't it because of morning sickness?"

She pretended to be calm. "Su Zhan, do you still think that I will give birth to your child? Even if I have your child, I will not want it." She grabbed the medicine from his hand and continued, "I had nausea only because I contracted stomach flu. That's why I came to the hospital to get medicine. Have you seen pregnant women taking antiemetics?"

Su Zhan wasn't sure about that. He only knew pregnant women shouldn't take medicine casually.

"But..." he started.

Qin Ya interrupted him, leaving no room for him to speak at all, "But what? Su Zhan, we are separated now, and I have so many years in front of me. Even if I am pregnant, do you think I will want the child?"

He clenched his hands into fists and said, "Do you hate me so much?"

"Yes, I hate you." Qin Ya finished and left.

Just when Su Zhan wanted to follow her, the phone in his pocket suddenly rang. He took out his phone and saw that Zong Jinghao was calling. Under normal circumstances, Zong Jinghao would not contact him on his own. He pressed the answer button and heard him say, "Go to Lijiang Palace."

With that, Zong Jinghao ended the call.

Su Zhan looked at the phone for a while, then at Qin Ya, who was walking away. Finally, he sighed. He wanted to get Qin Ya back, but he knew it wouldn't be easy. He kept his phone and walked out of the hospital, not to chase after Qin Ya, but to head to Lijiang Palace.

When he arrived, a waiter walked over and asked, "Are you Mr. Su?"

Su Zhan nodded. "I'm looking for Zong Jinghao."

"Please follow me." The waiter said and led Su Zhan to a VIP room.

In the large private room, Shen Peichuan and Zong Jinghao sat around a large round table.

He pulled a chair and sat down as he asked with a smile, "What occasion is it today?"

Usually, they would gather only when he organized it. Zong Jinghao rarely asked them out because of his busy schedule, and Shen Peichuan also had a lot of work. He had more free time compared to them.

Shen Peichuan twitched his lips before saying, "It's too early for you to laugh. You might cry soon."

Su Zhan laughed at him. "What can trouble me more than how I feel now?"

What troubled him at the moment was Qin Ya.

Grandma's condition was getting better, but Qin Ya was still very cold towards him, and there was nothing he could do to change that since she did not respond to the carrot or the stick.

"Peichuan, drink with me. I'm in a bad mood." Su Zhan waved for the waiter, but Shen Peichuan stopped him and asked the waiter to leave. "We are not ordering at the moment. Please go out for now. We will call you when we want to order."

Su Zhan stared at Shen Peichuan and said drily, "Are you planning to watch a movie instead of eating at a restaurant?"

"Yes, I'm here for a movie."

"Are you kidding me..."

But before he could finish speaking, he saw the display screen hanging on the wall suddenly light up, and he asked in surprise, "We're really watching a movie?"

However, he realized it was not a movie because the screen was showing the surveillance footage of another room.

There was a man in a floral shirt sitting in the room. Su Zhan took a closer look. "Isn't this Feifei's college mate?" he asked.

Su Zhan and Liu Feifei were also college mates, but they were not in the same class. That man in a floral shirt, also a rich second-generation, was in the same class as her.

Seeing him, Su Zhan recalled many things from the past., "Do you remember him, Peichuan?"

Su Zhan pointed to the person on the screen and continued, "He drove a Maserati to school. It was awesome. Why isn't he bankrupt yet?"

Meanwhile, Shen Peichuan watched him silently.

Su Zhan quickly discovered that something was amiss. He looked at Shen Peichuan and then at Zong Jinghao. "What's up? Why did you ask me to come to the restaurant but stop me from eating to look at a rich playboy?"

Shen Peichuan was afraid that he could not accept the truth, so he said tactfully, "Have you ever thought about what Liu Feifei has been doing all these years?"

The gears in his head turned, and Su Zhan quickly grasped the situation. "Does it have something to do with this guy?"

Shen Peichuan remained silent.

Suddenly, Su Zhan stood up and said, "I'll ask him."

Shen Peichuan held him back and said, "When did you become so impulsive?"

"What's wrong with me asking him?"

Shen Peichuan let go of him and said, "Just wait. You will have an answer soon."

Su Zhan began to understand what was happening, and he looked at both of them again. "Have you done an investigation on Feifei?"

As soon as Shen Peichuan heard her name, his heart trembled with anger.

He glanced at Su Zhan from the corner of his eyes, but he said nothing in the end.

Finally, there was a movement on the screen. The door opened and Liu Feifei stepped in. She looked different from her usual innocent appearance in front of Su Zhan. Naturally, she dressed with care to meet her old lover.

She wore a black sling dress which ended at her calves, a fur shawl that rested on her shoulders, and finished her look with a pair of red high heels. Matched with her exquisite makeup, she looked very enchanting.

She thought that Lu Yuan finally missed her since he took the initiative to ask her out. If Lu Yuan would divorce his wife and marry her, she would also be willing to marry him.

After all, it took too much effort to salvage her relationship with Su Zhan.

Su Zhan's eyes widened. That was the first time he saw Liu Feifei dress that way.

He had only seen her dress in a pure, cheery, and youthful look.

“Did you miss me?” Liu Feifei gracefully twisted her slender waist as she walked over and sat on Lu Yuan’s thigh, which seemed to be a natural habit of hers.

Glancing at the camera lens above, he put his arms around Liu Feifei’s waist. “I missed you, so I looked for you. Don’t you miss me after being separated from me for so long?”

Mr. Lu, Lu Yuan’s father, had always wanted to cooperate with Zong Jinghao on a project. The latter had never agreed to it. Zong Jinghao agreed to cooperate with him finally, but there was one condition, and that was how Lu Yuan appeared in the private room.

Liu Feifei pushed him away. “So what if I missed you? You have a wife, and I’m nothing to you.”

Lu Yuan walked over to her and said, “I have no feelings for her.”

“Then will you marry me?” Liu Feifei looked at him eagerly. At her age, she desperately yearned for a home.

“Feifei, you know very well that my wife comes from a very good background...”

“But I have been with you for ten years. Back then, I left everything and followed you. All these years, how many children did I abort for you? In the end, your wife hired someone to beat me up, and I couldn’t get pregnant anymore as a result,” As she spoke of her sore spot, she became agitated. She grabbed Lu Yuan’s collar and said, “How are you going to compensate me for my lost youth?”

He looked at her quietly. “It was consensual. Didn’t you abandon that poor boy and follow me because of my money?”

Liu Feifei fell silent.

It was true that she was interested in his money. She thought she would definitely marry into his wealthy family with her beauty and wits, but it was not as easy as she thought.

Lu Yuan hugged her from behind and said, “We can still be together like this. Would you like to come back to me?”

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Liu Feifei looked at him. “And who would I be?”

Lu Yuan was amused. "What other choice do you have, other than be my mistress? You can't bear me any child, and you're not getting any younger. How dare you demand a rightful status from me?"

Liu Feifei was stumped into silence by his rhetorical questions.

Yes. I'm not getting any younger, and I'm not fertile anymore. What can I do?

She glared at Lu Yuan. "Then why did you come looking for me?"

He nudged at the upper right corner. "I think someone up there wants to what how we are related."

Liu Feifei traced his gaze and noticed the discreet surveillance camera in the upper right corner. Her eyes widened in disbelief and stared at the camera apprehensively. Who could that be?

Her heart thumped wildly. "Are you trying to frame me?"

Lu Yuan slid his hands into his pockets nonchalantly. "Frame you? Mind your words, lady. Everything that happened between us was consensual. Didn't you sit on my lap yourself when you entered? Moreover, I wonder who said that she was willing to be my mistress if that was what it took to stay by my side. You're not worthy of my effort to frame you. Instead, be grateful that you are still useful to me. Things are going to be tragic for you if you're no longer useful to me."

Liu Feifei did not know where to put her hands as her palms became drenched in sweat. What do I do? What should I do right now?

I really want to run away.

Lu Yuan regarded the woman with a fix. He did not feel any sympathy for her, even if she had been together with him for nearly ten years.

To him, women were akin to commodities in which he could use money in exchange for their bodies.

Suddenly, Liu Feifei dashed out of the private room and opened the doors of other private rooms. When she opened the door of private room number two, the sight of Su Zhan greeted her. There was also a huge screen showing the private room that Lu Yuan and she had been in.

She shivered, and her voice went hoarse. "Su Zhan, let me explain..."

Su Zhan turned his head to face her. There was not a hint of anger, or any suppressed emotions. Even he was taken aback by his oddly calm demeanor.

He did not love this woman anymore. That was the reason he was not mad at her unbecoming past. He was only exasperated at her lies.

He used to think that Liu Feifei was pure and innocent. However, she was actually a woman full of schemes and lies.

Su Zhan found it amusing that he had not noticed this before.

“What do you want to explain? That you didn’t leave me because of the rich guy? That you were in fact not born infertile?”

“No... No...” Liu Feifei dashed inside and grabbed at his arms. “Su Zhan, listen to me. I really love you...”

“You express your love for me by becoming another man’s mistress?”

Su Zhan swatted her off and glared at her. “Why didn’t I realize you’re such a scheming woman?”

Liu Feifei broke down in tears. She was indeed in love with him. However, her love toward Su Zhan did not supersede the significance of money. That was what drove her to choose money over him.

In the end, she realized she had no future with Lu Yuan. Besides, Lu Yuan’s affection for her had faded in view of her withering beauty. It was because of this that she wanted to get back together with Su Zhan.

If she settled for someone who could provide for her high life, and she genuinely liked the person, then it would definitely be Su Zhan.

She actually regretted her decision to leave Su Zhan back then. If she had stuck with him through thick and thin, then she would already be his wife. All the wealth and power she yearned for would be within her grasp.

Alas, there was no use crying over spilled milk.

She hugged Su Zhan’s legs, and her very own tears smeared her delicate makeup. “Would you give a chance in view of our past?”

Su Zhan snorted, “Why should I?”

Liu Feifei was at a loss for words, but she knew she had no other way out. Su Zhan was her last glimmer of hope.

He was everything that she ever wanted. The looks, the money, everything. There was no one else but him.

"I beg you." Liu Feifei clutched his legs. "Su Zhan, I know I did you wrong. Please give me another chance to atone for my mistakes. I will stay by your side and take care of Grandma. Please, I beg you," Liu Feifei edged her cheeks close to his calves as she sobbed.

Su Zhan enunciated every word as he regarded her impassively, "Let. Go. Of. Me."

"No." Liu Feifei stubbornly clung to him. It was as if she clutching to her lifeline.

He crouched down and held her chin up to face him. "Tell me. Did you plan everything? I remember you still couldn't walk back in the hospital, but now you're strutting in high heels. So is it because you're meeting your past lover? Even if you hurt your hands, you'd make it to the hospital when you're only able to crawl on all fours?"

"I'm sorry, I really am. Su Zhan, please..."

"I was blind to have fallen for you back then!"

He kicked her away after he was done. Liu Feifei fell over back and knocked into the chair behind her. It resulted in a loud clang.

Su Zhan left without a second glance.

"Su Zhan!" Liu Feifei's wail failed to stop him.

He was as resolute as he was disappointed in Liu Feifei. She had soured their sweet memories together. All he felt was disgust and contempt when he thought of their past.

Qin Ya called Lin Xinyan as soon as she left the hospital. She was all tuckered out.

"I want to leave." Qin Ya lowered her head.

She felt utterly spent and craved for a good rest.

Lin Xinyan noticed her reddened eyes. "Did you cry?"

Qin Ya did not deny it. "I saw Su Zhan at the hospital together with... Liu Feifei."

Lin Xinyan's heart sank as she snorted to herself. It looks like Su Zhan has finally seen Liu Feifei's true colors.

"Does he know about the baby?"

Qin Ya shook her head. "I don't know."

"I'll have your back, no matter the decision you make." Lin Xinyan took out a credit card and handed it to her.

"I cannot take this." Qin Ya was reluctant to accept her offer.

"This is not for you. It's for your baby. Use this to buy anything you want. As for Su Zhan, I think you'd have to give him some time to cool down," Lin Xinyan said as she held Qin Ya's hands.

Even if he knew he did wrong and came back begging for Qin Ya's forgiveness, she should not agree to it right away.

How could he not know who's important to him?

He needs to be taught a lesson!

Qin Ya smiled. It did not matter to her anymore. She just wanted to find some place to give birth to her baby and live a peaceful life together.

She did not plan to come back after leaving. Then Qin Ya asked, "Do you need more people to help you out?"

Lin Xinyan tried to calm her. "Don't worry about this. I'll ask for more staff from Mrs. William if I really encounter the problem. The manpower at the store is looking good at the moment."

Qin Ya heaved a breath of relief at her reassurance.

"Have you decided where you're going? Let me send you off," Lin Xinyan said.

Qin Ya agreed. After chatting for a bit, Lin Xinyan's phone rang. The call was from the kindergarten. The teacher called to inform that Lin Ruixi was involved in a fight with other kids.

Lin Xinyan would not feel surprised, had the teacher reported that it was Lin Xichen who was involved in a fight. However, it was impossible for her daughter to be fighting other kids, even if Li Ruixi would sometimes throw tantrums at her brother.

Lin Xinyan excused herself and left in a rush.

Qin Ya walked out of the building to hail a car after she left. Suddenly, a black van came to a stop before her and abducted her.

The sudden attack took her by surprise. "What are you guys doing?"

However, the men paid no heed to her. They cramped her into the van and sped off.

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“Who’re you guys?” Looking horrified, Qin Ya stared at the two men. They obviously were a bunch of jerks who harbored malicious intent against her.

It was clear that she was their target, judging from how decisively and swiftly they seized her.

While she was under their supervision, the driver behind the wheel ignored her.

Meanwhile, she tried to wiggle herself out of their control while constantly screaming hysterically, “Let me go!”

The driver, who seemed to find her voice irritating, yelled at the two men, “Do me a favor by keeping her mouth shut!”

They immediately covered her mouth with their hands and warned her, “You’d better be a good girl.”

Her mind went blank with fear. The only thing she wanted to do was run away from this terrifying situation, but the little remaining logical sense in her mind told her she stood no chance.

Hence, she could only stay calm for the time being and bide her time.

The further away from town they went, the more panicked she became.

However, she knew her chances to free herself from the two burly men were slim.

After around an hour, the vehicle left the town area and reached Repulse Bay.

There was a construction ongoing by the beach, and many fishing vessels docked at the bay. When they pulled up to a stop, the two strong men hauled Qin Ya off the car callously when she tried to put up a fight. They seized her by her arms and dragged her to one of the fishing vessels.

Panic-stricken, she started shrieking at the top of her lungs, “Is someone there who can help me? Please, help me! Help...” Smack!

One man slapped her and issued her a stern warning in a menacing voice, "I'd kill you right now if you dare to utter a word again!"

Her head tilted to one side due to the impact of the slap and the right side of her cheeks was burning with pain; she could taste blood in her mouth. "Are you guys after my money? I'm willing to offer all the cash with me if you guys let me go."

Considering that she had no kins nor enemies in the country, she had not the slightest idea who would want her here.

Therefore, the only possibility she could think of was that the guys did this for her money.

However, they were unfazed by her offer. One of them threatened her with an intimidating look. "You'd better be good and stay quiet. Mind you, we aren't gentlemen, and if we decide to punish you, you will end up being injured or dying. So, I guess you know what to do right now."

A sense of despair washed over Qin Ya as the blood froze in her body. If they are not after money, what did they want?

Colors drained from her face as her tongue went numb. It was only after some time did she manage to pose them her question, albeit stammeringly, "Can you tell me why you kidnap me? I want to know the reason because I don't want to die in confusion."

One of the guys was fed up with her badgering. Pinching her jaw, he raged, "B*tch, what's your issue? You will know everything when we arrive later! So now, you'd better keep your mouth shut!"

Qin Ya was immediately deterred from probing any further because she didn't want them to hurt her. The baby in her womb was her priority.

Soon, she was hauled to a battered-looking fishing vessel. There were fishing nets scattered all over the deck with some dried-up dead fishes caught inside. They then threw her into a filthy little cabin which reeked with a horrible stench.

She started feeling nauseous as her insides started churning.

At last, she had no choice but to dash over to an open window and vomited.

Other than casting her a disgusted glance, the two men did nothing to help her. The cabin only came with a door and a small window, which was only large enough for one's head.

Anyone who tried to sneak out through the window would fall off into the raging waves and die.

Qin Ya stuck her head out to inhale fresh air from outside.

As she was physically exhausted and mentally drained, her head felt heavy and her mind was in a turmoil.

After some time, she felt the cabin sway before she heard a string of footsteps from outside. Feeling alarmed, she immediately spun around to find Liu Feifei standing by the door. Just as she was about to speak, her eyes widened in shock as she spotted Su Zhan's grandmother, who was tied up behind Liu Feifei. "What are you trying to do?"

Liu Feifei sneered, "Isn't that very obvious?"

She was left with nothing now. Lu Yuan refused to have anything to do with her, and Su Zhan too resented her.

If it weren't for Qin Ya, she could have been able to salvage her relationship with Su Zhan!

She hated Qin Ya for snatching Su Zhan away from her and she loathed his grandmother who had always preferred Qin Ya over her.

Since he cared so much about them, she kidnapped both of them.

She then waved her hand at her subordinates to let them tie them both up.

As Qin Ya was struggling to stop them, she yelled, "Liu Feifei, are you crazy?"

Crossing her arms in front of her chest, Liu Feifei glanced at her contemptuously and taunted, "Crazy? Haha, I'm more sober than ever right now. I have nothing to lose and nothing to be scared of! I'm going to drag everyone down with me!"

She strutted into the small cabin, producing a crunching noise along her way when she stepped on seashells on the floor. At last, she stopped in front of Qin Ya and pinched her chin as she confronted her, "Are you the one who plotted against me?"

If Qin Ya didn't plot against her and investigate on her, how did Su Zhan know so much about her past?

Qin Ya looked puzzled. "What do you mean?"

Liu Feifei pinched her chin even harder. "Stop playing dumb with me!"

Other than her, who else would dig out the dirt in my past diligently and reveal everything to Su Zhan?

Who would have the motive to do such a thing?

"I really have no idea what you're talking about." Qin Ya's voice came feebly from her throat.

Liu Feifei refused to believe her innocence because she was adamant that she was the culprit.

Other than Qin Ya, no one else would gain a direct benefit from her misfortune. Su Zhan would naturally return to her side when he resented Liu Feifei.

Qin Ya still had no idea what Liu Feifei was talking about, but there was one thing she was sure. The latter hated her. She felt bitter thinking that Su Zhan was most likely the reason behind her sentiment.

That man brought nothing but endless pain and suffering to her.

"Since I'm the one you hate, why do you bring Grandma, who's still sick over here? Shouldn't you be nice to her since you and Su Zhan dated before?"

Be nice to her?

Did Su Zhan treat me nicely when he dumped me?

Liu Feifei's face distorted with hatred. She patted Qin Ya's young and beautiful face. Slowly, she started exerting more force on the latter's cheeks, slapping her so hard that it looked like she was trying to disfigure her.

"Please be patient. We're about to play a very interesting game soon."

With that, Liu Feifei let loose a wicked and frenzied guffaw.

In the meantime, Qin Ya was trembling. Deep down inside she was sure Liu Feifei must have gone mad or she wouldn't do something as crazy as this.

Having lost the ability to speak, Su Zhan's grandmother glared at Liu Feifei, wishing she could attack her with her eyes.

That woman is indeed a vicious one, and she is finally showing her true colors!

Just as Qin Ya was racking her brain trying to convince Liu Feifei to let them go, another person was thrown into the cabin.

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It was a woman tied up with ropes who looked even more disheveled than Qin Ya.

When Qin Ya saw the face of the woman, she felt even more baffled because she was a stranger.

She was sure Liu Feifei must have been insane to keep so many people as her captives.

The woman was Lu Yuan's wife, whom Liu Feifei hated even more vehemently than Qin Ya since she was once beaten up so badly that she became infertile.

In Liu Feifei's opinion, a woman who couldn't conceive would never have a complete and happy life.

Crouching down in front of Mrs. Lu, Liu Feifei lifted the woman's fringe off her face and snickered gloomily, "Can you feel the sense of Deja vu in this situation?"

When Liu Feifei was beaten up by Mrs. Lu's men back then, she too was tied up in the same way with no chance of fighting back. The people who attacked her were so ruthless that she could still remember the pain until now.

The woman glared at Liu Feifei and cursed, "B*tch, how dare you kidnap me! Are you tired of living?"

"Ha." Liu Feifei chuckled coldly. "Yes, I can't wait to die. I consider it a great bargain because I'm gonna drag all of you to hell with me!"

The woman looked greatly shaken, as she didn't expect Liu Feifei would go to such length just to take revenge.

"Aren't you worried that Lu Yuan will kill you if you do harm me?"

Liu Feifei roared with laughter in response. "Do you actually think Lu Yuan loves you? Who has he loved before? Does he even understand what is love? He only married you because of your family background, which will boost his family career. What you're having with him is a marriage of convenience. Do you know what that is? It means your marriage with him only exists to provide benefits and convenience for your as well as his family. What makes you guys any different from a commodity?"

She grabbed the woman's hair, which hurt the latter so much that she started grimacing in pain.

“Do you think you’re superior to me just because you were born into a wealthy family? Eh?”

Mrs. Lu surrendered instantly.

“I’ll give you money. Just let me go!”

“Money?” Money was no longer important to Liu Feifei because her future was bleak.

The only thing she wanted was to take revenge on those people who had hurt her and made her suffer before!

She loosened her hold on that woman’s hair and fished out her phone. “Now, let’s play a game to test if the love of your life cares about you, shall we?”

The woman appeared slightly flustered. “D-Do you even know what you’re doing?”

Liu Feifei cupped her chin in one hand. “This is by far the soberest moment I’ve ever experienced in my life.”

Mrs. Lu thought she was crazy.

Liu Feifei enjoyed seeing the anxious look on the woman’s face immensely. She deliberately took out her phone slowly for the latter to notice Lu Yuan’s phone number on the screen. To further provoke the woman, she purposely talked about her past relationship with Lu Yuan. “Come to think of it, your husband is so horny. He used to beg me every night for sex when we were younger.”

“You must have seduced him into doing that.” The woman wished she could spit on Liu Feifei’s face.

“Don’t you know that a sealed container can’t attract flies?”

The woman looked sullen in an instant.

Liu Feifei was pleased to see her feeling frustrated and angry. Thinking about how she used to look at her with so much cockiness in her eyes, Liu Feifei relished in trampling her dignity.

“Since I can’t have any happiness in my life, you have to suffer the same!” At that juncture, she summoned a man into the cabin and stood up to stare at the woman condescendingly. “Lu Yuan dumped me. I will make him do the same to you!”

She turned to face the man and instructed curtly, “Strip her naked.”

Looking horrified, the woman shouted, "How dare you!"

Liu Feifei cast her a side eye disdainfully. "There's nothing I don't dare to do at this stage. All of you forced me into this!"

She then gave the man a look. "Do it."

Every penny she saved over the years went into hiring these men from the underworld who would do anything for a price.

Not only were they offered money to help her, but they would also get to spend time with some beautiful women too.

The man stared at Mrs. Lu, who slumped on the ground lasciviously. Rubbing his hands eagerly, he squatted down to unbutton the woman's blouse.

Meanwhile, Liu Feifei stood while aiming her phone at them.

The woman looked utterly dumbfounded. It never occurred to her that Liu Feifei was wicked enough to destroy her life like this.

If the man really raped her, would Lu Yuan still want her as his wife?

"D-Don't come near me!" The woman turned as pale as a sheet. "I'll give you ten times or even a hundred times the amount she has offered you. Please, don't touch me."

The man froze, swayed by her offer.

Sensing his hesitation, Liu Feifei reminded him, "Don't be stupid. If she escapes us, you can forget about the money. Be thankful if she doesn't alert the police. How can you believe what she said?"

After mulling it over, the man agreed with Liu Feifei. The woman would surely hate him for kidnapping her, and there was no way she would give him money.

If he raped the woman as per Liu Feifei's instruction, not only would he get paid, but he would also get to have a taste of a rich man's wife.

"Act faster if you've made up your mind," Liu Feifei urged.

The man nearly drooled after weighing on the pros and cons of the two different decisions. After deciding what to do, he stripped the woman naked and pounced on her without hesitation.

Liu Feifei aimed her camera at the woman's face and started taking a video.

“Liu Feifei, you’ll die a horrible death!” As the woman was securely tied up, she could not push the man away despite intending to do so.

Liu Feifei wasn’t bothered by the curse the least bit. “I’ll die a horrible death, but you’ll live a life worse than death. Do you think I will only send the video to Lu Yuan? How naive of you to think it that way! I’ll make sure your reputation is tarnished beyond redemption! I want everyone to see you naked and I want you to live your whole life in embarrassment!”

She then ended her sentence with a maniacal laughter.

“Urgh...” Qin Ya experienced a sick feeling in the pit of her stomach as the sight of the man stripping the woman naked was so disgusting.

Su Zhan’s grandmother wanted to ask her whether she was all right, but all she could produce was some muffled noises.

The elderly lady thought there was something not right with her condition as she wondered why she was vomiting for no reason at all.

As a married woman, she soon associated Qin Ya’s condition with pregnancy.

Her eyes lit up with delight, but soon turned bleak again.

She was feeling pessimistic because she wasn’t even sure whether they could make it out of the fishing vessel alive.

Judging from the misfortune that befell the woman, the elderly lady knew it would not be easy trying to escape.

She was in a state of trepidation at the moment, worrying that Liu Feifei would do something similar to Qin Ya too.

However, she could not break her hands free from the ropes no matter how hard she tried.

What should I do?

By then Liu Feifei had already released the video in which the woman was naked to several parties. The first copy she sent to Lu Yuan, who was a rich kid that was spared from the ordeal of managing his family business. He spent most of his time fooling around with his friends. When Liu Feifei sent the video to him, he was having a great time at a club.

He didn’t even bother to check when his phone rang.

He pretended not to hear it because he was busy flirting with a beautiful lady.

However, he was not the only one Liu Feifei sent the video. She too gave a copy to some of his buddies she had befriended during the time they were dating.

One of them, who was sitting in a corner watching TikTok videos, looked rattled when he saw the video. He quickly weaved through the throng of crowd in the club to reach Lu Yuan.

Lu Yuan sounded slightly impatient being disturbed by him. "Can't you see I'm busy now? What's wrong with you?"

"Look at this." The man handed his phone to Lu Yuan.

Lu Yuan gave the screen of his phone a nonchalant glance without taking it. When he glimpsed the offensive nature of the video, he grabbed the phone and clicked to play the video.

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Liu Feifei ensured the woman's face was clear in the video.

Lu Yuan's expression alternated between shock and anger while watching the video. He might not have any feelings for his wife, but legally, they were married.

His anger was caused more by embarrassment than pity for his wife.

When his lady companion edged closer to take a peek at the screen of the phone, he shoved her away and smashed the phone on the floor.

His friend frantically rushed over only to find his phone in pieces. His voice cracked in agony when he protested, "That's my phone! What good will you get by smashing it?"

At that juncture, Lu Yuan's phone, which was left on the sofa, started ringing. He grabbed it hastily and answered impatiently, "Hello."

Liu Feifei, who could easily detect anger in his voice, couldn't help but chuckle, "Have you watched the video I sent to you?"

Lu Yuan extracted his phone from his ear and saw that he had an unread WeChat message. After opening it to find the same video inside, he soon got a rough picture of the matter. "Are you behind this?"

Liu Feifei did not deny his allegation. She wanted to tarnish his wife's reputation and humiliate him by making sure everyone in B City knew his wife was unfaithful to him.

Lu Yuan gritted his teeth. "You must be crazy. Delete the video right now. Tell me where you are because I'll be on my way!"

"Haha, are you panicking? I'm afraid it's too late for you to do anything. I've sent the video to a very popular TikTok account and several media companies in B City. I believe they will be more than willing to cover a juicy story like this. After all, your family is indeed quite famous in the city."

"Liu Feifei!" Lu Yuan was infuriated.

Liu Feifei used to be easily intimidated by his angry outbursts because she was worried he might decide to break up with her. But now, she had nothing to fear.

Glancing down at Lu Yuan's wife condescendingly, she asked, "Would you fancy a livestream to see how your wife is faring now?"

Trying his best to subdue his anger, he asked, "Where are you?"

She chortled, "Do you think I'm stupid enough to tell you so you can come visit me with police?"

"What do you want from me then?"

He wished he could slaughter her right now!

"I'm doing this purely for fun." Then, she laughed out loud and revealed, "Your wife is at Drum Tower. Go ahead and look for her now."

She hung up on him after giving him that piece of information. By then, she reckoned his wife's sleazy video had already gone viral in the city. Making her the target of public censure would make her life more torturous than death.

Since she had already achieved her goal, she did not see the need to keep his wife with her.

Therefore, she asked one of her men to send her to Drum Tower and instructed those who remained to sail off.

In the meantime, she dialed Su Zhan's number.

Su Zhan was on his way to visit his grandmother at the hospital. He tossed his phone to the backseat of his car instead of answering Liu Feifei's call.

Soon, he received another call from the maid whom he had arranged to look after his grandmother at the hospital. He needed the maid there while he was away because he found it hard to entrust his grandmother to someone else.

Thinking that the maid was probably calling to update on his grandmother's condition, he bent down to grab his phone and answered the call. The maid's anxious voice soon came from the other end. "Mr. Su, your grandmother is missing!"

Grandma is missing?

"How could that happen? Has she gone for a medical check-up?" Su Zhan found it hard to believe that his grandmother was really missing.

Who could have abducted his grandmother at the hospital in broad daylight?

"I don't think so because I can't find her anywhere at the hospital. I went out just now to get soft bean curd for her, but she was gone by the time I came back." The maid sounded panicky, worrying that she might have to bear the responsibility if anything bad happened to the elderly lady.

Feeling anxious after listening to the maid, he floored the accelerator and nearly crashed into other cars along the way twice.

When he finally reached the hospital, he jumped out of his car and marched toward the inside of the hospital. The maid was pacing around the nursing station apprehensively.

He approached her and questioned, "How long has she gone missing? Have you covered every corner of the hospital to look for her?"

"I have, but there's no trace of her. She was discovered to be missing after I came back with her favorite soft bean curd from Deli Delish..."

Su Zhan fixed an intimidating gaze on the maid. It was situated quite some distance away from the hospital, and the journey to the place was always packed with heavy traffic. It was hard to estimate the exact time the elderly lady had been missing.

However, he knew it was not the time to throw a tantrum at the maid because their priority was to trace his grandmother down as soon as possible.

Knowing his grandmother very well, he knew she always stayed loyal to her favorites. She would refuse to have anything other than the one from Deli Delish when she felt like having soft bean curd.

Instead of searching blindly for her at the hospital, he went to the hospital director first and asked to go through the surveillance footage. That was the convenience brought about by technology, and he thought he should utilize it.

Indeed, his method turned out to be brilliant because he soon found some clues from the footage.

His grandmother was brought away from the hospital by two men.

According to the footage of the cameras installed at the main door of the hospital, his grandmother was dragged into a van which then sped away from the hospital. It had been a long time since he last represented anyone in a lawsuit and he had offended no one lately. Who could have kidnapped his grandmother?

“Is the footage clear enough to show the car plate?” he asked.

The image was not of the best resolution, but it was clear enough for them to make out the car plate which read: VQ23Y.

Su Zhan immediately fished out his phone. Just as he was about to dial Shen Peichuan’s number, he received another call. Liu Feifei, who was sure he would not pick up her call at the moment, used Qin Ya’s phone to reach him. At the same time, she was watching Qin Ya, who looked weak.

As someone who had been pregnant before, she knew how morning sickness felt like and the sight of Qin Ya vomiting reminded her of the experience. A trace of inquisition emerged in her eyes.

Is she pregnant with Su Zhan’s baby?

Raising her brows at her, she asked, “Are you pregnant?”

Qin Ya ignored her question, thinking there was no need to respond to someone who had gone mad.

“Qin Ya.”

Su Zhan, who was slightly delighted to receive Qin Ya’s call, spoke with extra gentleness in his voice when he picked up the call.

“I’m afraid Qin Ya might be too busy to talk to you at the moment.” Liu Feifei tightened her grip around Qin Ya’s phone when she heard the note of delight in his voice.

A mere phone call from Qin Ya could make him happy.

Does he like her?

Su Zhan's voice turned frosty as soon as he heard Liu Feifei's voice. "Why're you having her phone? What did you do to her? We should settle our dispute between the two of us. You shouldn't involve her in this or I won't go easy on you!"

Liu Feifei fiddled with a lock of Qin Ya's hair leisurely as she said airily, "What're you going to do to me? Hire someone to beat me up or kill me?"

"Pass the phone to Qin Ya."

"I'm afraid she's not available to take your call at the moment."

Suddenly, something dawned on Su Zhan. "Did you kidnap my grandmother as well?"

Although it was a question, he sounded certain.

"You're making me sound like a criminal! Look, let's put it this way. I've merely brought her away for a trip."

With his blood boiling with fury, he demanded, "Where're you now?"

Pinching Qin Ya's jaw, Liu Feifei narrowed her eyes and replied, "I can reveal my location to you but with one condition: you have to come alone. If you bring someone with you, be prepared to see the corpses of Qin Ya and your grandmother later."

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"I won't bring anybody with me." Su Zhan dared not risk their lives.

Liu Feifei responded with a laugh, sounding pleased. Then, she gave him an address and emphasized again, "You have to come alone and I'm not joking with you here. If you bring anyone with you, I won't hesitate to throw them into the sea to feed the sharks."

"I've already promised you I wouldn't bring anyone with me. If you dare to hurt them, I wouldn't go easy on you either!"

With that, he hung up on her and set off to the address given by her.

Soon, he arrived at the beach. He received a message from Liu Feifei when he alighted his car: Find yourself a boat and sail toward southwest.

He kept away his phone and began searching for an available boat. When he spotted some fishermen who just returned from a fishing expedition, he approached them. "Can you guys take me to the sea?"

He offered all the cash in his wallet to one fisherman who was mooring his boat to the pier.

The fisherman was a tanned man in his fifties with a scrawny body. Looking at the huge stack of cash Su Zhan offered him, he wondered exactly how much money that would be. As it was not Su Zhan's habit to carry much cash with him, the stack of cash he was holding only amounted to around two thousand.

"Where do you want to go?" the fisherman queried. He would have to pass if Su Zhan wanted to go as far as to the deep sea.

"Somewhere in the southwest direction," Su Zhan answered.

The fisherman pondered it over. The sea in the southwest region was near to the mountains, it was rather remote as he and his fellow fishermen seldom ventured there. "What business do you have there?"

No houses or even shelters were built there.

Su Zhan knew the fisherman had his reservations due to safety issues, but he could not tell him the truth. Hence, he had no choice but to come up with an excuse, hoping it could convince him. "I'm going there to look for my friend who hasn't been back after sailing in that direction. I need to check on him."

After some contemplation, the fisherman took his cash and agreed, "Fine, just hop onto my boat."

Two thousand was considered a handsome sum for the fisherman who might not be able to earn that much of money from his fishing expedition.

Su Zhan thanked him and stepped onto the slippery deck.

The fisherman flashed him a sheepish grin. That there was no need for Su Zhan to thank him because he was paid to do this.

Standing on the deck where the air was permeated with a fishy stench, Su Zhan looked into the distance at the vast ocean. He felt uneasy and restless, just like the boat that was floating on the sea.

The fisherman was very familiar with the sea. It took him a short time to steer his boat in the right direction.

After about twenty minutes, Su Zhan spotted a ship ahead of them and instructed the fisherman to steer the boat toward it.

Liu Feifei experienced a mixed feelings when she spotted him. Yet, she soon returned to her emotionless state. There was no turning back for her at this stage.

She couldn't accept how pathetic her life had ended up to be. While she could only live a lonesome life miserably in the future, Su Zhan would go on to marry another woman and build a happy family with her.

No, that was not what she would like.

She would rather die if she could not get what she wanted in life. However, she had to make sure those who had bullied her before suffered their retribution.

Su Zhan saw her too. "Are you referring to that ship over there?" the fisherman asked.

Su Zhan nodded in response.

The fisherman then steered the boat toward the ship and mounted a wooden plank to connect the two. "Be careful!" he urged.

Su Zhan mumbled a response before stepping on the plank without hesitation.

The wooden plank was narrow and flimsy as it started to waver when he landed his feet on it. Meanwhile, the fisherman tried to hold it still at the side of his boat.

Liu Feifei chuckled. "Did you rush here because of your grandma or Qin Ya?"

Su Zhan landed on her ship and cast her an ominous glance. "Where are they?"

Liu Feifei strolled over to him and adjusted the collar of his shirt. "What's the rush?" Her hands grazed against his skin in a seductive manner when she continued, "Of course I will let you see them since I've asked you to be here."

Standing with his back straight, he looked down at her hands at his collar. "If you want to take revenge, you should come at me."

She snickered, "Can't you see I'm doing exactly that right now? If they aren't related to you, I won't even have them here. Don't you think so?"

He responded coldly, “Just tell me what you want from me. Since I’m already here, shouldn’t you let them go now?”

“Would you still be here talking to me if I let them go?” Liu Feifei prodded his chest with her finger. “Do you think I’m dumb enough to do that?”

“Just shoot. What do you want from me?”

She tugged at his belt trying to pull him toward the cabin, but he refused to budge. “Don’t you want to see your grandma and Qin Ya?” she asked.

Both of his hands were balled into fists.

Liu Feifei knew he was infuriated, but she believed he wouldn’t lay a finger on her because he would want to make sure his grandmother and Qin Ya were safe.

He walked into the small cabin, which was nothing but a filthy mess. Then, he spotted Qin Ya and his grandmother tied to a shelf at the back of the cabin. Noticing Qin Ya’s pale face, he was just about to approach her when he was held back by Liu Feifei. “What’s the hurry…”

He shoved her away before she could even finish her sentence.

“Urgh… urgh…” His grandmother couldn’t wait to tell him that Qin Ya might be pregnant so that he could help her and make sure she was safe.

However, she could not utter a word.

Su Zhan, who had no idea his grandmother was trying to draw his attention to Qin Ya, consoled her, “Don’t worry because I will make sure nothing happens to you.”

In the meantime, Qin Ya’s vision was getting blurry, and she was experiencing an excruciating pain in her lower abdomen. Parting her dry lips, she let out a feeble voice, “Help me…”

Su Zhan failed to catch what she said. Just as he was about to get closer to her to listen to her, Liu Feifei’s voice came from behind. “I’d blast them to death if you go any nearer.”

He froze in his tracks and turned around to find Liu Feifei holding a remote control for a bomb.

Then, he glanced around and spotted a bomb stashed at a corner of the cabin.

“Liu Feifei!” he bellowed as his eyes reddened with fury.

Unperturbed by his murderous stare, she dazzled him with a bright and warm smile. “Don’t raise your voice at me because it scares me.”

Su Zhan suppressed the raging fury in him and said, “Tell me what you want from me.”

She strode toward him, traced her finger across his chest seductively and finally stopped at the collar of his shirt. Then, she opened the first button of his shirt with her eyes glassy with desire. “Do you still remember the first night you spent with me?”

He pursed his lips tightly without answering.

She cast a fleeting glance at Qin Ya before resting her hands on his chest. “You treated me with so much gentleness because you were worried that I might be hurt. You whispered next to my ears that you loved me very much and you would be nice to me for the rest of your life. Do you still remember that?”

Grabbing her hand to stop it from moving around his body, he snapped, “Just tell me what you want me to do.”

How he wished he could just wipe out all the memories he had with her. The night he lost his virginity should have been a beautiful memory, but it was all ruined by her. Now, he was disgusted whenever he thought about that fateful night. He wondered why he even fell in love with such a scheming and paranoid woman like her in the first place.

He believed he must have been blind to be interested in her.

“What do I want?” Liu Feifei pretended to look shy when she proposed, “Why don’t you and I do it again? It must be a very unforgettable memory for you. After all, it was me who made you a man.”

Chapter 346

Qin Ya was experiencing a nauseating feeling that she had never had before. She only managed to hold back the urge to puke by biting her lips hard.

The elderly lady sitting next to her could feel her body shaking, but there was nothing she could do except feeling anxious.

“Are you going to turn me down? Don’t forget your grandma and your girl are still under my control.”

Looking grim, Su Zhan seized her neck and seethed. “You’re digging your own grave right now.”

His hands caused so much pain to her neck.

She was having difficulty breathing as she felt like her neck was going to be broken by him any minute. Her face contorted with bitterness as she tried hard to speak intermittently, "Go ahead and strangle me to death."

Su Zhan did not relax his hold on her because it was true that he harbored the intention to finish her off at the moment. Snatching the remote control from her, he remarked icily, "Liu Feifei, do you even have any idea how disgusting you are?"

She cackled, her hoarse voice sounding awful and jarring. "Do you think I'm so stupid that I don't have a backup plan ready? You can try killing me and then see what happens to them after that!"

Su Zhan hesitated.

Not daring to gamble with the lives of his grandmother and Qin Ya, he shoved her away, reluctantly.

When her body landed on the floor, producing a loud thump, two guys immediately dashed into the cabin holding a detonator and a knife in their hands. That was the backup plan she just mentioned. In the event she was in danger, they would trigger the bomb in the cabin.

Slumping on the floor, Liu Feifei placed her hands on her chest and gasped for breath. It was only when fresh air filled up her lungs did she feel better.

She then looked up at Su Zhan and chuckled. "You really do care about them a great deal."

Yet Su Zhan was staring at the two guys who just barged into the cabin.

She got to her feet and stood in front of him. "Are you desperate to get them out of here?"

He felt so frustrated by her question that he wished he could kill her on the spot. Of course he wanted to get them out of there.

Liu Feifei fixed her messy hair before looking up at him. "Yes, you may get them out of here."

She threw a look at the two guys who immediately understood her instruction and carried it out by mounting their knives at Qin Ya and the elderly lady's neck.

"Now, I'll let one of them go and you have to make the choice." She laughed triumphantly.

She knew how close Su Zhan was to his grandmother. Therefore, there was no way he would choose Qin Ya over her, no matter how much he fancied Qin Ya.

“I’m bringing both of them with me!”

“I know that’s what you want. Since I might not be alive after today, I have to find myself a companion or I would be very lonely on my way to afterlife.”

Not to mention that she had already spent all her savings, she had also offended Lu Yuan and Su Zhan. She had prepared for the worst-case scenario. The two would not go easy on her, even if she could make it back to the shore alive.

Su Zhan’s anger hit the ceiling as he gritted his teeth and thundered. “Liu Feifei!”

Liu Feifei cringed in fear. It was the first time she witnessed him having an angry outburst.

Yet, she recovered quickly because she still had the situation in her control. As long as he cared about the two women, he would have no choice but to play by her rules.

“Make your choice,” she spoke like a winner of the game.

The elderly lady got agitated trying to ask Su Zhan to choose Qin Ya over her. At her advanced age, she didn’t mind having her life shortened, but it was a different case for Qin Ya. She was very young, and it was highly likely that she was pregnant with his child.

From all aspects, choosing Qin Ya over her would be the wisest choice.

Meanwhile, Qin Ya remained very quiet. Her messy hair covered her face and her despair deep down inside. She could feel the puddle of sticky, warm fluid beneath her. She knew what it represented without having to check it out. A pain so intense that it was beyond description was coursing through her and it came not from her body but from her heart.

She once thought of giving up her child, but at the same time, she looked forward to welcoming the baby into the world. However, she knew it very well that her child had left her for good at the moment.

Back then, she had often come across how people experienced heartache in novels and dramas, but she assumed it to be a mere way of description. She only realized it was real because she was feeling it at the moment. It was a numbing and stifling sensation which made her breathless.

“If you hesitate any longer, I’d let both of them perish together with me,” Liu Feifei said impatiently.

That was one tough decision for Su Zhan because he didn't want to give up any of them. With his eyes bloodshot, he croaked, "Let both of them go and you'll be free to do anything to me."

"No way. I want you to make your choice so one of them will live and the other will die. No matter who you're going to choose, you will live the rest of your life in self-reproach. That's exactly what I would like you to suffer! You will live a life worse than death haunted by nightmares every night in the future!"

That was the reason she kidnapped both his grandmother and Qin Ya.

"Save... Ya..."

It was with much effort that the elderly lady produced the two words. Su Zhan understood what she said, but how could he give up his grandmother who had nurtured him and raised him up?

He shook his head, deciding that he couldn't do such a thing or he would really live his entire life in self-reproach as pointed out by Liu Feifei just now.

He looked at Qin Ya and saw how pale her face was. If anything happened to her, he was sure he would spend the rest of his life in pain or he might even kill himself just to free himself from the torture.

At last, he mustered up every ounce of courage in him and pleaded, "Qin Ya, I was raised up by my grandma..."

What he was trying to imply was he couldn't give up his grandmother in any case.

Qin Ya didn't think there was anything wrong with his choice. As it was commonly said that it was harder to raise one than giving birth to one, it was not wrong of him to choose his grandmother over her.

However, she still felt an unbearably intense pain in her heart as tears started streaming down her face uncontrollably.

"If anything happens to you, I will..." keep you company.

He couldn't finish his sentence because his grandmother suddenly fainted.

In that split second, he told Liu Feifei to let his grandmother go.

Qin Ya did not feel any pain because she had expected to hear that from him. She would rather die if she had to live in misery in the future.

Liu Feifei then instructed the two guys to send the elderly lady back to shore. When they walked past her, they secretly passed the detonator back to her, which she hid at her back in a barely noticeable movement.

Pretending as if nothing had happened, she made her way toward Qin Ya. "I bet you've seen how heartless a man Su Zhan is."

Qin Ya lifted her head and stared at her through her fringe. "I don't think there's anything wrong with his decision. Could he still consider himself human if he were to decide to abandon his family member?"

Her comment infuriated Liu Feifei, and she grabbed a fistful of Qin Ya's hair. "I can't believe you're still so stubborn when death is looming ahead of you!"

Thump! All of a sudden, Liu Feifei was sent flying away and then crashed into the wall of the cabin. The entire ship swayed. Su Zhan then dashed toward Qin Ya and untied her hands. "I'll bring you out of here."

His hands trembled when he noticed the puddle of blood beneath her. "A-Are you injured?"

Cough, cough. "Let's head to hell together!" Liu Feifei pressed on the detonator.

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Just before she detonated the bomb, Su Zhan rushed over and kicked the remote out of her hand. He later crouched down and choked Liu Feifei while yelling, "Go to hell."

Liu Feifei didn't struggle. Instead, she grinned evilly.

Su Zhan's gaze darkened. He quickly realized that the only reason she'd be happy was if she had something else up her sleeves. Hence, he didn't kill her. He simply slammed her head against the corner with a bang. Liu Feifei's head started bleeding before she passed out.

Su Zhan walked back to Qin Ya's side to help her up, but she pushed him aside. "You should leave," said Qin Ya.

Su Zhan wasn't expecting that, so he fell hard on his butt. He stared at Qin Ya in bewilderment as he blurted, "You..."

Qin Ya struggled to get up. She glared at him and scowled, "I don't need you and your fake love. And don't touch me. I'll get so disgusted that I might vomit."

Su Zhan knew that there was no point in saying anything to her. His action had already hurt her.

He wanted to say that he would die with her if anything were to happen to her.

Still, he had no choice.

“I’m so sorry. You’re injured, so let me take you to the hospital,” said Su Zhan. He ignored her reluctance and bent down to carry her like a princess. That was when he noticed something strapped around her waist. He tilted his head down to take a better look. It was a bomb!

The number on the device kept changing. It didn’t take a genius to know that it was a time bomb, and it was counting down!

Su Zhan shifted his gaze upward and met a pair of eyes shining with hopelessness.

Qin Ya’s throat was dry, and her voice was extremely hoarse when she growled, “Let me go. Run as far away as you can if you want to live.”

Su Zhan set her down, but he didn’t leave. He examined the bomb to figure out a way to free her from it. He promised, “I won’t let you die alone. If it comes to it, I will die right by your side.”

Qin Ya laid weakly against the cold and dirty wall before she replied, “Do you think I’d forgive you just because you said those words? I will never forgive you, Su Zhan.”

He had his head down in shame as he murmured, “I know.”

Qin Ya stared at Su Zhan’s face and messy hair for a moment before she slowly closed her eyes. She never wanted to see that man again.

He had a shot at disengaging the bomb. He wasn’t confident about it, but he had a shot!

“Don’t worry, I will...” said Su Zhan as he looked up. He caught Qin Ya with her eyes closed and knew she didn’t want to see him. His heart ached, but he knew that was not the time or place for dealing with his love life. He had to prioritize saving her life.

He walked away to find a plier, but he couldn’t find one despite searching the entire ship. When he returned to the cabin, he found a rusty box in a secluded corner. He used a metallic rod to pry it open. As suspected, that was a rusty toolbox that was rarely used. The

ship was constantly wet, so the toolbox had a thick layer of rust, but all the necessary tools were shielded inside. He grabbed a pair of pliers and hurried to Qin Ya. "I found the tools!"

Qin Ya had turned even weaker by then, and she couldn't even open her eyes. She was like a withered flower that no longer held the vitality she once had. Su Zhan went into a daze and wondered how things would be if she died just like that.

His heart ached like nothing before when he thought about it. It was like countless needles had simultaneously pierced through his heart, and they stung him.

Su Zhan reached out to caress her face. He decided that if they were to survive, he would beg for her forgiveness and do anything to make up for his mistake.

Su Zhan's hand trembled when he held the pliers and saw the four wires inside the box. His decision would determine whether they survive.

Unfortunately, the bomb was still counting down. Su Zhan didn't have time to think, so droplets of sweat donned his forehead.

He bit down and chose the red wire. With his eyes closed, he applied force on his pliers to cut that wire. Click!

Unfortunately, the countdown continued. That got Su Zhan nervous.

"Leave, just abandon me. You don't have to do this," said Qin Ya. Her voice was as soft as a single buzzing bee, but Su Zhan heard her clearly. He didn't know why. When he heard her asking him to leave, his heart ached so much that he felt like he couldn't breathe.

He had never been afraid of losing anyone before, but he was terrified of losing her at that moment.

"I won't leave. I promised I will die with you if you don't make it out," said Su Zhan, before he tightened his grip on his pliers again. Click! He cut another wire. The bomb didn't go off. Instead, the timer stopped... for a second before the bomb counted down even quicker. Su Zhan held Qin Ya tightly in his arms when he saw they were about to run out of time.

Qin Ya's heart was cold. A warm embrace engulfed her, but her heart was still cold.

Su Zhan's throat was dry, so his voice was raspy when he apologized, "I'm sorry. I'm so sorry."

He was sorry for breaking her heart, for letting her get physically hurt because of him, and for potentially causing her death soon.

His words seemed so hollow at that moment.

The unconscious Liu Feifei slowly woke up and saw Su Zhan holding Qin Ya. Liu Feifei was jealous. That man used to only love her. His warmth belonged to her and her alone. However, that love had since been transferred to another woman. That disappointed and infuriated Liu Feifei.

She struggled to get up and reached for the detonator. She wanted to blow the ship up and to kill Su Zhan and Qin Ya with it.

Qin Ya saw what Liu Feifei was trying to do, so the former held Su Zhan's collar and requested, "Carry me out so I can have some fresh air."

"Okay," replied Su Zhan.

The wind carried the scent of the ocean when it caressed the couple that had reached the top deck. The bomb strapped on Qin Ya was counting down, and Su Zhan promised, "If reincarnation is real, I will find you again in our next life, and I promise I will treat you right."

Qin Ya's eyes were in a daze. She grinned. If reincarnation is real, I wish we never meet again. Meeting you in this lifetime is a misfortune. I don't want to go through this again, so let's not get together again in our next life.

Just before the time bomb went off, Qin Ya pushed as hard as she could, and Su Zhan fell off the boat.

Splash! He landed in the water.

Just before he hit the water, Su Zhan saw Qin Ya sitting calmly on the boat. It was as if she wasn't facing death. Instead, it was like she was looking forward to being released from her tormented life.

She wants to die!

Boom!

The ship exploded. The sparks and the fire swallowed Qin Ya whole.

"No!" shouted Su Zhan before the seawater drowned his voice out. It was burning hot, even when he was under the water, and the ship's wreckage soon surrounded him. The fire continued to glow fiercely above the surface.

Su Zhan swam upward as quickly as he could to find any traces of Qin Ya.

However, the vast ocean only had wreckage floating around. No one was in sight.

"Qin Ya!" shouted Su Zhan.

He grabbed a random piece of floating debris before he searched for Qin Ya.

Surprisingly, Lu Yuan drove his boat over at that moment.

He found the place by tracing Liu Feifei's number. Things were in a mess for Lu Yuan because Liu Feifei shared a video of his wife on the internet, and that got the news to spread like wildfire. It made the Lu family look bad, and the share price of the company had fallen because of that. Lu Yuan was furious about it.

He wanted to seek vengeance from Liu Feifei, but he didn't realize that he would see an explosion instead.

"Is someone there?"

Chapter 348

A guy tagged along with Lu Yuan. The former was standing on the top deck and pointing at Su Zhan, who was busy looking for Qin Ya.

The tiny dot looked like a human, and Lu Yuan was in a hurry to locate Liu Feifei, so finding any survivor was good news for him. Lu Yuan quickly had his people get the boat over.

Su Zhan and Lu Yuan knew one another, but they weren't close. They never chatted or worked together before, and they were acquaintances at most.

When Lu Yuan saw who the man in the water was, he cleared his throat and asked, "Where is Liu Feifei?"

Su Zhan shifted his gaze up. Water dripped down from his hair and blurred his vision, but he could still see who the man was. He knew that Lu Yuan was the one talking to him. "Help me locate someone, and I will tell you where Liu Feifei is," said Su Zhan.

Lu Yuan scoffed, "Look at the state you're in. How can you talk terms with me? If it hadn't been for me, you would've drowned."

What is Lu Yuan doing here? Something must've happened, and it must be related to Liu Feifei. That is why he is looking for her.

"That is my only condition, and you're right. There is nothing I can do if you don't help me, but you can forget about ever locating Liu Feifei if you don't."

Lu Yuan deliberated. Everyone knew Su Zhan and Zong Jinghao were friends. Lu Yuan's father was collaborating with Zong Jinghao. If Su Zhan died because Lu Yuan refused to extend a helping hand... well, things would be bad.

To make matters worse, the company was in hot water because of Liu Feifei. Lu Yuan could not afford to let the woman share any other videos or news online.

"Fine, I'll help you find your friend," replied Lu Yuan. He was there to capture Liu Feifei, so naturally, he had a number of excellent swimmers with him.

"Who are you looking for?" asked Lu Yuan.

"A woman."

Lu Yuan seemed to have sensed what that matter meant to Su Zhan, so the former waved his hand and instructed, "Do your best to locate that person."

It was extremely difficult to locate a woman in the vast ocean,. The longer it took them to locate the woman, the less likely that she would survive.

Su Zhan and Lu Yuan had the men spread out to expand the search.

Then, someone suddenly shouted, "I found somebody."

Su Zhan swam over as quickly as he could. His heart thumped faster as he got closer. He was hopeful and terrified at the same time. He was hopeful about the person being Qin Ya, but was terrified that she might already be dead.

As he got closer, he saw the person's face. Her wet hair had hidden over half of her face, but Su Zhan could tell that the person was Qin Ya.

Su Zhan pushed the other guy aside. He held Qin Ya in his arms as he swam and dragged her to the boat.

It took a couple men to get Qin Ya out of the water. Su Zhan slowly set her down and checked her heartbeat. It was mild, but it was there! "Turn the boat around right away!" growled Su Zhan.

Lu Yuan stared for a moment before he had his people take them back to land.

"Dry clothes. I need dry clothes." murmured Su Zhan.

He then went as far as trying to snatch the coat off of Lu Yuan's back.

Lu Yuan was dumbfounded for a second before he roared, "Are you out of your mind?"

"Hand me your clothes," demanded Su Zhan. The weather was too cold, and he was worried that Qin Ya would get a fever. Everyone else had jumped into the water earlier, so only Lu Yuan had dry clothes on.

Lu Yuan bulged his eyes in bewilderment. "You're gay?"

Su Zhan was tempted to cuss upon hearing that. Your mom's gay.

He later snatched Lu Yuan's coat off the man's back then rushed to Qin Ya. He wrapped her in the coat and kept praying. Please be alright. You can't die. I can't let anything happen to you.

Su Zhan was on his knees. All he could think about was how calm Qin Ya looked when she stood on the boat, and how she wanted to die.

"Holy f*ck!" shouted Lu Yuan when he saw the bomb strapped on Qin Ya's waist. It's not gonna go off, is it?

The boat exploded because Liu Feifei wanted to kill Su Zhan and Qin Ya. She pressed the detonator and the bombs on the boat exploded. The bomb strapped on Qin Ya, however, never went off. Turned out, Su Zhan cut the right wire. The countdown paused at the last second, and the bomb never went off.

"Quick, hurry! Get rid of it," roared Lu Yuan. He could barely form full sentences at that moment. It was a bomb. No one knew if it would still explode.

"You want us to throw the woman overboard?" asked a subordinate.

"I meant the bomb, you idiot!" growled Lu Yuan.

The man Lu Yuan called an idiot then reached out to take the bomb. However, Su Zhan suddenly turned around and glared over. "Do not touch her!"

"I'm not reaching for her. I just..." said the man. He trailed off and pointed at the bomb.

That was when Su Zhan realized that the bomb was still strapped to Qin Ya. Su Zhan quickly took the bomb off. When he did so, the timer on the bomb, which had since stopped, started counting down again. 1... 0...

Boom!

The bomb exploded at the exact moment Su Zhan tossed it out.

The explosion caused the water to fly over a few meters upward and rain down on the boat.

It was like a storm had hit the boat. The ripple also knocked on the boat and pushed it away.

Everyone on the boat took cover. The only one who remained at the same spot was Su Zhan. He was shielding Qin Ya the entire time.

When everything died down, Lu Yuan regained his composure and cursed, "F*ck! That bomb was live? Holy crap, we almost died."

Lu Yuan thought the bomb was dormant since it hadn't exploded yet. He didn't think that it would go off so suddenly. If Su Zhan had delayed, even for a second, everyone on the boat would've been dead.

I wonder what kind of lunatic would strap a bomb to another human being? That is so cruel.

Lu Yuan quickly put two and two together. "Did Liu Feifei do that?"

Su Zhan ignored the guy. He wasn't in the mood to do anything.

"Where is she?"

"Dead," replied Su Zhan. He looked extremely grim at the time.

There was an explosion in the middle of the ocean. She would most definitely die if no one were there to rescue her.

Lu Yuan repeated, "Dead?"

She died before I could get ahold of her and torture her to settle the score?

Lu Yuan was a little sad to hear that. He loathed Liu Feifei and wanted to torture her in person. He wanted her to have a life worse than death.

Su Zhan was getting on his last nerve, so he urged, "Faster!"

Lu Yuan turned to the poor guy and replied, "We're going as fast as we can. There's no point in shouting."

Su Zhan knew that as well, but he was too worried. The longer it took them to reach land, the more dangerous the situation was for Qin Ya.

Su Zhan reached out to part her hair and reveal the part of her face that was previously covered.

The right side of Qin Ya's face was mutilated, and there were blackened bits on her skin.

Lu Yuan swallowed hard as he stood at the side, and he almost screamed aloud.

Doesn't this mean that she is disfigured? thought Lu Yuan.

Su Zhan felt like his earth had shattered. His fingers trembled, and he didn't dare to check any other parts of her face.

Words could not describe Su Zhan's devastation at that moment.

It wasn't just pain. He was also enduring a lot of disbelief and denial. He didn't even dare to imagine how Qin Ya would react when she learned about her face. Will she be able to accept it?

The boat reached the shore at that moment, and Su Zhan carried Qin Ya off.

"How did Liu Feifei die? And where?" asked Lu Yuan. He wanted to see Liu Feifei's corpse with his own eyes to confirm that she was dead.

Su Zhan walked toward his car. Lu Yuan's voice was loud and clear when he asked that question, but Su Zhan acted as if he couldn't hear a thing. It was likely that Su Zhan was in a daze.

A man standing beside Lu Yuan suggested, "She's probably under the ocean right now."

It was obvious that both Lu Yuan and Su Zhan hated Liu Feifei and wanted revenge. As such, Su Zhan wouldn't have kept anything if Liu Feifei actually escaped.

Given his current state, I'm guessing he wanted Liu Feifei dead as much as Lu Yuan does.

Lu Yuan turned around and stared at the vast ocean. It would be difficult for him to locate Liu Feifei's corpse at that moment.

Qin Ya was in such a terrible shape. it was likely that Liu Feifei wasn't any better off either.

"She got what she deserved," murmured Lu Yuan before he got off the boat as well. He had to go back to his post and deal with the mess that Liu Feifei made.

Su Zhan, on the other hand, sped toward the hospital.

He carried Qin Ya into the emergency room as he screamed, "Quick. Please save her."

Chapter 349

The doctor instructed his staff calmly to roll the bed over then added, "Take her into the operating theatre immediately!"

Su Zhan placed Qin Ya carefully onto the bed while the doctor asked, "How did she get hurt?"

"There was an explosion."

The doctor needed to know what he should prepare for. He murmured some instructions to his assistant before they pushed Qin Ya into the operating theatre.

Su Zhan wanted to follow along. He was simply too worried.

The medical experts, however, stopped him. "No one is allowed into the operating theatre. Please wait here."

"I will pay however much is needed. Please, just save her," shouted Su Zhan to the doctor just before the door closed.

The doctor was under oath. He would do his best to save Qin Ya, so he ignored Su Zhan's words.

Just like that, Su Zhan was locked outside.

He felt like his entire world was crumbling, and he didn't know what to do.

He paced around in the corridor as time trickled by. The door to the operating theatre remained closed. He was anxious, frustrated, and unsettled.

He knew those emotions were counterproductive, but he still couldn't force himself to calm down.

Qin Ya's family wasn't living in the country, and Lin Xinyan was her closest friend. Qin Ya's current situation is bad, and if she reacts negatively to seeing me here... Su Zhan thought about how there was no one to take care of her, so he reached into his pocket only to learn that his phone was long gone. He was thinking about how to contact Lin Xinyan when a nurse passed by. Su Zhan called out to the nurse and asked, "Can I borrow your phone?"

The nurse saw how terrible he looked, so she got her phone out of her pocket and handed it to him.

“Thank you,” replied Su Zhan. He didn’t call Lin Xinyan immediately, because he didn’t remember her number. He only saved her number on his phone. Fortunately, he remembered Zong Jinghao’s number.

Zong Jinghao was in the office and was discussing some matters with Mr. Lu. The two men had just started a business collaboration, and the scandal revolving around the Lu family had disrupted the project they were working on. Hence, Mr. Lu personally dropped by to apologize for the matter. One of the terms of their contract was that if either party caused a loss of profit, the other party could terminate the entire thing before the project completed.

Mr. Lu was worried about Zong Jinghao terminating the contract, so he hurried over to talk to the latter.

“I will settle the issue quickly. Don’t worry, the negative impact won’t be that big,” said Mr. Lu. He looked energetic, and his old age didn’t make him seem frail. However, the incident at the time wore him out a little.

Zong Jinghao calmly pointed out, “From what I have gathered, Lu Group is already suffering from this scandal.”

“Yes, but please trust me. I will solve the issue soon.”

Zong Jinghao’s phone vibrated at that moment. He scanned the screen before informing Mr. Lu, “Excuse me, I need to take this.”

After saying his piece, Zong Jinghao got his phone and walked out of the meeting room. He stood in the corridor, and the French window was right beside him when he picked the call up.

“Hello.”

“It’s me. Is Xinyan with you?”

“Why are you looking for her?” asked Zong Jinghao as he raised his brows suspiciously.

“Yeah, Qin Ya... at the hospital... not sure if she’ll survive,” said Su Zhan. His voice kept breaking up because he was speaking between sobs. He later calmed down and informed, “Her family lives overseas. I think she will feel better if she sees Xinyan when she wakes up.”

“What happened?”

“It’s a long story, and I lost my phone. I’m using someone else’s phone right now, so I can’t talk for long. I’m at the second branch of the People’s Hospital.”

Zong Jinghao murmured a reply and hung up before he walked out and called for Guan Jing.

Guan Jing hurried over.

“Tell Mr. Lu that something important just happened, and I have to leave. Also, inform him we can discuss the matter in the near future,” ordered Zong Jinghao as he walked toward the elevator. After that, he called Lin Xinyan. Su Zhan sounded off. It seemed like an incident had happened, so Zong Jinghao was worried about Lin Xinyan going to the hospital on her own.

Lin Xinyan was at the kindergarten at the time because Lin Ruixi fought with another kid.

The reason behind that fight was hilarious. A girl kissed Lin Xichen’s cheek, and Lin Ruixi caught that, so Lin Ruixi ran over to push the kid. After that, Lin Ruixi growled, “That is my big brother! How dare you kiss him?”

As far as Lin Ruixi was concerned, she was the only one allowed to kiss her brother.

Every other kid was forbidden from doing so. She felt like the other girl was there to steal her brother away, so she pushed the kid.

Lin Xichen was stumped as well. Life at the kindergarten was terribly boring. He was on the verge of breaking down because he was surrounded by a bunch of immature brats.

The fact that someone forced a kiss on his cheek during recess made him feel like that kindergarten was just too much. He had to leave, or he’d go insane.

The little girl’s head knocked on the edge of a stool after Lin Ruixi pushed her. The kids in that kindergarten were all from powerful families, so the teachers contacted and asked the parents to drop by the kindergarten.

The little girl’s mother was an entitled woman with a terrible attitude. “It’s not like he’s royalty or anything, and it’s just a kiss, right? Kids play pretend all the time, so it’s no big deal. Besides, if anyone’s being taken advantage of, it’s my daughter. Your daughter made it worse by pushing my precious girl. Look at her reddened head. How do you plan on dealing with this?”

It didn’t matter what caused it. Lin Ruixi was at fault for pushing the kid, but the mother didn’t have to be that rude.

Lin Xinyan hadn’t even spoken up before Lin Ruixi interrupted, “Just a kiss? That is my brother, and we never gave her permission to kiss him!”

“Ruixi,” warned Lin Xinyan sternly.

“I was just telling the truth,” complained Lin Ruixi softly.

Lin Xichen, the boy in between all the drama, sat at the corner and acted as if it had nothing to do with him. It didn’t matter if it was the kids or the teachers in school. Everyone was nice to him, and they liked to kiss his cheeks. That made him feel troubled.

Still, he was glad that something so minor had turned so crazy because that might mean that he no longer needed to go to that kindergarten.

“You are just a kid, so what do you know? Do you even know who her father is?” yelled the entitled woman.

Lin Ruixi didn’t understand what the woman meant by that, so she asked, “Who’s her dad?”

“The deputy mayor of B City,” answered the woman arrogantly before she added, “Apologize right away, and I will forgive you. If you don’t, I will tell her father about this, and things will be much worse.”

Lin Xinyan frowned. She was upset about the woman’s behavior because that was not a huge issue in the first place. Lin Xinyan had planned to get her daughter to apologize anyway because the kid was at fault for pushing someone else.

Lin Xichen was called over soon after.

“Mommy,” greeted Lin Xichen as he stepped forward. The entitled woman finally got a good look at Lin Xichen and thought that the kid was pretty amazing. He was young, but his back was straight when he walked, and his facial features were wonderful.

The entitled woman tapped on her daughter’s shoulder and commended, “You have pretty good taste.”

The little girl tilted her head down shyly. She liked the new student, Lin Xichen, and she didn’t understand what love meant. Her mind was innocent. She simply thought he looked cute, so she kissed him.

She didn’t understand the complicated world of adults.

“She kissed me without my permission, and that is disrespectful toward me, so she should apologize to me. My sister pushed her, and that is my sister’s fault, so my sister will apologize as well. We can start with you apologizing to me,” said Lin Xichen calmly and rationally.

The entitled woman didn’t expect a kid that young to speak so rationally and maturely.

“It’s your privilege that my daughter kissed you. Yet, you expect an apology for that? Not even in your dreams. You’re lucky I’m not asking you to apologize to her! I’ve learned all

about the parents who sent their kids to this kindergarten, and no one is as powerful as her dad. Stop messing around because it will not end well for any of you. Apologize right away, and I will pretend that nothing happened. If you don't..."

Chapter 350

"What are you going to do?" asked Lin Xinyan as she turned to the fuming lady. It was a ridiculously minor issue, but that woman insisted on making it bigger than it actually was.

"Oh, we're putting on an act, are we?" scoffed the woman.

Lin Xinyan frowned. "Your husband may be powerful, but will he really do something to us just for this?"

The entitled woman stared like Lin Xinyan was an alien. Is this not how the world operated? There is no such thing as being fair. We may not live in the past where social rankings were clearly marked, but are those social statuses really gone?

The woman glared discriminatorily at Lin Xinyan. The former thought that the latter was pretty, but lacked a pair of huge breasts. As such, the woman straightened her back and showed off her breasts before saying, "What corporation does your husband own? I will have my husband take good care of him."

The woman deliberately emphasized the words "take good care" when she spoke.

Anyone who could afford to send their children to a kindergarten like that had to be pretty well off, so the lady asked that question.

Lin Xinyan understood the underlying threat, and she was upset about it.

So she's abusing her power to bully us, huh?

The principal walked over at that moment. The others might not know who Lin Ruixi and Lin Xichen were, but the principal was well aware of it. Zong Qifeng had said that the kids' identities should not be exposed, so only the principal knew who the kids really were.

"I've looked into the matter. Kids hug and kiss all the time when they play together. Their form of love is more innocent and is different from our love. I have been working in this industry for over thirty years, and I have seen countless similar incidents. Most parents are okay with it, so for the sake of the children hanging out nicely in the future, I'd like to ask both sides to calm down and make up. Will that be okay?" asked the principal.

The lady sneered, "My daughter is her father's precious little girl. I don't have to make this a big deal, but the deputy mayor might not see things the same way."

It was obvious that the lady was abusing her husband's power.

"Are you really the deputy mayor's wife, though?" asked the principal. He had seen the uglier side of the world. The deputy mayor was almost sixty years old, so how could his wife and daughter be that young?

That simply didn't make sense.

The glow in the woman's eyes flickered for a while before she calmed down and insisted, "All you need to know is that she is the deputy mayor's daughter."

Lin Xichen saved the video he just made. He had been recording the woman since the principal stepped foot inside the office. At first, he only wanted to share the video online and teach that entitled woman a lesson, but after hearing the principal's words... This isn't as simple as I assumed, thought Lin Xichen.

It was obvious that something else was up.

Lin Xichen tugged at his baby sister's arm and instructed, "Apologize to her."

Lin Ruixi wasn't happy about that, so she argued, "But she's the one who kissed you first. You're my big brother, and only me, Mommy, and Daddy can kiss you. Who does she think she is? What gives her the right to kiss you?"

Lin Ruixi was rather possessive.

Lin Xichen winked at his sister and said, "Be good. Didn't you hear how powerful her dad is? We have no choice but to apologize."

"But..."

"Do you trust me?" interrupted Lin Xichen.

Lin Xinyan crouched down beside her daughter. That woman's attitude was terrible, but Lin Ruixi still attacked someone, and that was wrong too. "Ruixi, we're not supposed to push others when conflict arises. A gentleman uses his words, not his fist."

“But I’m not a gentleman. I’m just a pretty girl,” refuted Lin Ruixi as her big, round eyes glowed innocently at her mother.

Lin Xinyan was speechless.

She was trying to come up with solutions to convince her daughter to apologize when the phone in her pocket suddenly started vibrating. She fished her phone out and accepted the call. Zong Jinghao’s voice rang up soon after, “Where are you?”

Lin Xinyan shifted her gaze to her children before replying, “I’m out. What’s wrong?”

Zong Jinghao didn’t know the details either, so he didn’t answer. He simply said, “Send me your address. I’ll go pick you up.”

Lin Xinyan took a deep breath before replying, “I’m at the kindergarten.”

Zong Jinghao frowned a little. He tilted his head down to check his watch and noted that it wasn’t time to pick the kids up yet. What is she doing in there?

Zong Jinghao made a U-turn and drove toward the kindergarten.

He was close by, so he reached his destination quickly. Lin Xinyan had already led the children out of the office.

No one knew what Lin Xichen whispered into Lin Ruixi’s ear, but Lin Ruixi later apologized to the little girl she pushed. Lin Xichen also claimed that he would not complain about being kissed without permission.

Zong Jinghao walked over and picked his daughter up immediately. Lin Xichen had convinced his sister to apologize, but Lin Ruixi was still upset because she didn’t think that she was wrong.

She looked sad when she hugged Zong Jinghao’s neck and hid her face in his embrace. It was obvious that his daughter wasn’t happy, so Zong Jinghao turned to Lin Xinyan, then to his son. “What’s wrong?”

Lin Xinyan wouldn’t have come to the kindergarten at that hour if nothing were wrong, and his daughter would not be that upset.

“It’s fine,” replied Lin Xinyan. Everything was in the past, so Lin Xinyan didn’t want to talk about it anymore.

Lin Xichen, on the other hand, already had a plan up his sleeve. He didn’t need his dad to do anything because he could solve the issue all on his own.

Lin Ruixi was the only one who was motivated to tell Zong Jinghao everything. She wanted to be validated and told that she was not at fault.

“Was I wrong? He is my brother, right? So how can that girl kiss him? He’s not her brother! Besides, I didn’t push that hard. She’s the dumb one who couldn’t stand still and fell to the stool. Yet, I was the one who had to apologize,” shared Lin Ruixi as her eyes reddened with tears. She felt so wronged.

Zong Jinghao kissed his daughter’s cheek and replied, “You are not wrong, and you don’t need to apologize.”

Zong Jinghao carried his daughter and walked toward the kindergarten, but Lin Xinyan stopped him. Everything was settled, so there was no point in making more noise. Lin Xinyan wasn’t afraid of that entitled woman, but she didn’t want to deal with idiots like the latter anymore. “She pushed the kid, and that was her fault. How is she not wrong?” said Lin Xinyan.

“She didn’t do it on purpose,” refuted Zong Jinghao. His heart trembled in pain when he saw his daughter wronged like that. She was his precious baby, so how could he let others bully her at school?

Zong Jinghao taught them they shouldn’t abuse their family’s power to bully others, but that didn’t mean that they should be bullied!

“Don’t worry, I’ve already solved the issue,” claimed Lin Xichen confidently.

Lin Xinyan looked somewhat surprised when she turned to her son and asked, “What did you do?”

Lin Xichen climbed into the car after he grinned mysteriously and said, “You’ll know soon enough. We should go home now.”

Lin Xinyan felt conflicted as she stared at her son. She wasn’t sure if she should be happy or not. “Alright, Mommy will hold you, and we’ll go home now,” said Lin Xinyan.

“No, I want Daddy,” insisted Lin Ruixi. She held onto Zong Jinghao tightly because she didn’t want Lin Xinyan to carry her away.

Zong Jinghao handed the car keys to Lin Xinyan and said, “You drive.”

Lin Xinyan accepted the keys and got into the driver’s seat while Zong Jinghao sat in the passenger’s seat with his daughter. Lin Xichen sat in the backseat on his own. He fished his tablet out of his backpack and uploaded the video he secretly took via his watch. After that, he shared the video online and posted it on some of the most popular websites.

Videos like that could easily attract attention, and the video Lin Xichen uploaded started trending without anyone promoting it. The journey from the kindergarten to their house was short, but the video already had over a hundred comments by the time they reached home.

Lin Xichen swiped on the screen and monitored the comments left on various websites.

The car was parked at the entrance, and Zong Jinghao carried his daughter out of the car. After that, he told Lin Xinyan, "Wait here."

Lin Xinyan wanted to ask him if something was up, but she later realized that he wouldn't have gone to the kindergarten to pick her up if nothing happened. As such, she only murmured a simple reply.

Lin Xichen went into his room as soon as he got home. Zong Jinghao couldn't help grinning when he saw the kid closing the door. He caught what the kid was doing, even when they were all in the car.

Lin Xichen was smart and careful, and that was something Zong Jinghao was delighted about.

That is the son Lin Xinyan gave me.

"Why are you two home so early?" asked Cheng Yuxiu as she walked out of the study room and saw the two kids.

Zong Jinghao's smile faltered slowly, and he looked distant soon after.

Cheng Yuxiu saw the change in Zong Jinghao's expression. Naturally, she felt hurt. She shifted her gaze downward to hide her sorrow. "Ruixi is home. Come, give me a hug," said Cheng Yuxiu.

Cheng Yuxiu didn't use the word 'grandma' when Zong Jinghao was around because she was worried about upsetting him.

Lin Ruixi was wronged, so she wanted someone to cuddle with. Cheng Yuxiu tucked Lin Ruixi in at night, so the two of them were getting closer and Lin Ruixi was okay with Cheng Yuxiu's hugs. Hence, Lin Ruixi extended her tiny arms and ran to her grandmother.

Zong Jinghao needed to accompany Lin Xinyan to the hospital, so he let his daughter play with Cheng Yuxiu.

Lin Xinyan was resting her head on her hand when she saw Zong Jinghao walking over. She asked, "What's up?"

Zong Jinghao opened the door and informed, "Qin Ya is hospitalized."