

Chapter 181

"What are you doing?" Liu was holding a cup of water and standing in front of the kitchen when she asked Lin Xinyan who was about to make a call.

Lin Xichen frowned when he noticed that it wasn't mommy's voice, but he still thought that that person over the phone was mommy. He tried to remain calm but failed to do so, and could only ask with a shivering voice, "Mommy, is that you?"

Stunned for a while, Lin Xinyan wanted to ignore Liu and answer her son. She wished to tell him that he didn't have to worry about her as she's fine, yet the phone was seized by Liu. She ended the call immediately and said, "Didn't young master forbid you from making any phone calls? Did you forget?"

Lin Xinyan looked at Liu and said, "It's true that your young master saved me, but don't you think it's a bit too much for him to forbid me to contact my family?"

This indeed seemed to be unreasonable, yet she believed Bai Yinning did it with a reason. She then said, "Young master must be doing it for a reason, and you just have to obey whatever he says."

"Do you know that my family will be worried about me if they can't get in touch with me?" Lin Xinyan tried to persuade her.

Liu held the telephone close to her chest, as if she was afraid that Lin Xinyan would snatch it from her. She admitted that what Lin Xinyan said made sense, yet she couldn't disobey her young master.

"Liu..."

"Don't talk about it anymore. Let me help you walk and get into the house." Liu put the telephone on the dining table to ensure that Lin Xinyan couldn't reach it. She then ran towards her to help her up and said, "Let's go. Please don't make things difficult for me. If you really need to contact your family, you may talk to our young master about it. I definitely won't stop you if he agrees."

Lin Xinyan knew nothing about Bai Yinning and was even unaware about the motive that he forbade her from making phone calls.

"Liu, have you been here for long?" Lin Xinyan was secretly sounding her out in an attempt to get more information about Bai Yinning.

"Yes, I've always been taking care of young master." Lin was rather innocent and answered it right away when Lin Xinyan asked her the question.

“Why is there only him here? Where’re his parents?” As Lin Xinyan was afraid that she might suspect her intention, she added, “Since the house is so big, it would be quite lonely for him to live here alone.”

“I’ve never seen his mother and had only seen his father before. But since his father passed away, he’s the only one left in this house.”

“Oh. What’s his job?” Lin Xinyan pretended to be inexperienced when she looked around the house and said, “It seems that he is very wealthy.”

“You might not know him since this is your first time being in Baicheng, yet everyone in Baicheng knows him.” Liu was rather proud of the Bai family when she said, “Even though young master couldn’t stand, he is still an extraordinary man. More than 70 percent of the residents in Baicheng work for the corporation of the Bai family. He has single-handedly provided jobs to numerous people.”

Her eyes sparkled in pride when she talked about Bai Yinning.

70 percent? That’s a great deal indeed.

“How many residents are in Baicheng?” Lin Xinyan asked again.

“Probably fifty to sixty thousand, but I’m not really sure.” Liu helped her sit and said, “Put down your legs slowly.”

Lin Xinyan put her legs on the bed with her help, looked at her and asked, “Have you been to other places? For instance, do you know how far B City is from here?”

“I don’t know. I have never been there before, but it shouldn’t be very far? Our city is slightly remote from other places.”

Lin Xinyan lay on the bed. She could basically confirm that Bai Yinning wasn’t lying since this girl was very innocent and didn’t know how to disguise herself. Her admiration and fondness towards Bai Yinning were visible to anyone.

“Take some rest, Ms. Lin. Should I get a book for you so that you won’t feel bored?” Liu tried to ask.

As Lin Xinyan slept earlier, she really didn’t feel sleepy now.

“Would you like to have biographies, romance novels or other types of books?”

“Can you just give me a black pencil and a piece of 4K paper?” Since the purpose of reading is to spend her spare time anyway, why not grab the chance to do something that she’s passionate about?

“Why do you need these?” Liu seemed to have realized something all of a sudden, and said, “You like to draw?”

Lin Xinyan shook her head and said, "I'm a fashion designer, and I need these stuff to draw."

Liu stared at her with admiration and said, "You are a fashion designer? That's amazing!"

Lin Xinyan was a little embarrassed by her passionate gaze. She's just a fashion designer who has made some achievements in her own field that aren't worth mentioning.

"Wait for me. I'll get those things for you." Liu was very excited, as if a fashion designer was a remarkable figure.

Soon, Liu brought the pencil and paper and handed them over to Lin Xinyan. She was thoughtful enough to put the small dining table on the bed. Suddenly, she said something odd, "I've seen the real one."

Ah? Lin Xinyan looked at her doubtfully.

What's the real one?

A little embarrassed, Liu rubbed her hands and said softly, "I wanted to be a fashion designer when I was young, yet I didn't have the chance to learn nor meet a fashion designer at all. I mean I did see them in the TV shows but have never seen one in real life."

"If you are really passionate about it, I can teach you." Lin Xinyan was generous enough to teach what she knew to others.

Although she could teach the techniques of a fashion design, inspirations depend on one's own effort and luck.

"Really?" Liu's eyes were sparkling, yet when she recalled what Bai Yinning said, she replied with an even softer voice, "It's okay."

"Why?" Lin Xinyan didn't understand her. She seems to like it very much, but why would she refuse to learn when she has the chance?

"Young master wants me to take care of you and make sure that you won't be tired. He will certainly be mad at me if he knows that you teach me something."

"Well, it'll be fine as long as we don't tell them, right?" Lin Xinyan suggested.

"No. No." Liu shook her hands and said, "I can't lie to young master."

Lin Xinyan was baffled.

She didn't even know how she could best describe Liu's 'obedience' towards Bai Yinning.

It was too low. Is this the way to love a person?

“Liu, to grab a person’s attention, you have to make sure that you have something that is eye-catching.” Lin Xinyan couldn’t help to give this girl some advice.

She could tell that Liu was very kind.

Since Bai Yinning chose the girl to take care of her, he must know that she was loyal to him.

Lin Xinyan knew what Lin Xinyan wanted to say, yet she was also aware about her status. Even if her fondness and admiration towards Bai Yinning aren’t a secret to anyone, she can never confess her feelings to him. How can such a lowly girl like her deserve to be with young master?

She didn’t desire much, but merely wished to be at young master’s side to take care of her. She was already satisfied and didn’t expect more.

“Ms. Lin, you can just proceed. I’ll leave the room now. Call me if you need anything.” She soon left the room after finishing speaking.

She seemed to be avoiding something.

Lin Xinyan heaved a sigh and thought to herself. If she doesn’t strive to stand before others, how would Bai Yinning ever notice her?

Status is important, yet personality is even more crucial.

After all, social status has nothing to do with the feelings for each other.

Will a rich guy only have feelings for another rich guy?

Isn’t it nonsense?

Lin Xinyan sighed when she thought about her silliness. Since she likes her, she must strive for it. Her humble and silent devotion might not be appreciated by Bai Yinning after all.

Lin Xinyan grabbed the pencil and took a deep breath to calm herself down.

When Lin Xinyan gradually felt calm after taking several deep breaths, Zong Jinghao’s face suddenly flashed through her mind.

She suddenly felt anxious.

Will that man be nervous because she’s missing?

She wouldn’t know.

As soon as the tip of the pencil touched the paper, she seemed to have known instantly what she should draw, and immediately started drawing smoothly and confidently.

There was some noise outside the door.

“Young master.” It was Bai Yinning who just came back from outside. Liu immediately took Bai Yinning’s jacket that he had just taken off from the driver.

Bai Yinning glanced at Lin Xinyan’s room and said, “What did she do at home today?”

Ms. Lin hesitated for a while, yet didn’t lie to him and said, “Ms. Lin came out to make a phone call today.”

Bai Yinning raised his eyebrows and looked at her.

Liu immediately explained, “I just went to the kitchen to fill up a glass of water and didn’t purposely give her the chance to reach the phone.”

“Did she manage to make the call?” Bai Yining interrupted her when she was still explaining to him nervously.

Liu thought for a while, shook her head and said, “No. I hung up the phone.”

“Okay.” Then, he pushed his wheelchair towards Lin Xinyan’s room.

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The door of Lin Xinyan’s room wasn’t closed. After drawing for a long time, she felt tired and lay on the table to take a rest, yet unknowingly fell asleep.

Bai Yinning pushed his wheelchair gently towards Lin Xinyan, and only found out that she’s asleep when he reached the bed. He grabbed some of her drawing papers on the table to take a look and noticed that the drawings were smooth and meticulous in detail. Even though he could recognize that these were merely sketches, yet her designs were able to demonstrate her ideas clearly to everyone.

It showed that she was very good at it.

He looked at her and thought to himself. Is she a fashion designer?

“Young master, she’s a fashion designer.” Liu came in to take a look when she saw him holding Lin Xinyan’s drawings. She was indeed telling the truth when she said she’s a fashion designer. If she isn’t, she won’t be able to casually come up with these impressive sketches.

Bai Yinning’s face darkened, probably because she was too loud when she spoke.

Liu immediately lowered her head and pursed her lips reluctantly. She didn't want to wake Lin Xinyan up on purpose, but merely explained it to him instinctively when she saw him holding the drawing papers.

"Liu, don't be so impetuous next time."

Liu lowered her head and said, "I understand."

"Hum..." As Lin Xinyan heard someone talking when she was sleeping, she frowned for quite some time before slowly opening her eyes.

"Sorry for disturbing your sleep." Bai Yinning was looking at the woman with tired eyes who had just woken up.

As soon as Lin Xinyan wanted to rub her eyes, she realized that one of her arms was numb after sleeping on her arm for quite some time and hissed in pain.

"What's wrong? Is your arm numb?" Bai Yinning reached out his hand and said, "Is it this arm? Let me rub it for you."

Lin Xinyan immediately pulled back her hand that was touched by him, shook her hand non-stop and said, "It's fine. It's fine. I can do it myself."

She rubbed her numb arm vigorously when she was talking so that the numbness can subside soon.

Calmly withdrew his hand, Bai Yinning wasn't angry because Lin Xinyan resisted him, and asked, "Do you like it?"

Ah?

Lin Xinyan soon understood that he was referring to the aquarium. She nodded perfunctorily and said, "It's a rare aquarium."

Bai Yinning put down the drawings when he was withdrawing his hands, and said, "If it can make you smile, that'll be the making of it."

Lowering her head, Lin Xinyan pretended that she didn't hear it, tidied up her drawings and said, "Please excuse my poor drawings."

"Not at all. You draw very well. You should be a famous fashion designer, am I right?" He sounded confident even though he was asking a question.

"No." Lin Xinyan didn't want to reveal too much about herself to him as she knew nothing about this mild-mannered man.

He can't be an ordinary man after all since he is an overlord of this place.

"I trust my own feelings." Bai Yinning was confident.

Lin Xinyan inverted her drawings and put them on the table, and apparently didn't want to talk about this further.

Bai Yinning was very observant and didn't continue to ask her. He changed the subject and said, "Are you bored because of staying at home all the time?"

Lin Xinyan nodded his head and said, "Not really."

"Do you want me to bring you out to tour around?" Bai Yinning said smilingly.

He was always smiling.

Lin Xinyan wanted to refuse at first, but she agreed to it when she thought that she could also go out and be familiar with the surroundings.

"But my legs..." It was difficult for Lin Xinyan to make a decision. Since she could hardly walk now because her legs were injured, she didn't want to be a cripple and wished to recover soon and go home.

"I'll help you walk." Bai Yinning reached out his arm.

"Let me help." Liu immediately came up to Lin Xinyan to help her as she was afraid that Lin Xinyan would really grab him by his arm, and explained, "Since I can walk, it would be more convenient for Ms. Lin."

Lin Xinyan surely understood Liu's intent whereby she didn't hope to see her having physical contact with Bai Yinning.

As she was willing to do her the favor, she grabbed Liu's arm and said, "Just let Liu help me."

Glanced at Liu, Bai Yinning didn't say anything and pushed his wheelchair towards the door.

He then turned around to glance at Lin Xinyan and said, "You can visit my study first."

Since his bedroom and study were on the ground floor and only a couple of steps from Lin Xinyan's room, he pushed the door and went into the room first.

When Liu helped Lin Xinyan walk into the room, Bai Yinning instructed her, "Help her sit on the chair, and you may leave."

Liu wished to stay, yet Bai Yinning apparently wanted to send her away. She didn't dare disobey Bai Yinning even though she was reluctant to do so.

She had no choice but to help Lin Xinyan sit and leave the room. Before closing the door, she glanced at Lin Xinyan.

Lin Xinyan wished to tell her that she didn't have to worry about anything as she did not have any feelings for Bai Yinning.

She hoped that she could put her at ease.

But since Bai Yinning was in front of her, she couldn't say it out loud and had to bite her tongue.

Once the door of the study was closed, Bai Yinning pushed his wheelchair to the front of the writing desk and asked casually, "Did you study drawing?"

"Not really. I went to a fashion design college and drawing was a must, and so it is my basic skill." Lin Xinyan answered fluently.

But deep in her heart, she was even more on the alert for him. He was smart to break the ice between them easily.

Bai Yinning laughed and said, "Do you like to read?"

"Sometimes." She rarely has spare time to read, and even the books that she occasionally read were related to fashion designing.

"I love reading." Bai Yinning said earnestly, "Since I couldn't walk and don't have many friends, the books are the ones who can accompany me."

Even though he buried his feelings well, Lin Xinyan could still sense the air of disappointment and melancholy around him.

No one can be completely unconcerned about the fact that he or she couldn't walk.

Lin Xinyan's gaze fell upon the bookshelf behind the writing desk. It was made of Narra wood and had the same height and width as the front wall. There were many rows of books on the shelf, and most of which Lin Xinyan hadn't even heard of the titles.

"I love this book the most." Bai Yinning took out a book from the bottom of the shelf. It was a very thick book with a blue cover. When he was handing the book over to Lin Xinyan, he accidentally knocked down a photo frame on the writing desk.

Lin Xinyan didn't purposely want to look at the person in the photo, yet she couldn't take her eyes off it as soon as she glanced at it unintentionally.

It was Yuxiu.

She was Zong Jinghao's stepmother.

Why would her photo appear on his writing desk?

What's the relationship between them?

Her mind was in a whirl.

Bai Yinning was quietly observing Lin Xinyan's reaction. Her facial expression was obviously changed after looking at the person in the photo.

Then, his gaze fell upon her wrist again. He put the photo frame back and looked at the woman in the photo and confirmed that the woman was also wearing the same jade bracelet on her wrist.

He could confirm his thoughts based on Lin Xinyan's reaction.

"Who is she?" Lin Xinyan blurted out.

This is too strange.

Why would Yuxiu's photo appear here?

Bai Yinning continued to hand over his book to her and said, "You can read it when you have time. It's an interesting book."

He deliberately changed the subject.

Although he tried to feel Lin Xinyan out on purpose to confirm his thoughts by using the photo, he didn't wish to tell her everything.

Lin Xinyan looked at him, as if realized that he treated her well because of Yuxiu.

"What's wrong? You don't like my recommendation?" Bai Yinning didn't take back the book in his hand and still wanted to hand it over to her.

Lin Xinyan took the book over out of courtesy and said, "Thank you. I'll read it."

When she was talking, her gaze fell upon the photo frame that was put back, She then looked at Bai Yinning and said, "I heard Liu said that you're the only one left in the house."

Bai Yinning's facial expression changed slightly before he looked normal again. He smiled and said, "Yes."

He said it concisely and without superfluous words.

Lin Xinyan knew that he avoided talking about it.

Bang, bang...

Liu knocked on the door when she was standing outside, and said, "Young master, Ms. Lin, dinner is ready."

"Let's go." Bai Yinning pushed his wheelchair to come up to her, reached out his hand and said, "I'll help you walk."

Lin Xinyan didn't hold out her hand immediately. She hesitated for a while and said, "I'll let Liu help me walk..."

"Are you refusing me? Don't you think it's not very appropriate to embarrass your savior?" Bai Yinning looked up at her with his smile. But as he was insistent on it, Lin Xinyan found it difficult to refuse.

Lin Xinyan reached out her hand to hold his arm. Although he was sitting in a wheelchair, Lin Xinyan could feel that he had a sturdy physique and thought that he should have worked out a lot. Contended, he pushed his wheelchair towards the door. After Lin Xinyan turned the knob to open the door, Liu who was still standing in front of the door immediately held out her arm when she saw Bai Yinning helping Lin Xinyan walk...

But before she could say anything, Bai Yinning glared at her warningly, and she had no choice but to withdraw her arm, turn around and leave.

When they reached the dining room, Bai Yinning pulled the chair for Lin Xinyan and said, "This is the first time that we have our meal together."

Even though Lin Xinyan smiled, she was thinking to herself. We don't really know each other and haven't met for a long time anyway.

Liu placed the dishes and occasionally looked at Lin Xinyan. Since she's really good-looking, it is no wonder that young master treats her well.

"Liu, did you prepare bone broth as I asked?" Bai Yining was putting his napkin slowly on his laps.

"Yes, I'm going to get the broth now." Liu said respectfully.

"I heard that it's good for our body parts for the corresponding cuts of meat that we eat. I'm not sure if it's true, but you should drink more." Bai Yinning said.

"You are very thoughtful." Lin Xinyan responded moderately.

It somehow showed that Bai Yinning was overly hospitable.

He laughed and evaluated heartily as he said, "A woman who is too smart is not likeable."

When Lin Xinyan saw Liu coming over them, she said smilingly, "I'm really worried that someone will have feelings for me now, as my two children might be reluctant to accept him."

Bai Yinning was stunned. She already has children?

But she looks rather young.

Liu was even more shocked than Bai Yinning. She... She has children.

In that case, it's impossible for her to be with young master.

Feeling excited, she walked faster and accidentally spilled some of the soup. As she didn't notice and slipped over it, she spilled the whole bowl of hot soup towards Lin Xinyan.

"Watch out." Just before the hot soup was spilled on Lin Xinyan, Bai Yinning pushed the wheelchair and moved swiftly towards Lin Xinyan. He took her in his arms to ward off the hot soup, and so it was all spilled on his back.

He bellowed, perhaps because it was too hot.

"Young master." Liu screamed and she was shocked.

Lin Xinyan recollected herself when Liu screamed. She looked at Bai Yinning and asked, "Are you alright?"

Bai Yinning looked up, smiled to her and said, "I'm fine."

But Lin Xinyan could feel that he wasn't fine as his voice was a lot softer than before. He just pretended to be calm.

"Liu, go get a doctor."

"Alright. I'll make a phone call now."

"Are you caring for me?" Bai Yinning was still holding her in his arms, and his eyes were sparkling at the moment.

Chapter 183

"I'm sure that the one who called me was my mommy." Lin Xinyan said confidently.

When Shen Peichuan looked at Zong Jinghao, their eyes met. Zong Jinghao asked, "Can you identify the location?"

"As the phone call was too short, we can't get the exact location. But we can still find out the area of the number." Shen Peichuan said.

“If I call her again using the number, will we be able to identify the exact location? Lin Xichen couldn’t conceal her excitement as he wished to find his mommy as soon as possible.

Zong Jinghao pulled his little hand and took him in his arms. He wanted to move, yet Zong Jinghao held him by his shoulders and said, “If your mommy is not held captive, she will surely contact you.

Considering that when you managed to get through, she didn’t say a word and you even heard a stranger talking, that indicates that she’s held captive. If you call her now rashly, the bad guy might even transfer her to another place.”

Lin Xichen agreed to it. If mommy is not held captive, she will definitely contact him. She must be put under surveillance since she hasn’t contacted him now.

“What should we do now?” Lin Xichen asked nervously.

“As long as I’m here, we will be able to find her. Don’t worry.” Zong Jinghao successfully shifted Lin Xichen’s focus away. He was too focused on finding mommy and forgot that he was in Zong Jinghao’s arms.

Shen Peichuan looked at them silently, and then said, “I will tell the driver where we should be heading to.”

Based on Lin Xinyan’s phone number, he found out the area of which the number belonged. Even though the area was huge, they would be closer to where Lin Xinyan was hidden, and it would be very helpful for them to locate her.

“Hum.”

Zong Jinghao said calmly.

“Will we be able to find mommy?” Lin Xichen asked.

“We will.” Zong Jinghao answered affirmatively.

He firmly believed so.

He will find her and get her back!

Shen Peichuan came in and said, “We’ll be entering a rest area soon to fill up the car. You can bring Xichen and Ruixi out to get some fresh air.”

It’s boring to keep staying in the car. Even though the car had everything that they had in the house, it was still a vehicle that lacked space.

Lin Xichen stood up and said, “I’ll get out of the car with you first.”

“Alright.” Shen Peichuan held out his hand and said, “Let me hold your hand.”

Lin Xichen was obedient and held out his hand.

“Look after him.” Zong Jinghao instructed him.

The rest area was very crowded with all walks of life.

“Understood.” Shen Peichuan looked at him. Why is he so wordy now ever since he became a father?

Can't an adult like him look after a child?

But he didn't say anything, as he knew that Zong Jinghao said it because he loved his son.

“Let's see if there's a place for us to rest.”

Shen Peichuan brought Lin Xichen out of the car, whereas Zong Jinghao went to the back of the car to carry his daughter.

The little girl was still sleeping soundly, and her face looked red. When he bends over to carry her daughter, she is awake at the moment when she's touched. Opened her sleepy big eyes, she realized that it was Zong Jinghao, and said softly, “Daddy.”

Zong Jinghao's heart melted when she called her daddy. He kissed her on her forehead and said, “Let's get out of the car and have some fresh air.”

The girl felt refreshed as soon as she heard that they could get out of the car, and said, “Is there something to buy?”

Zong Jinghao poked his daughter's nose and said fondly, “Yes.”

Hehe.

The little girl grinned cheerfully.

Since Lin Ruixi's hair was a bit messy, Zong Jinghao wanted to help her comb her hair. However, as soon as he started combing, the little girl's facial expression changed as she said, “It hurts.”

Zong Jinghao hadn't done such a thing before.

He immediately withdrew his hand, put down the comb and said, “Daddy never combed hair for others before.”

Lin Ruixi looked into the mirror. Even though her hair was a little messy, she didn't want his father to comb her hair for her. She said with her pouting lips, “Daddy, did you comb my hair for me because you think that I'm ugly?”

Zhong Jinghao was stunned for a while before he said, "No. My daughter is the most beautiful girl, and no one can match her.

Zong Jinghao picked his daughter up and said, "I won't comb your hair."

The little girl lay on his shoulder and said, "I want to buy some delicious food."

Zong Jinghao looked at his daughter and recalled something. Lin Xichen once said that she's an avid foodie, and now it seems to be true.

But he likes her.

Since he had seen too many intrigues and hypocrites in the past, he felt that his life wasn't boring anymore after such an innocent and lively girl came into his life.

"Daddy, over there, over there." Lin Xichen pointed at the supermarket that wasn't far from them with her index finger.

Zong Jinghao said patiently, "I saw it."

He felt compelled to do it but liked it very much at the same time. After entering the supermarket, Lin Ruixi asked him to put her down so that she could pick her favorite food by herself.

Perhaps due to the fact that groceries in the rest area were more expensive, there weren't many people inside. Once Zong Jinghao put her down, she ran happily.

Frowned slightly, Zong Jinghao followed her quickly and said, "Slow down."

"I want this." Lin Ruixi took a box of chocolates from the shelf, held it in her arms and said, "I want potato chips too, and this, this..." Soon, she grabbed too many things and couldn't carry them. She yelled at Zong Jinghao and said, "Dad, I can't take that."

There's a snack that she wanted on the shelf, yet she couldn't reach it because the shelf was too high for her.

Zong Jinghao who was standing behind her reached out his arm, grabbed the snack that she wanted effortlessly and said, "I'll hold it for you."

"No." Lin Ruixi shook her head. She would feel secure only if she's the one holding the snacks.

"You can't have this. This is too expensive." A mother in front of them said to her son.

The little boy was staring at that bottle of fruit juice. He seemed to be salivating at it, yet didn't ask for it anymore. His mother took a bottle of mineral water and said, "Drink this if you're thirsty."

The mother handed the bottle of mineral water to her son and went to the cashier to pay for her goods.

Lin Ruixi looked at the things in her arms and looked at the little boy and his mother again. Then, she looked up at Zong Jinghao and said, "Daddy, did I take too much? Is this very expensive? Do we have to spend a lot of money?"

Zong Jinghao knelt down before his daughter, caressed her hair that covered her forehead, and put them behind her ears. He then said gently, "No. Daddy will work harder to earn more money, so that my daughter can buy whatever she wants."

"Daddy, I love you." Lin Ruixi leaned closer to Zong Jinghao, kissed on his face and said, "Can I get that bottle of fruit juice?"

Zong Jinghao hadn't recollected himself after being kissed by his daughter. There was still some of her saliva when he touched his face.

He didn't think that it was dirty, but rather felt that it was proof that his daughter loved him. Felt cheerful, he stood up and handed the bottle of fruit juice over to her.

After taking the bottle of fruit juice from him, Lin Ruixi ran towards the cashier, handed it over to the little boy and said, "Take this as a present."

"We didn't buy this." The mother of the little boy said awkwardly.

"My daddy will pay for it," said Lin Ruixi as she reached out her hand determinedly and looked at the little boy with her big sparkling eyes. He was slightly skinny and was wearing a black and white striped sweater. The sweater wasn't branded nor new but looked rather clean.

The little boy looked at her but didn't reach out his hands. Even though she looked a little 'disheveled', he could still tell that this little girl probably came from a wealthy family.

Considering that she seemed to be innocent and knew nothing about how the world worked, she could be a child who was loved and cared for ever since she was born.

Only those who had never experienced any suffering in life won't know how difficult life is and how wicked a human can be, and perhaps that's the reason that she still has the pair of eyes that was as clear as crystal.

He said courteously, "Thank you, but it's fine."

"Don't you want it very much?" Lin Ruixi blinked her eyes when she asked.

"I want it, but I will strive by myself to get it." After finished speaking, the little boy held his mother's hand and said, "Mommy, let's go."

The mother paid for the bottle of mineral water and left with her son.

Lin Ruixi was standing still and felt lost when she looked at the boy.

Did she do something wrong?

Was she wrong?

Since Lin Ruixi was being rejected, she started to question herself whether she really did something wrong.

She asked herself again and again.

Zong Jinghao picked his daughter up, caressed her hair and said comfortingly, "Ruixi, are you upset?"

Lin Ruixi nodded and replied, "I wanted to give it to him as a present because I thought he really wanted it, but why would he refuse?"

Zong Jinghao squinted when he looked out the window and saw the pair of mother and son standing in front of the bus. He could sense that the boy was rather proud and had the strength of character to be a capable man when he grew up.

"Ruixi, sincerity is not always reciprocal, and so does our kindness." He knew that his daughter was kind and sympathized with the little boy who wanted something but couldn't get it.

But in the eyes of the little boy, her kindness was seen as pity towards him.

Therefore, he didn't want to accept her pity.

He caressed his daughter's head and said, "Your mommy protected you very well."

Chapter 184

Zong Jinghao held a plastic bag with one hand while carrying his daughter with the other. When they left the supermarket, the bus was about to pull away too. The mother and son who were buying something in the supermarket just now were in the bus.

When the little boy got into the bus, he looked back at the little girl who was carried by someone in his arms. He felt that she was an innocent yet very adorable child.

"Let's go." His mother urged him.

The little boy had to get into the bus.

“Where’s brother?” Lin Ruixi looked around and saw a lot of cars and the crowd. She didn’t notice that a boy with a pair of black and sparkling eyes was looking at her behind the window of the bus.

The bus soon pulled away, and she slowly disappeared from his sight.

“Daddy, what’s that about?” Lin Ruixi pointed at the stall that was selling tanghulu (sugar candy) not far from them and surrounded by a bunch of people.

She fell on Zong Jinghao’s neck and said, “Daddy, I want tanghulu.” Zong Jinghao looked up at the sky for a while and then looked at the bag of snacks that he was carrying.

Hmm, since my daughter wants it, I have only one option: Buy it!

“Daddy’s so nice.” Lin Ruixi kissed and brushed him when she fell upon Zong Jinghao’s neck. Zong Jinghao’s heart melted.

Tanghulus in the old days contained only Chinese hawberries covered in hard candy, but now many different types of fruits could be strung together with a stick. Lin Ruixi wanted one original hawberry tanghulu that was coated in glittering sugar and looked rather appetizing.

She said approvingly, “This must be very delicious.”

Zong Jinghao paid for it and said, “We should go.”

The little girl nodded repeatedly. She was very satisfied now since she got everything that she wanted.

When they returned, the car was already filled up. Shen Peichuan had also brought Lin Xichen back, and he was also holding a tanghulu.

“Why are you guys so late? We’ve been here for quite some time.” Lin Xichen looked at the stuff that Zong Jinghao put into the car. He then looked at his sister and slightly heaved a sigh as he roughly knew what happened.

Shen Peichuan patted him on his head gently and said, “You’re still very young. What are you sighing about?”

Lin Xichen pouted his lips and sat on his seat to eat his tanghulu.

Shen Peichuan followed Zong Jinghao to the back and said, “Su Zhan solved the matter about He Ruilin...”

“We’ll talk about it later.” Zong Jinghao interrupted him as he didn’t want his daughter to hear such nasty things.

Shen Peicuan immediately shut his mouth and said, “I’ll wait for you downstairs.”

“Ok.” Zong Jinghao put her daughter down, placed the food on the desk and said, “You’ll stay in the car with your brother. Daddy and Mr. Shen has something to discuss.”

“I got it.” Lin Ruixi was very thoughtful and lovely.

Zong Jinghao caressed her hair.

The little girl turned away and said, “My hair was messy enough, and it became messier after you touched me. When we find mommy, mommy might not recognize me anymore because I’m too ugly.”

Zong Jinghao laughed softly, pinched her face and said, “Who dares to say that my daughter is ugly?”

Felt joyous, Lin Ruixi grinned broadly, revealing her clean and white teeth.

Shen Peichuan was in front of the car when Zong Jinghao got out of it. He slightly moved backwards to give him the space.

They walked a few steps to the front, but still not far from the car.

“Lin Yuhan’s dead.”

Zong Jinghao startled. Why is she the one who died?

Back then, Lin Yuhan wasn’t injured at all whereas He Ruilin was tortured rather badly. They were purposely being placed in the same place to ‘slaughter each other’, and he had never expected that Lin Yuhan would die.

He thought that He Ruilin’s the one who would die. Nevertheless, neither of their deaths concerned him since the one who survived was found guilty of murder and would surely go to jail. If her crime was found to be severe, she could be sentenced to death.

“I never expected it before He Ruilin...” Shen Peichuan shared the same thought as Zong Jinghao. He used to think that He Ruilin would die, yet it turned out that Lin Yuhan who wasn’t injured was dead.

It tells them how tough He Ruilin is.

She could still kill Lin Yuhan even though she was injured.

“The evidence in the murder of Lin Yuhan by her was inclusive and indisputable. Also, she had been given the death sentence with one-year reprieve due to the old case of contract killing that involved Yu Doudou’s brother. The ones who are watching over her now are my men, and so something like He Ruize’s escape in the past won’t happen again.”

They deliberately kept He Ruilin and Lin Yuhan in the interrogation room with security cameras. Since they recorded the way He Ruilin killed Lin Yuhan crystal clear, it was literally impossible for her to reopen the case. Considering that she was also convicted of contract killing in the past, she had zero chance to survive.

Zong Jinghao looked very calm, as if the woman who was given the death sentence had nothing to do with him.

She brought this on herself and couldn't blame anyone.

He used to tolerate her and ignore the dirty tricks that she played because she saved him before. Because of that, he missed the chance to be with Lin Xinyan for so many years.

Didn't he know that He Ruilin was rather ill hearted?

He knew it but tolerated her all the while due to his indebtedness to her. Instead, she's the one who eroded his patience and gratitude towards her.

"Let's go." He strode towards the car.

Shen Peichuan followed him and said, "Su Zhan's on his way too, and would soon catch up with us."

Zong Jinghao looked back at him.

Shen Peichuan spread out his hands and said, "He's already on his way when he informed me that he's coming. Also, I can't really stop him since he's determined to come."

At this moment, Zong Jinghao's phone in his pocket rang. He took out his phone and noticed that it was Guan Jing's call.

He didn't want to pursue the matter about Su Zhan but take the call instead. When Guan Jing was about to report to him on He Ruilin, Zong Jinghao who was standing in front of the car window said calmly, "I knew it."

After Guan Jing informed him about some matters related to the company, he turned on his laptop to check the documents that Guan Jing sent to him. Then, he signed on the documents after confirming that they were fine and gave him some instructions before ending the call.

When the night was closing in, they reached Baicheng.

Shen Peichuan said, "Since we had been in the car for the past few days and didn't really take a good rest, I think we should stay overnight in a hotel. The two kids can also rest well and get refreshed."

Zong Jinghao didn't seem to hear him as he was still browsing through some websites. Frowned, Shen Peichuan came closer to him and asked, "What are you reading..."

Before finished speaking, he could see what was on the screen and realized that Zong Jinghao was looking for some information about Baicheng.

The first piece of information was about the origin of Baicheng.

This place wasn't named Baicheng in the old days, and its original name was County of Mengcheng.

There was an entrepreneur named Bai Hongfei who solved the unemployment issues of the locals. To commemorate him, the city Baicheng was therefore renamed after his surname.

Although Baicheng wasn't a populous city, it was rather prosperous, and most of the locals here worked in Bai Group.

Zong Jinghao continued to scroll down the screen but couldn't find much information about Bai Hongfei. Most of them were about the ups and downs throughout his journey to become a successful entrepreneur, and none was about his relationships and family.

"Daddy." Lin Ruixi was calling Zong Jinghao in the car.

"Are we staying overnight in a hotel? If we are, I'll make the arrangements right away." Shen Peichuan asked again.

Zong Jinghao sat straight to stretch his body, looked back at him and said, "Yes."

Even though there was everything in the car, the space was still limited and they couldn't really get a good rest in it.

"The button fell off." Lin Ruixi was sitting on the bed with her legs crossed, while Lin Xichen was leaning on his side and fell asleep.

"Let me take a look."

Lin Ruixi handed the button over to him, pointed at the collar and said, "It fell off from here."

"I'll get you another one." Since Zhuang Zijin packed her clothes for her and put them in the cupboard, he opened the cupboard, found a dress and asked, "This?"

Lin Ruixi shook her head and said, "This is a pajamas."

"Zong Jinghao continued to search and said, "This?"

"I'll look for it myself." As Lin Ruixi lost her faith in him, she slid down from the bed and searched through the cupboard. Finally, she grabbed a blue dress and said, "This is the one. Mommy bought it for me during my last birthday."

Speaking of birthdays, Zong Jinghao didn't even know when they were born.

Zong Jinghao helped her take off her dress of which the button fell off and put on the blue dress that she liked very much. She looked adorable in the dress that was adorned with a small sweater. Apparently, Lin Xinyan knew very well how to dress her daughter nicely and match clothes for her.

Zong Jinghao was a little excited when she looked at his daughter and asked, "Ruixi, when's your birthday?"

"May." She said with her pouting lips, "My birthday's passed for a long time, and I can only wait for next year."

Zong Jinghao held out his hand to caress her head.

When the car pulled over, Shen Peichuan came in and said, "I've found the best hotel in Baicheng."

He spread his arms and said, "It belongs to Bai Group."

Since most of the companies were under Bai Group, they didn't have much choice.

Chapter 185

"Can I see mommy now?" When Lin Ruixi was picked up by Zong Jinghao and brought to the hotel, she asked that question because she thought that they had arrived at the destination and could meet Lin Xinyan right away.

Zong Jinghao was a little nervous, but soon recollected himself and said, "She's playing hide-and-seek with us and wants us to find her. We haven't found her yet for now."

Lin Ruixi said with her pouting lips, "Alright."

Baicheng wasn't a large city. Even though it's a county town, it looked more like a town that belonged to a prominent family, namely the Bai family.

Although the hotel wasn't five-star, its environment, cleanliness and services were pretty good.

Shen Peichuan was carrying Lin Xichen who wasn't awake yet, while a few people were carrying their luggage behind.

"This is already the best hotel in Baicheng. Would you be uncomfortable with it because it's too small?"

When did Zong Jinghao ever stay in such a hotel before?

“Isn’t this a nice place?” Lin Ruixi blinked her eyes and asked as she didn’t understand why Mr. Shen said so.

Zong Jinghao took her firmly into his arms so that she couldn’t listen to their conversation. After Lin Ruixi opened her eyes widely to look at Zong Jinghao’s face, her eyes slowly squinted and seemed like a pair of crescent moon.

“Daddy, you’re so handsome.” She immediately buried her face into his chest after finishing speaking.

Zong Jinghao was inexplicably pleased by his daughter’s sweet compliment. He had never smiled ever since Lin Xinyan was missing, yet his lips quirked because of his daughter.

“Then, do you love daddy?”

The little girl answered without hesitation, “I do.”

Zong Jinghao kissed his daughter on her hair. Even though the fragrance of shampoo had worn off because she hadn’t taken a bath for two days, he still felt that his daughter smelled nice.

Once they reached their room, Shen Peichuan put Lin Xichen down on the bed and checked the surroundings. He had reserved all rooms on this floor as he knew that Zong Jinghao would need a serene environment.

Lin Ruixi was jumping up and down when she asked, “Daddy, are you going to help me take a bath?”

Zong Jinghao nodded and said, “Yes.”

She ran towards him to wrap his legs with her arms, looked up at him and said, “Daddy really is like mommy.”

Zong Jinghao held out his hand to lift her chin up and asked, “How is it that we are alike?”

“Because whatever I want, mommy will agree to it.” Once she finished speaking, the little girl let go of him and bounced up and down again.

On the other hand, Bai Yinning’s back was scalded and had several blisters. It wasn’t severe, and the doctor had come and provided some treatments for him.

Liu was standing beside the door like a child who was lowering her head because she knew she did something wrong. She seemed to have cried a lot as her eyes looked red.

Lin Xinyan sat on a chair next to the bed and said, “Thank you.”

If he didn’t ward her off in the nick of time, she would be the one lying on the bed instead.

“You really want to thank me?” Bai Yinning was lying on his side on the bed.

Since the doctor had applied some dressings on his back, he couldn't sleep on his back, or else he might tear the wounds where the blisters had just been removed.

“Of course.” As Lin Xinyan was afraid that he would give some unreasonable requests, she immediately added, “It should be something that I'm able to do.”

Bai Yinning smiled lightly and said, “No worries. I won't ask you to marry me.”

Lin Xinyan's lips quirked slightly.

He looked at her and said, “Can you get a glass of water for me?”

When Lin Xinyan was about to reach out her hands to take the jug on the desk, Liu who had been standing by the door rushed towards her and said, “I'll do it.”

She wanted to make amends.

Bai Yinning looked at her calmly and said, “Liu, why do you still appear bumbling?”

When Liu wanted to explain for herself, he stopped her from speaking when he said, “Go to shut yourself away and ponder over your mistakes. Don't appear in my house without my permission.”

“But...”

“But what?” His voice was slightly cold.

“Who's going to take care of you?” Liu wished to stay and immediately said, “Young master, I'm so sorry and it's all my fault. Please let me take care of you.”

“Liu, I'm injured now and can't be angry. Do you really want to infuriate me?” He said with an even deeper voice.

Since he usually looked mild-mannered, Liu was somehow shocked by his coldness now. She didn't dare refute him and chose to obey his order and leave the room.

“You frightened her. She didn't do it on purpose.” Lin Xinyan wanted to speak for Liu when she added, “She cares a lot for you.”

As Bai Yinning didn't want to continue this conversation, he deliberately changed the subject by saying, “Do you want me to die from dehydration?”

Lin Xinyan had no choice but to stop talking and take the jug to fill a glass with water for him.

Suddenly, Bai Yinning's phone on the table rang. Since Lin Xinyan knew that it's inconvenient for him to move, she handed the phone over to him and said, "Your phone."

Bai Yinning looked at the screen and noticed that it was the hotel manager's call. He answered the phone call and put it near his ear.

"Young master, there's a group of people who seem to be from the upper crust and have reserved all rooms on a floor."

Bai Yinning instructed him before that whenever he saw non-locals in these few days, he had to report to him.

That's why he immediately called Bai Yinning to inform him about the arrival of several non-locals.

He looked up at Lin Xinyan who was filling the glass with water but said to the person over the phone, "Do you know where they are from?"

"From B City. They brought along two kids, bar anyone from entering the entire floor, and don't require any service from us. Whenever they need something, they will just send some men to come downstairs to pick it up, and so we can't have any contact with them at all. Are they the ones you are looking for?"

Since Lin Xinyan was missing, someone would definitely be looking for her. He therefore instructed the hotel management to pay attention to any non-locals so that he could identify the ones who looked for her as early as possible.

"I understand." He couldn't be sure yet if they were here to look for Lin Xinyan.

After hanging up the phone, Lin Xinyan handed the glass over to him.

He put down the phone, took the glass of water and said casually, "Some non-locals came to the hotel, and the manager reported it to me."

Lin Xinyan wasn't doubtful at all, and merely thought that he was trying to start a conversation with her.

If he really had some useful information, he probably wouldn't tell her anyway.

After Bai Yinning finished up the glass of water, Lin Xinyan wanted to take it from him. However, as Bai Yinning didn't withdraw his hand when Lin Xinyan held the glass, she accidentally touched his hand with her fingertip, and immediately withdrew her hand.

Bai Yinning's gaze fell upon the part of his hand where she touched. It was as if her warmth lingered for a while, yet it was too light, short-lived, and didn't really make a deep impression on him.

"I suppose I'm not poisonous, but why are you so afraid of me?"

Lin Xinyan clasped her hands as her face turned solemn, and said, "I'm not afraid of you. To be honest with you, I'm already married. So, whether it's you or any other men, I'll always keep a distance."

Lin Xinyan used her marriage contract with Zong Jinghao now as the pretext.

If she says that she has children, Bai Yinning might either be surprised or don't believe her at all. But this time...

He relaxed himself, buried half of his head in the pillow and said, "How old are you? And you're already married and have children? Did you actually say it on purpose because you're worried that I might drool over you?"

"An 18-year-old person is considered an adult. Since I'm already 24 and about to be 25, is it really strange that I'm married and have children?" Lin Xinyan held back her uneasiness.

She doesn't really want to talk about it.

It wasn't a wonderful past for her.

What's wonderful was that she now has two adorable kids.

Bai Yinning could feel that Lin Xinyan's voice was slightly shaky, faster and more solemn, unlike her usual voice that always remained calm and steady.

His gaze fell upon Lin Xinyan hands that were clasped as he laughed softly and said, "What kind of a person are you married to? He didn't even buy you a wedding ring. Why don't you divorce him, and I can buy one for you."

Lin Xinyan lowered her head when she heard it. Her hands looked empty and only had a jade bracelet on her wrist which was given by Yuxiu to her.

"I didn't wear it". She pretended to be calm.

The marriage between Zong Jinghao and her was carried out to achieve their respective purposes and lasted for merely a month. Why would they have the time to get wedding rings?

Bai Yinning just didn't believe that she's married and had children.

But he was still in some doubt about it since the non-locals came to the hotel today.

He looked at Lin Xinyan and was lost in thought.

As Lin Xinyan didn't want to be alone with him, she said, "Take some rest. I will go back to my room."

Lin Xinyan stood up once she finished speaking and walked towards the door slowly by placing one hand on the wall for support.

“Lin Xinyan.” Bai Yinning suddenly stopped her.

Lin Xinyan looked back and asked, “What is it?”

“I find the jade bracelet on your arm very beautiful. Where did you buy it from?”

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Lin Xinyan looked down at the bracelet on her wrist and said laughingly, “Why are you asking this? Do you have some kind of special liking for women’s ornaments?”

Bai Yinning was speechless for a while and replied, “No...”

“Then, what is it that you really want to know from me?” Lin Xinyan asked straightforwardly.

She wouldn’t be so cautious if she hadn’t noticed Yuxiu’s photo in his study.

Since the jade bracelet was given to her by Yuxiu and he wanted to know where it came from, she had to be more vigilant.

She clenched her fists quietly and thought: What’s the relationship between Yuxiu and him?

No one would put a stranger’s photo in his or her own study, right?

Since the photos were even put on the table, apparently he always looked at it.

Bai Yinning touched his forehead and said laughingly, “Would you ever feel tired because of thinking too much?”

He could apparently sense that Lin Xinyan was suspicious of him.

“I don’t know her, but merely saw her photo.” Bai Yinning admitted that he put the photo on the table just to sound Lin Xinyan out.

It wasn’t always being put there.

He looked at the bracelet on her hand and said, “I’m keeping you here because your bracelet is the same as the one that the woman was wearing. I thought... you might be her daughter.”

Lin Xinyan didn’t utter a word.

But Bai Yinning didn't continue either and merely said, "You should take some rest."

Frowned, Lin Xinyan didn't really believe what he said and asked, "You said you don't know her, yet aren't you keeping me here for her sake because you thought I'm her daughter? Who will do such a thing for a woman who's a stranger? Do you really think I will believe your story?"

Lin Xinyan didn't hide it anymore since she was curious about his identity, and asked, "Who is she to you? Relative..."

Lin Xinyan actually wanted to say mother and son?

She can't think of an alternative explanation other than Yuxiu bore another man a child before she remarried Zong Qifeng.

But she doesn't think that Yuxiu is such a woman.

She feels that something just doesn't add up, and thus wants to ask Bai Yinning everything here.

"Let's make a deal." Bai Yinning suddenly suggested.

Lin Xinyan thought about it for a while and asked, "What deal is that?"

She didn't dare to simply agree to a deal with him.

"If you want to know who I am, I can tell you now. But you'll have to answer a question from me honestly." Bai Yinning said.

Lin Xinyan thought about the deal for a while and responded, "Sure."

She felt that Bai Yinning's secrets were a lot more compared to herself.

"Ladies first. You may ask a question." Bai Yinning had prepared himself when he proposed the deal.

Lin Xinyan pondered for a while and said, "What are your parents' names? Where were they from? Where are they now?"

Bai Yinning frowned when he said, "Is that really one question?"

"Yes." Lin Xinya didn't feel guilty at all when she answered, "I asked only one question about your parents, am I right?"

Bai Yinning laughed out loud. Lin Xinyan was indeed witty, as he could not refute her explanation at all.

His face turned solemn as he said, "I don't know who my mother was as I'm an orphan. My foster father was Bai Hongfei from Baicheng, who was the heir of Bai Group. Before he passed away, he handed Bai Group over to me with a request..."

He stopped here, looked at Lin Xinyan emotionally and said, "He hoped that I could marry Yuxiu's daughter, and I thought you were her."

So, is this the reason that he saved her and kept her here?

But who was his foster father Bai Hongfei? What's his relationship with Yuxiu?

"Since I've answered your question, now is my turn to ask." Bai Yinning looks serious when he said, "Are you ready?"

Lin Xinyan was lost in her thoughts as she was trying to guess what he would ask and prepare answers in her mind in advance.

"Are you ready?" Bai Yinning urged her.

"Yes." Lin Xinyan looked at him.

Bai Yinning raised his eyebrows when he said, "I've to attend an event this Saturday, and you'll be my partner."

Lin Xinyan frowned. Did she just experience some kind of hallucinations?

What... What did he say?

To attend an event with him?

"Shouldn't you be asking me a question?"

"I think I could hardly understand you by just asking one question, and so I decided to use it wisely."

Lin Xinyan was speechless.

"It's too late for you to regret now. We must never renege on our promises, right?" Bai Yinning grinned, as if he had his way.

"I won't harm you, and might even give you a surprise." Bai Yinning blinked at her.

Lin Xinyan was thinking to herself. I just hope that I won't be shocked. Surprise? Forget it.

"You didn't really follow the rule by putting forward this condition. I can still agree to it, yet you must also agree to my condition."

"I've already answered you." Bai Yinning blinked his eyes. This woman really didn't want to be shortchanged at all.

"Ask me another question then." Lin Xinyan looked up and apparently didn't want to cooperate with him. If he didn't agree to her request, she wouldn't agree to his as well.

Bai Yinning looked at her in silence for a while and finally said, "Alright, I'll agree to it. Just tell me."

"Allow me to make phone calls."

Bai Yinning knew since the beginning that she would make this request.

"Sure, but you can contact your family only after accompanying me to the event."

Lin Xinyan made a calculation and knew that there were just three to four days left until Saturday. She was willing to be patient for a few more days as long as she could contact her family.

"You shouldn't stay up too late." Bai Yinning grinned at her.

Time fled, and three to four days soon passed. After being massaged by the doctor carefully, Lin Xinyan's ankle recovered a lot. She could now walk by herself, yet couldn't walk for a long time as she hadn't fully recovered from the injury.

"Ms. Lin, young master asked me to give you this." Liu came in with a delicate box in her hands.

When Lin Xinyan was sitting on the side of the bed to move her feet, she heard Liu's voice, looked up and asked, "What's inside the box?"

Liu shook her head, yet she envied her very much as she could receive a gift from young master.

"Ms. Lin, would you want to open it and take a look?" Liu was standing next to the bed while holding the box in her hands. She looked at Lin Xinyan who was rather calm and said, "Young master rarely gives a gift to anyone."

She really isn't excited about it.

At least she has never seen young master giving a gift to anyone.

"Open it." Lin Xinyan said calmly.

Liu opened her eyes widely in disbelief and asked, "You want me to open it for you?"

Lin Xinyan thought about it again and felt that it was disrespectful to ask others to open her own gift. Even though she didn't look forward to Bai Yinning's gift, she said, "I'll open it."

She took the box from her and opened it.

It was an evening dress.

“Oh my god!” Liu couldn’t help but said shockingly, “Isn’t it the dress that you designed earlier? Young master asked someone to make it.”

Lin Xinyan saw it too. She held the dress up and spread it out like a piece of smooth silk.

“It looks beautiful.” Staring at it, Liu held out her hands to touch it and asked, “What’s the dress made of? Why is it so soft and smooth?”

“The real tea silks.” Lin Xinyan never thought that Bai Yinning would ask someone to make this dress by using tea silk.

Many imitations in the market are sold at a high price, yet none of them are real tea silk.

In terms of noodles, tea silk is considered the noble noodle and is given prominent titles such as “soft gold” and “slim queen”.

In terms of fabric, it is regarded as the highest quality silk.

Due to the complexity to produce tea silk, the craftsmen who are good at manufacturing this type of fabric are very few, and so the craftsmanship is about to be lost.

She knew it through books and the internet, and only saw a real dress made of tea silk once at Mrs. William’s house.

It was very difficult to buy tea silk even if the person had money.

She wasn’t sure where Bai Yinning got the material from. Also, the long dress that she designed would require large-size tea silk.

Liu didn’t know about all this but only felt that the design was beautiful. As the fabric was soft, smooth, and glowing, the pure black dress wasn’t dull and looked elegant, graceful as well as sexy.

“You must look very beautiful in the dress.” Liu buried her envy deep in her heart.

“Do you like it?” When Lin Xinyan looked up, she saw Bai Yinning in a dark blue grid suit with a light-colored necktie. Even though he was sitting on a wheelchair, he still looked extraordinarily stunning.

Chapter 187

Lin Xinyan was really surprised—not that he instructed his men to make this dress but managed to make it from tea silk.

Lin Xinyan put the dress in the box and asked, “I was wondering where you obtained such fabric from.”

“Do you like it?” Bai Yinning asked deliberately.

Actually, he purposely showed this fabric in front of Lin Xinyan, since every fashion designer loved quality fabric.

He believed Lin Xinyan was no exception.

Lin Xinyan was indeed interested in it, yet didn’t express herself and continued to rub her ankle.

Bai Yinning’s gaze slowly fell upon her, and he could see that she was fair-skinned, including her legs. Her ankles looked rather dainty, whereas her heels were pinkish-white. As the good-looking legs of women were called slim and delicate legs in ancient times, such a thought flashed through Bai Yinning’s mind.

Once Lin Xinyan felt that someone was staring at her pair of legs, she quickly pulled the quilt to cover her legs.

Bai Yinning slightly averted his gaze, yet he had made a real gaffe and looked rather embarrassed.

“I know the craftsman who can make such fabric...”

“Really?” Lin Xinyan opened her eyes widely and interrupted Bai Yinning before he could finish his words, “Where’s the craftsman? I would like to know him.”

Bai Yinning laughed. She is indeed interested in it.

“Put on the dress. After the event, I can introduce you to the craftsman.” Then, Bai Yinning pushed his wheelchair while gave his instruction to a person whom he brought along and said, “I’ll leave her to you.”

“You can rest assured.” The makeup artist who was holding a cosmetic case had already sized up Lin Xinyan. Since she was a good-looking woman, it’s very simple to apply makeup for her to look stunning, and the makeup artist already planned several versions of makeups in her mind.

Lin Xinyan wasn't used to heavy makeup, and in fact she rarely applied any makeup on herself other than attending events. So, she said, "Actually, Liu can just help apply makeup for me. There's no need to hire a makeup artist."

Bai Yinning said smilingly, "It's very important to me. I wish that my partner will be the most stunning woman in the hall."

Lin Xinyan wished to tell him that he should actually get an artist instead if he's looking for a good-looking woman. Even though she was rather unwilling to go with him, she had promised him in advance. Also, he would introduce the craftsman who can make tea silk to her.

She stood up from the bed and sat in front of the dressing table, waiting for the makeup artist to start.

"I don't really like heavy makeup." Even though she was determined to 'hand herself over' to the makeup artist, she was still afraid that she would be made like a 'ghost' by her.

The makeup artist wasn't irritated by Lin Xinyan's reminder and smilingly said, "Don't worry. Not everyone looks good with heavy makeup. Heavy-makeup is good, yet it depends on the poise of that particular person."

Since the makeup artist was rather easygoing, Lin Xinyan was much relieved.

"I've designed quite a lot of makeups, and some of them made deep impressions on others. But none of them triggered me to have so many thoughts in my mind when I met them." She then looked at Lin Xinyan and said, "You're the first one."

Lin Xinyan wasn't joyous because of her compliment but felt a little melancholy instead.

She missed her son and daughter.

She had never been separated with them for so long ever since she gave birth to them.

"I can see that you're unhappy. Is it because of Mr. Bai's legs..."

Lin Xinyan looked up.

"Even though Mr. Bai has to be in a wheelchair, he is handsome and very capable, and numerous women have always been dreaming of being noticed by him."

"Indeed, indeed." Liu interrupted the makeup artist before she could finish speaking, and added, "Too many women would dream of marrying him since young master is an outstanding man."

Lin Xinyan looked up at her, and even the makeup artist could feel her feelings.

It was simply too obvious for everyone.

Liu realized suddenly that she was too emotional and immediately explained, "There was a time when the daughter of the county mayor was pursuing him relentlessly, yet young master rejected her too. Young master treats you very well now, yet I feel that you seem unhappy."

Lin Xinyan didn't want to explain to Liu anymore. Even though she knew that Liu was not black-hearted, she was too wide-eyed and would not believe her explanation.

She just felt that her young master was the best.

Perhaps in her mind, there would only be women who are out of his young master's league, and definitely not the other way round.

The makeup artist smiled but didn't say anything. Since this little girl didn't know how to hide her thoughts at all, she would be fine to be a maid here. If she were to work in companies with intertwined office politics, she would be fired many times.

She didn't know how to adapt to the different situations.

When the makeup artist was combing Lin Xinyan's hair, she looked at her face closely in the mirror. Although she wasn't a stunning beauty at first sight, she was the type of beauty that seemed to look better the more others looked at her. Also, she had very good-looking facial features.

The makeup artist used a curling iron to curl Lin Xinyan's black hair, braided two small pieces of hair above her ears and put the hair behind the ears, while leaving some bangs to casually cover her forehead. Lin Xinyan was very fair-skinned and almost didn't need any powder, yet the makeup artist still applied some powder on her face for the sake of the entire makeup.

Before applying makeup, she looked too innocent to wear the black evening dress.

As for the eye makeup, the makeup artist applied brown and pink glitter so that her pair of eyes would stand out. She then used an eyeliner to draw upward at the upper corners of her eyes so that her crystal clear eyes would appear more enchanting.

As for lip makeup, the makeup artist chose dusty rose to make sure that her lips wouldn't look too red and gaily-colored nor plain, which matched her makeup perfectly.

"Your lip shape is very good-looking." The makeup artist couldn't help but complimented her when she was applying lipsticks for her.

The final step would be to put on the evening dress and high heels.

The pair of silver high heels was inlaid with numerous diamond chips and looked glittering.

Liu said in admiration, "It looks like a pair of crystal high heels, and young master is the prince."

The makeup artist initially wanted to say whether she had really seen a prince in a wheelchair, but she eventually bit her tongue. If she said something bad about Bai Yinning, this girl would surely be pissed off.

Lin Xinyan looked at Liu and heaved a sigh. She has to change for herself if she really wants it, yet she was too self-abased and didn't want to make any changes. In that case, it is destined that she will never be able to grab Bai Yinning's attention. She took her clothes to the restroom.

The design of the evening dress was simple and basically had no ornament. It had a v shaped neck design and two ribbons above her waist, one of which rounded the waist and stretched to the left to be tied with another ribbon. The ribbons were rather long and fell to her knees, while the hemline of the dress reached her ankle.

Two straps near her neckline crossed and formed a deep v neckline, revealing the curve and cleavage that would mesmerize everyone.

With the personalized makeup applied by the makeup artist, she looked rather charming while preserving her sense of innocence. Her grace and elegance would impress anyone just by a quick look, while the pride reflected by her black evening dress made her look mesmerizing.

Even the makeup artist and Liu who were all women fixed their eyes on her.

Since Lin Xinyan attended cocktail parties and banquets before, she didn't feel uncomfortable and acted decently.

She stood near the door of the restroom and said smilingly, "Is there something on my face? Why are you guys staring at me?"

"Shoes." Liu recollected herself and bent down to put her high heels near her legs.

When Lin Xinyan put on the high heels, she felt that they fitted her legs perfectly, and didn't feel uncomfortable at all as the height was just nice.

"Let's go. Young master was waiting outside." Liu held out her arm to help her walk.

Since Lin Xinyan's leg hadn't fully recovered, she didn't push herself to walk and held Liu's arm.

Bai Yinning was answering a phone call in the living room when he heard the sound of high heels. He turned around and saw Lin Xinyan who had dressed up nicely.

His hand that was holding the phone suddenly tightened. He held back his astonishment and told the person over the phone, "I'll be there soon."

Then, he hung up the phone and said to Lin Xinyan, "Let's go."

Lin Xinyan let go of Liu to walk towards him, held the handlers of the wheelchair and said, "I'll help you."

"I couldn't ask for more." Bai Yining gave her a sideways glance and wanted to say that she looked gorgeous, yet he bit his tongue.

When they were outside, the driver pushed Bai Yinning into the car which was specially retrofitted. It is equipped with an automatic slide ramp that could be extended to the ground, making it convenient to push his wheelchair into the car.

After fixing the wheelchair in the car, he came down to help Lin Xinyan get into the car.

"What kind of event am I accompanying you to? Where are we going?" Lin Xinyan asked after she sat down.

Since she didn't have any idea about it at all, she wanted to make sure that she wouldn't make any mistake.

"Annual banquet of Bai Group, organized in one of the hotels of Bai Group." He turned around to look at her when he spoke, and added, "The manager told me that there are a few people from B City, and I'm not sure if you know them."

Lin Xinyan's hands clasped unknowingly, yet she acted calm and said, "Although I was born in B City, I didn't grow up there. I don't believe in coincidence, particularly because I don't really know a lot of people."

Even though she said so, she was looking forward to it.

Would one of them be Zong Jinghao who's looking for her?

Chapter 188

The annual banquet of Bai Group was busily astir. Since Bai Yinning was an entrepreneur who drove the economy in the area and contributed a lot to the city, even the city mayor attended the event in person.

When the car pulled over, Lin Xinyan saw a huge banner at the entrance of the hotel. Many cars were parked beside the hotel, most of which belonged to the employees of Bai Group.

Gao Yuan, the assistant of Bai Yinning ran towards them to open the door and push him out of the car with the help of the driver. Then, he said to him, "The city mayor is here."

Bai Yinning gave an affirmative reply to him calmly. When he looked back at the car, Lin Xinyan walked towards him while Gao Yuan thoughtfully moved aside to save the position for Lin Xinyan.

Lin Xinyan held the handlers of the wheelchair and pushed him into the hotel.

The chandelier on the ceiling in the lobby was crystal clear and illuminated the entire lobby.

The other leaders of the group who were chatting with the city mayor made way for Bai Yinning when they saw him entering. Even before he came up to them, he forced himself—usually happened in such events—to say politely, “My apologies. I’m late.”

When a waiter passed by, Bai Yinning stopped him, took a glass of wine from his serving tray and said, “I’ll drink three glasses of wine as punishment.”

After gulping down the first glass of wine, he filled his glass and finished up the second glass. When he was about to drink the third glass, the city mayor finally said, “Even though you should drink three glasses of wine as punishment for being late, all of us can accept your lateness.”

He glanced at Bai Yinning’s legs and seemed to hint at something.

Bai Yinning remained composed and said smilingly, “When the tortoise races with the hare, why would the tortoise always win? I think I might be the diligent tortoise. Since I’m late, I should drink three glasses of wine as punishment.”

It was a double-edged remark. Even though he couldn’t walk, he is a successful person.

Regardless of social status, the diligent person wins as long as he or she is successful.

On the other hand, if a ‘hare’ is born to be superior but refuses to work hard due to its arrogance, what would happen to it in the end?

He gulped down the third glass and didn’t even frown a little.

The city mayor in a black tunic suit had some wrinkles on his face. He laughed and swept away his unhappiness due to Bai Yinning’s lateness.

He admired Bai Yinning’s wisdom.

When his gaze casually fell upon Lin Xinyan behind him, he was a little shocked. He looked at Bai Yinning again and asked, “Is she... your girlfriend?”

Everybody knows that Bai Yinning’s a bachelor and has never had a girlfriend. If Bai Yinning isn’t a disabled person, even he would want his daughter to marry him.

To be honest, apart from the fact that he’s disabled, he actually recognizes his look and capabilities.

Since there’s beauty by his side, he instinctively thought that she’s his ‘lady’.

Considering that it's the annual banquet of Bai Group and he shows himself with her in front of all employees in the company, he must value her very much.

Furthermore, even though Bai Yinning's disabled, he doesn't have other physiological disorders. He is a normal man and needs a woman too.

Bai Yinning looked back at her and said smilingly, "My..."

"Friend." Lin Xinyan interrupted him before he could finish his words.

She didn't want to develop a complicated relationship with him.

As she didn't want to embarrass Bai Yinning in front of everyone, she patted Bai Yinning on his shoulder to pretend that they were close friends, and said, "Since he said he didn't have a partner and kept persuading me to come with him. As a good friend, I couldn't refuse."

The city mayor laughed again and said, "I thought Chairman Bai who has always been single finally has a girlfriend. It's my mistake."

Bai Yinning laughed and stole a glance at Lin Xinyan.

Lin Xinyan pretended that she didn't notice his glance. Although she agreed to come with him, she would never let him control everything, and the power must be firmly in her hands.

After greeting each other and chatting for a while, the city mayor asked his secretary to hand over a document to Bai Yinning.

Bai Yinning took it from her and realized that it was a letter of approval for his land application. Since he wanted to set up a factory outside of Baicheng, he chose the directly administered city of Baicheng and submitted his application.

The city mayor surely wished that he could build factories in his administered area to drive the economy of the city and retain immigrants. A factory surely needs to hire workers, and thus the economic development of a city depends a lot on the local companies.

As a city mayor, he had heavy responsibilities to make sure that the future of the city looked bright and wouldn't want to lose any talent.

Outside of the hotel.

When two black SUVs pulled over in front of the hotel, Shen Peichuan got out of one of the SUVs and noticed a car with the registration number of five zeros that was parked in the garden. He glanced at the lobby and said, "This Bai Group is rather powerful."

Anyone who had a vehicle registration number like this surely wasn't an ordinary figure and had to be a mayor at least.

Zong Jinghao was wearing a black suit that looked slightly wrinkled as he had sat in the car for quite some time. He went out with Shen Peichuan to look for more information, yet no one saw Lin Xinyan before.

They were already in Baicheng for a few days, but their efforts were in vain thus far.

Dark circles could be seen underneath his eyes as he was constantly worried that He Ruize might have transferred her to another location.

“Let’s take the stairs.” Shen Peichuan suggested it because they wouldn’t have to enter the lobby to use the lift if they take the stairs.

They could just enter the hotel from outside if they took the stairs.

Since Zong Jinghao was in a very bad mood these past few days because he didn’t receive any news about Lin Xinyan, Shen Peichuan was being extra careful when he was with him.

Why did Su Zhan say he’s going to arrive soon but isn’t here until now? How many days have passed?

Is he lost and couldn’t find this place?

But he did send him the location.

An extra man can help shoulder some of the burdens for him.

A few days have passed, yet there’s no news about Lin Xinyan at all. Zong Jinghao isn’t the only person who is anxious because he’s rather worried about the situation too.

Zong Jinghao only looked slightly better in front of the two kids these past few days. If the two kids weren’t around, his face looked cold and hard like an ice sculpture.

Shen Peichuan was ‘trembling’ whenever he had to face him.

If it wasn’t because there’s no better hotel, Zong Jinghao could never stay here any longer as it was too noisy.

Shen Peichuan followed him to take the stairs and said, “I asked the person in charge of the hotel. The annual banquet of Bai Group is held only today, and the venue that they chose would naturally be their own hotel.”

When Zong Jinghao took the stairs, he walked for a while and suddenly stopped.

Shen Peichuan didn’t notice that Zong Jinghao stopped suddenly and almost bumped into him. Shocked, he immediately took a few steps back and asked, “What... what’s wrong?”

Please don’t scare him. To be by his side these few days was already a torment to him.

Zong Jinghao clenched his hand that was holding the handler and said, "She... is it possible that she's already left here?"

He isn't sure about it. Even though he thinks that Lin Xinyan might not be here, he still feels that he might miss something if he leaves now.

Shen Peichuan didn't dare to answer him.

Despite very little clues, they came all the way here merely because of the phone number and received no news about her at all these past few days. What more can he do about it?

She should call Lin Xichen again so that he could keep his hope alive.

Ring, ring...

The phone in Zong Jinghao's pocket rang. After taking out his phone and pressing the button to answer the call, a child said with a cute and crystal clear voice, "Daddy, when will you be back?"

"Soon."

"How soon would it be?" Zong Jinghao talked to her daughter over the phone while walking up the stairs, "It means I'll be right in front of you in the blink of an eye."

The little girl really blinked her eyes. Why isn't daddy in front of her yet?

"Daddy..."

"Look here." The photographer was holding a camera and facing the center of the lobby. Since this was Bai Group's annual banquet, a number of outstanding managers and workers had been selected, and Bai Yinning had to take a group photo with them.

Lin Xinyan was reluctant to join in the fun, yet Bai Yinning looked at her and said, "You promised that you will accompany me, yet don't want to be by my side now. Does it really count as accompanying me?"

Since Lin Xinyan couldn't get a good justification to refute him, she had no choice but to stand beside him.

Click...

Following the sound of the camera shutter, the beam of light was refracted through the chandelier to Zong Jinghao's eyes. He instinctively squinted his eyes and continued to say to his daughter, "On the count of three, I'll be right there..."

He glanced randomly at the crowd downstairs when he was talking...

Chapter 189

He glanced randomly at the crowd downstairs when he was talking but frowned and averted his gaze from them soon as all he could see was a large group of people.

“President Zong.”

Zong Jinghao looked back and saw the city mayor walking towards him. He said smilingly, “I thought my eyes are deceiving me, but it really is you. Are you here to attend Bai Group’s annual banquet too?”

He felt that something didn’t add up as he had never heard that Wanyue was going to cooperate with Bai Group.

If Bai Yinning was a young and successful man, Zong Jinghao would be the best among that group of young men.

Zong Jinghao told his daughter that he would come back later and hang up the phone.

He then kept his phone.

“No.” His gentleness when he was talking over the phone faded away. This was how he usually looked when he was attending an event.

The city mayor held out his hand and said, “What a coincidence to meet you here.”

Zong Jinghao held out his right hand to shake hands with him and withdrew it in just a few seconds.

Zong Jinghao didn’t wish to waste his time for him, but he still had to give him some respect since an ordinary citizen would not pick a fight with a government official.

This applies even more to a businessman.

“Chairman Bai will soon be building a factory in my area, and so we’re going to discuss the details.” Since Bai Yinning still had some matters to attend to, he came up first to wait for him.

They planned to talk about it over dinner.

“How about joining us for dinner to get to know each other?” The city mayor wished to be the middleman, yet seemed to have thought of something very soon and laughed embarrassedly as he said, “Have the two of you known each other long ago?”

Considering Zong Jinghao’s status, how is it possible for him to be here if his company doesn’t have any ties with Bai Group?

“I don’t know him.” Zong Jinghao’s answer was straightforward and concise.

“He’s the chairman of the Bai Group. Even though he’s in a wheelchair, I rather admire his capabilities. Anyway, Bai Group is certainly no match for Wanyue. I heard that you’ve invested in some projects overseas and established an investment bank with your business partners. President Zong is indeed bold and resolute.”

Zong Jinghao really wasn’t interested to know about Bai Yinning, yet was slightly curious when the city mayor said that he’s in a wheelchair.

A leader who’s a disabled person must have his strengths, or else his employees could hardly be convinced under his leadership.

His gaze fell upon the crowd downstairs.

Several leaders of the group were surrounding Bai Yinning and Lin Xinyan to tease them.

There’s never been a woman by Bai Yinning’s side in the past, but today he suddenly brought along a beautiful lady with him in front of every employee. So, all of them were very curious to know what kind of relationship they were in.

“Chairman Bai, you hid it so well. Even the old men like us who ‘went through fire and water’ with you didn’t know about it at all. You made a huge mistake.”

“No...”

“No? Do you still want to deny it? Will you bring her along if there isn’t anything going on between the two of you?” Someone didn’t want to listen to Bai Yinning’s explanation and interrupted him immediately.

Bai Yinning laughed and said, “I actually hope that it could really happen, but the main problem is...”

“What’s the main problem?” A few of them said in one voice. When they appeared to have understood something soon enough, they looked at Lin Xinyan together and asked, “Did you turn up your nose at our Chairman Bai?”

At this moment, Lin Xinyan felt that she had been ‘cheated’ by Bai Yinning as traps were everywhere now.

When she was about to explain it, Bai Yinning grabbed her by her arm, pulled her closer, and whispered to her, “Don’t embarrass me in front of my employees. If you were to reject me, feel free to do so when we are at home. Please, I beg you.”

When Zong Jinghao’s gaze fell upon them, he could only see Bai Yinning whispering to a lady. Due to their positions, he couldn’t see Lin Xinyan’s face but only saw her slim waist.

“I promised to be your company to attend the event, but never agreed to pretend myself as your girlfriend.” Lin Xinyan was very determined.

Bai Yinning wasn't mad at her as he finally realized that this woman was smart and had a strong will. He said, “Do you still want to know the craftsman who's skilled at making tea silk?”

Lin Xinyan was speechless.

At that moment, Lin Xinyan finally understood why tea silk appeared before his eyes, and said, “You did it on purpose.”

She sounded affirmative even though she was asking a question.

Bai Yinning didn't refute her and merely grinned broadly, revealing his good-looking white teeth. He came closer to Lin Xinyan and said, “I'm curious to know what kind of man can actually subdue you.” Lin Xinyan pushed him away and stood straight.

Once she turned around, Zong Jinghao who was standing on the first floor could see her face clearly.

It seemed as though time had frozen.

Sensed that something wasn't right, the city mayor looked downstairs and said smilingly, “Chairman Bai's a rather unconventional person as there was no woman around him in the past. But this time around, he suddenly brought along a woman who looks rather beautiful.”

“She...” As Shen Peichuan noticed the woman downstairs as well, he turned around to look at Zong Jinghao and said, “She's...”

He wanted to ask if that woman was Lin Xinyan, yet Zong Jinghao had already left before he could speak.

He immediately followed him.

It was still cheerful downstairs as many people were surrounding and teasing Bai Yinning and Lin Xinyan.

Even though she hadn't said anything explicitly yet, Bai Yinning knew that she had agreed to it.

When he was about to introduce Lin Xinyan, a tall man with a darkened face was standing at the entrance. His imposing appearance soon grabbed the guests' attention.

Lin Xinyan moved her gaze unsteadily around the back of the lobby. She was dazzled by the lights as many guests were moving around and tried to focus her gaze on the entrance where the commotion was from.

Soon, a familiar figure leapt into her eyes, and her heart seemed to have stopped beating.

Zong Jinghao walked against the light and through the crowd slowly and steadily.

This was the look that he always presented to everyone. Since he experienced and witnessed various circumstances in business, he had trained himself to look strong and invulnerable, so that no one could ever read his mind.

It became his instinct to look calm and composed all the time. The more excited and emotional he was, the more composed he looked.

However, the muscles of his entire body were tense, while his heart was trembling.

He fixed his gaze on her who looked familiar and strange at the same time.

Lin Xinyan stood still like a stone. Although she was clearly excited to see him, she realized that she was startled and couldn't utter a word.

As far as he could remember, Lin Xinyan had never dressed so enchantingly. He was always thinking about her and couldn't even sleep because she was missing, yet she appeared in front of another man now and revealed her elegance that even he had never seen before.

"What are you doing?" He said with a loud, clear and deep voice.

Does she know how excruciatingly distressed he was these past few days?

Does she know how worried he was?

Does she know how much he missed her?

Does she know that he's thinking about her every second and every hour?

Does she know all of these?

"Why don't you say anything?"

I..

"Do you guys know each other?" At the moment when Zong Jinghao appeared, Bai Yinning knew that he must be looking for Lin Xinyan, but still feigned ignorance and asked that question.

When Zong Jinghao's gaze moved and stopped upon Bai Yinning, his lips quirked as he said tauntingly, "Chairman Bai, you prefer a married woman, don't you?"

Bai Yinning's face darkened a little. He didn't believe it when Lin Xinyan said she was married and had children and thought that she was just making up an excuse to get rid of him.

But... he wouldn't be so sure about it now.

"She looked very young..."

Zong Jinghao held Lin Xinyan's hand and raised his eyebrows. Even the muscles on his face prickled slightly as he gave him a petrifying smile and said, "Since she's married to me when she was 18, would you agree that she's young?"

Bai Yinning frowned when he heard it. He felt that Lin Xinyan was an opinionated person and wouldn't get married so soon.

"You must be making a joke." His gaze fell upon Lin Xinyan, as if trying to ask if what he said were true.

"Xichen and Ruixi are still waiting for you." Zong Jinghao dragged her away from this place once he finished speaking.

He didn't allow her to speak with Bai Yinning at all.

He was very domineering, as if a kid who fought with another person who wanted to snatch his favorite toy.

He clasped Lin Xinyan's hands tightly in his palms like a clamp and strode away.

Since Lin Xinyan's legs were injured and she was wearing high heels, she couldn't keep pace with him at all. She bore the pain of her ankle and sole, and said, "Please walk slower."

Zong Jinghao turned around to look at her and said, "Are you reluctant to leave?"

Lin Xinyan shook her head and said, "No."

Ah...

Zong Jinghao picked her up right after she spoke, and she instinctively wrapped her arms around his neck and shut her mouth.

Chapter 190

Lin Xinyan could feel his arrhythmical heartbeat at this very moment. She wanted to ask why he would be here, yet realized that she couldn't utter a word even though she opened her mouth.

When they were walking up the stairway, Zong Jinghao looked back at Shen Peichuan and said, "You can go back."

Shen Peichuan understood his intention in just a second. He turned around and left without saying a word.

The light in the stairway was rather dim, and Lin Xinyan could clearly hear the sound of heartbeat. Thump! Thump! Thump! She couldn't differentiate whether it was her heartbeat or his.

"Why would you be here?" After Zong Jinghao walked up the stairs for two floors, she recollected herself and found her own voice.

Zong Jinghao remained silent.

Lin Xinyan stared at him when the light swept over his face and asked, "Are you here to look for me?"

Her hands unknowingly grasped the back of his collar. She hoped that he would answer yes.

But since she was afraid to be disappointed, she added, "You're here for business."

As Zong Jinghao still remained silent, Lin Xinyan felt rather uneasy. As she got increasingly unsettled and anxious, she asked carefully, "What's wrong?"

Zong Jinghao who was carrying her in his arms reached the floor that they had reserved entirely. Shen Peichuan had already come up and made the arrangements to send away all of their men who were guarding the passageway, before keeping himself in the room of Lin Xichen and Lin Ruixi. After pushing open the door of a room, he walked in, locked the door and carried Lin Xinyan to the bedroom to put her down on the bed.

Since his silence was terrifying, Lin Xinyan didn't dare open her mouth.

Zong Jinghao just sized her up silently. She looks simple and innocent since she doesn't really like to put on makeup. If she's wearing jeans and t-shirt, some would even think that she's a varsity student, and can't tell that she's already a mother with two children.

But at this moment, she looked rather enchanting while retaining her innocence. He could feel that she exuded an air of charm whenever he looked at her.

At this moment when she was sitting on the bed, he could easily peek at the curve underneath the deep v neckline which looked fair-skinned, round and soft by just moving his gaze down on her.

When he and the two children lost their appetite to eat and couldn't sleep well because of her, she dressed up 'coquettishly' in front of another man instead. What was she trying to do?

Did she fall for the disabled person?

“What’s between you and the disabled person?” He went nuts when he recalled that she was whispering in Bai Yinning’s ear.

Is she blind?

Why would she fall for the disabled person?

Lin Xinyan was at a loss for a while before she realized that the disabled person that he mentioned referred to Bai Yinning. Since Lin Xinyan never saw him being so mean before, she couldn’t help but laughed and replied, “It was very complicated, and I couldn’t explain it in just a few words...”

Zong Jinghao stared at her moving red lips, then came up to her so close and forcefully held the back of her head towards his. He kissed her on her lips and stopped her from talking.

He didn’t want to hear anything about that man now.

When he recalled that Bai Yinning and she were rather intimate, he got rougher with the desire to possess her.

Lin Xinyan’s eyes were wide open, while her face turned red. She wanted to push him away as she was suffocating.

But he didn’t want to let her go at all, as if wanted to devour her entire body.

“Hmm...” Lin Xinyan couldn’t help but hold his lower lip and bite on it. Feeling the pain, Zong Jinghao stopped for a while and immediately sprang upon her again.

There was the smell of blood between their teeth and mouths.

“You don’t want me to kiss you?” Zong Jinghao asked with a muffled voice.

Lin Xinyan wanted to deny it, yet she was about to suffocate to death as his kiss was too rough. When she just opened her mouth, she couldn’t help but make a sound, “Mm...”

She moaned seductively.

However, Zong Jinghao thought that she admitted to it when he heard it.

He bit her tongue and didn’t let go, as if wanted to punish her. The smell of blood within their teeth and mouths was getting stronger, and it’s difficult to differentiate whether the blood was his or hers.

He sucked and tasted her tongue while gulping down all of her saliva and blood.

Words couldn’t vividly describe the eroticism between them.

Lin Xinyan was distressed and felt that she had been wronged. She suffered a lot, but why does he treat her like this every time he meets her?

Why?

Is he really heartless?

“Zong Jinghao, you think I’m a steel wall that doesn’t feel any pain no matter how many times that I’m being pricked?”

He could hear that she started to snivel, and slowly let go of her lips.

Her lips became red and swollen after merely a few minutes.

His eyes misted over as he pinched her chin. He then said, “It’s painful? Do you really know what pain is? Do you know how worried I was, and how much I missed you when you were gone?”

“Whenever Ruixi asked about you, do you know how I lied to her? I said you are playing hide-and-seek with us, and we are going to find you. But what did you do instead?” He looked at her from her face to feet while he was talking, and then sneered, “Instead, you were enjoying your intimate moments with another man. Did you really feel the pain?”

“I wasn’t enjoying anything.” Lin Xinyan immediately refutes him as she would never admit to something that she had never done!

“I had no choice!” Since she went through an ordeal to escape from He Ruize, she wasn’t sure if she could survive if it wasn’t for Bai Yinning.

“I narrowly escaped death. How dare you question and doubt me? How dare you?” Even though she didn’t blink, tears still streamed down her face.

“Ruixi and Xichen were...” She held her chest and said, “They were exchanged with my life. Do I not miss them? Do I not worry about them? I’ve never left them since they were born and grew up until now. I’ve been working hard to take care of them because they are my children and my only treasure. Ever since I couldn’t see them, I’ve always been worried about whether they have enough food and clothes, whether they are taken good care of, and whether I will die and never see them again.”

When Zong Jinghao realized that she was very distressed, he immediately took her into his arms and kissed her on her forehead and hair. He felt very sorry for her.

“I’m sorry...” He kissed her hard on her eyes and wiped away the tears on the corner of her eyes.

Lin Xinyan finally recollected herself after quite some time, but Zong Jinghao was still grinding on her. He caressed her hair, kissed her on her cheeks and the corners of her eyes,

and said, "You're a married woman, and so you can't have any intimate relationship with any other man. I don't like it."

Lin Xinyan gently lowered her eyes. She could feel his feelings for her, yet she didn't dare to accept him as there were so many obstacles between them.

"Zong Jinghao, can you accept me for who I am?"

She considered his family background and social status.

"Can you accept Xichen and Ruixi?" Tears uncontrollably streamed down her face again.

Zong Jinghao's arms that were holding her began to quiver as he said, "Six years ago, in Country A, MOEN Hotel, Room 608..."

Lin Xinyan's body was suddenly stiff. How... How did he know about this?

She pushed him away and questioned him sternly, "You probed me?!"

Only a handful of people knew about this, yet why would he know?

This incident was her inexplicable pain and humiliation that she would never want to talk about ever again.

It was a secret that she buried deep in her heart.

Zong Jinghao moved a step back when he was pushed by her. He was just two steps away from her while watching her covered with nervousness, embarrassment and resistance.

"That year, your mother and brother met with an accident. As you needed money, someone recommended..."

"Stop it!" After Lin Xinyan interrupted him, she hit him madly and screamed, "Go. Go away. I don't want to listen to what you say!"

Zong Jinghao grabbed her wriggling arms and continued, "You sold yourself in exchange for a payment to save your mother and brother."

She felt ashamed, helpless and lost. She even wanted to hide herself as she felt that she was stripped naked. It is just like the night that she could never forget, when she's naked and standing in front of him. She feels that her whole body is now revealed and held up as an object for him to watch and ridicule at he pleases.

As her whole body was trembling, she said with a quivering voice, "Are you happy now? Are you satisfied? Do you feel the sense of accomplishment when you reopen the old wounds of others?"

Chapter 191

Lin Xinyan stood there swaying, as if she would fall down in the next second.

Zong Jinghao looked at her near-desperate eyes, and said clearly, "It was me that night."

She was so shocked at Zong Jinghao's words that she was in a state of stupefaction as if she had gotten an electric shock.

She stood rooted to the spot like a stake.

"W-W-W-What did you say?" Suddenly, she covered her face, crying and laughing at the same time. "How could it be? How could it be? How could it be you?"

She couldn't believe it, as she paced around in front of the bed. How could it be?

Her leg accidentally hit the edge of the bed, and she fell on the bed. She then tugged at her hair vigorously. "He Ruize did a check for me back then. He said, he said... that it was a local man that night. How could it be you?"

Zong Jinghao grabbed her hand that was scratching herself, and put his finger under her chin, forcing her to look at him. "What did you say? You did a check?"

Her eyes were still wet.

She looked at him apprehensively, and couldn't speak for a long time, as if her mouth was filled with ice cubes. She withdrew her hand that was held by Zong Jinghao, brushed his cheek with her fingers, and slid down to his neck, his collar, and his shoulder. "I once found a bite mark on your shoulder... I suspected it, so I asked He Ruize to help me investigate. Later he told me... that he was a local man that night."

Slowly, she calmed down. Could it be that my suspicion back then was true? He Ruize lied to me?

He Ruize had been taking care of her and helping her. He also often said that Xichen and Ruixi were pitiful without a father.

In fact, he has always known the truth and has been hiding it from me?

She looked up. "Did he lie to me?"

Her hand was cold. Zong Jinghao stretched out his hand to place it over her hand, and the hot palm tightly wrapped around her cold hand.

At this moment, no word could express his feelings, so he turned them into a kiss.

Lin Xinyan still felt like she was having a dream, as everything was so ethereal and unreal, like a bubble that would burst with a single poke.

The scorching heat from him that was close at hand was so real and hot.

“Have you investigated thoroughly?”

She didn't know if this was a lie he made up just to make her feel at ease.

Looking down, Zong Jinghao put her hand on his palm, and gently caressed it. “No need to investigate. I know it's you.”

It wasn't until the moment he knew the truth that he finally knew why he had a sense of familiarity toward her.

It turned out that there was a reason for everything.

Lin Xinyan retracted her hand, and his palm suddenly became empty. He found it awkward, so he looked up at her.

Lin Xinyan stared at him deeply. “I want to make sure there's no mistake.”

She calmed down. This was not a trivial matter. It was about the father of her children.

Zong Jinghao touched the corner of her eye. She had lost weight again, and her skin was ice-cold. He could imagine how much she had suffered out there.

“How do you think I knew about this?” Zong Jinghao sat down on the bed and took her into his arms. Rubbing his palms on her shoulders, he told her about the paternity test Zong Qifeng secretly did for him.

Therefore, Lin Xichen and Lin Ruixi were his children. There was no doubt about this.

Lin Xinyan slowly closed her eyes.

She still felt like she was dreaming.

“Pinch me.”

Zong Jinghao lowered his eyes, only to find that she had a scar on her forehead, which was not very obvious. With the cover of the foundation, it was difficult to notice. He gently touched it, and caressed it softly, as he trembled uncontrollably.

His eyes were bloodshot, which was the result of the heartache he felt over his failure to notice her disappearance and inability to protect her.

His heart ached for her. She had never seen such a vivid, deep, and concerned look on his face. He had been kind to her before, but he always had reservations. At this moment, there was a little gap in her heart that was always shut tight previously.

“Why are you here?” Zong Jinghao asked.

The news he got from Aunt Hua was that He Ruize was going to take her to Chuan Province.

Why would she appear here, and have something to do with Bai Yinning?

What exactly happened?

What did she go through?

Thinking of the days when she lived under He Ruize’s thumb, she couldn’t help but tremble. After several narrow escapes, she still had lingering fears at this moment.

He was stroking her slender back with his broad and hot palm slowly to comfort her.

It took a long time for Lin Xinyan to finally be able to calmly talk about her experience during that period. “I was brought here by He Ruize. Then I escaped. Bai Yinning saved me.”

She said nothing about the dangerous parts.

Zong Jinghao knew that she must have withheld something, as the place where she was trapped was so terrifying. He laid down with his arm around her slender waist on the bed, without the blanket. He pressed close to her, using his own body heat to warm her.

After a long time, Zong Jinghao actually fell asleep while holding her like that.

Lin Xinyan turned her head and looked at his sleeping face, only then did she realize that there was a dark circle under his eyes, which seemed to be due to not having a good rest.

She couldn’t help but stretch out her hand. As soon as her fingertips touched his skin, he held her hand without opening his eyes. He then brought her hand to his lips and kissed it. “Sleep with me for a while.”

During her absence, he hadn’t had a good night’s sleep, and now he was at ease while hugging her soft body in his arms.

“Okay.”

Lin Xinyan followed suit and closed her eyes.

Lin Xinyan had never rested very well during that period. At this moment of peace, she actually felt sleepy.

In the end, Lin Xinyan fell asleep. In her dreams, someone kissed her—her neck, hair, cheeks, nose, and lips—from time to time.

They stayed in the room for a day. With Shen Peichuan taking care of the things for them outside, no one came to disturb them.

When Lin Xinyan woke up, she found a pair of deep eyes looking at her intently.

She became more sober in an instant.

Zong Jinghao gently brushed the hair off her forehead, and asked, "You're awake. Hungry?"

Lin Xinyan did feel hungry, so she nodded.

"Let's go to another room. Xichen and Ruixi will be very happy to see you..."

"What?" Before Zong Jinghao finished speaking, she interrupted him excitedly. "Xichen and Ruixi are here too?"

"Yeah..."

"Why didn't you tell me earlier?" She glanced at Zong Jinghao sadly. She missed her two children very much as she was unable to see them during that period.

Eager to see her son and daughter, she got out of bed quickly, and didn't notice that the lacing of her dress was pinned by Zong Jinghao. With her action of getting up, the lacing was untied, and she felt a chill on her body. She exclaimed, and instinctively put her arms across her chest. When she turned around, only did she realize that the lacing on her dress was pinned.

Zong Jinghao looked over.

They were stunned when their eyes met.

Lin Xinyan was blushing. "Get up."

Not listening to her, Zong Jinghao cast his gaze on the dress that was pulled open. Her abdomen was very flat, without any trace of excess fat. There was a faint hue of pink on her fair skin, and faint white stretch marks below her belly button that weren't very profound. His eyes continued to look down...

His Adam's apple bobbed up and down in his throat.

Lin Xinyan's face was burning hot, as she pushed him away in shame. He grabbed her wrists and pulled. Losing her balance, she fell to the bed all at once, whereas Zong Jinghao turned over.

Her clothes were left open and she was pressed under his body.

The clothes of the man above her were neat except for some folds. His sturdy body was lying on top of her, while his eyes were nearly overflowing with a passion that was as strong as fire, but he was still restraining himself. "We are a legal couple."

Logically speaking, it was true that they were indeed still legally husband and wife without applying for the divorce certificate.

His gaze was so glowing that it made her throat dry. "You said that you'll wait for my consent."

He pressed and rubbed his fingertips against her palms. "But I don't want to wait anymore."

He bowed his head and kissed her softly at the corner of her eye, saying in a deep and low voice, "I miss you." His face was buried in her neck. "So much..."

Lin Xinyan tilted her head slightly. "Give me some time."

I'm not ready yet.

Zong Jinghao moved her face so that it was facing him directly and kissed her lips. "How long?"

Lin Xinyan looked at the ceiling, the halo of the light floating about. "When I was young, I also dreamed of an intense relationship, but in reality, I haven't even been in a relationship. I don't know what it's like—"

She looked at him. "Wait until I fall in love with you."

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Zong Jinghao's face was against the light, his expression changing, but the fire of desire inside him did not disappear and became more intense instead.

"Now I know." Suddenly, Lin Xinyan spoke out of left field.

Zong Jinghao frowned. "What do you know?"

"He Ruilin also knew about this. She was the one who sent me messages and lured me out." She deliberately said this to distract Zong Jinghao's attention.

Of course, He Ruilin knew that. She was the one that planned everything at the time.

Thinking of He Ruilin, his face sank.

Lin Xinyan wanted to quietly get out from beneath him, so he pressed her shoulders. Only then did he realize that she said that on purpose.

There was affection in his eyes. "I'm not young anymore, how long do you want me to wait?"

Then, he lowered his body, and leaned in to tease her by her ear, "I heard that love needs to be made."

Boom!

Lin Xinyan's mind went blank for a moment. H-How could he say such a thing?

Why is he so shameless?

Zong Jinghao squeezed her face until her facial features were wrinkled up. He studied it carefully, a visible smile tugging at his eyes. "Why do I love this face so much despite it being so bad-looking?"

"I'm bad-looking, and yet you still want to..." Lin Xinyan shut up quickly, as she almost blurted out, yet you still want to sleep with me.

She blushed, feeling so ashamed that she wanted to dig a hole and hide in it.

It's so embarrassing, particularly in front of him.

Zong Jinghao smiled, and purposely asked, "What do I still want to do?"

"Get up. I'm hungry." Lin Xinyan tried to break free.

Zong Jinghao composed himself and lowered his head to kiss her lips. "I'll feed you, okay?"

Lin Xinyan was speechless.

Knock knock

Lin Xinyan's eyes lit up. This person comes at the right time when I just couldn't find an excuse.

"Hurry up and get the door." Lin Xinyan pushed him.

Zong Jinghao didn't move, his face not looking as brisk as before.

Who is the person that comes at such a bad timing?

Knock knock—"Daddy."

The knock on the door was accompanied by a tender child's voice.

“Ruixi.” Lin Xinyan’s voice trembled. My daughter.

She looked at the man on top of her, feeling a little unhappy. My daughter is actually calling him, and not me.

“Daddy, are you there?” Her voice was heard again.

Zong Jinghao was reluctant, but he had to get up at this time, as his daughter was waiting outside.

He reached out to help Lin Xinyan with her clothes, but she reluctantly slapped his hand away, as if she was unhappy because her daughter didn’t call her. She gave birth to her and raised her for six years, but she became so close with this man.

Zong Jinghao noticed her unhappiness and brushed his finger across her nose. “Are you jealous of your own daughter?”

Saying nothing, Lin Xinyan bowed her head and tied the lacing of her clothes.

“We are father and daughter. Blood is thicker than water.” Half of the blood in her body came from him, so their relationship should be good.

Lin Xinyan didn’t want to talk to him and walked over quickly to open the door. Lin Ruixi didn’t know that Lin Xinyan was back, so she called out Daddy as soon as the door was opened.

When she saw that it was Lin Xinyan, she was stunned for a moment, and then her eyes reddened, while she said, feeling aggrieved, “Mommy, where did you hide? Daddy and I have been looking for you for a long time. I miss you so much.”

As she said, she threw herself into her arms, wrapped her arms around her waist tightly, and snuggled up into her arms. “Mommy.”

She feared that Mommy would go into hiding again, and that she could not see her.

Shen Peichuan was standing by the door. Zong Jinghao and Lin Xinyan had been in the room for a day, so they should have said and done all the things.

Therefore, he took his own initiative to bring the two children over. He did not tell the two children that they had found Lin Xinyan, as he planned to surprise them.

Earlier when Lin Ruixi knocked on the door, Lin Xichen wanted to go to the bathroom, and hadn’t come back yet.

Lin Xinyan squatted down and cupped her daughter’s face with her hands. The little one seemed to have gained weight as her face looked very round.

“Mommy, where did you hide? Why can’t I find you?” The little girl pouted.

Lin Xinyan didn’t know how to answer her daughter’s question, so she held her in her arms. It was then that Lin Xinyan noticed Lin Xichen, who had been standing straight at the door, with his hands hanging on his side, and clenched into fists.

“Xichen.” Lin Xinyan looked at her son. He became thinner, while the outline of his face was sharp and chiseled, just like Zong Jinghao’s.

She reached out to her son.

With reddened eyes and a stiff neck, Lin Xichen cried out, “Where have you been? It’s been so long. Do you know I am worried about you?”

“I’m sorry—” Lin Xinyan didn’t know how to comfort her son, so she stretched out her hand to pull him into her arms.

Lin Xichen wiped the tears away from his face with the back of his hand, and said chokingly, “Mommy, you didn’t do anything wrong. It’s my fault for not taking good care of you. I’m the man in the family, but I lost you. It is my fault.”

“Silly boy.” Lin Xinyan pressed her son’s head into her arms. He was only a child, but he kept saying that he did not take good care of her.

She couldn’t tell what she was feeling, and only felt a lump in her throat that was making her eyes sting.

Zong Jinghao walked over and reached out to touch his son’s hair.

They were raised well by Lin Xinyan, as they were smart and sensible, especially Lin Xichen, who was so sensible that he made others’ hearts ache for him sometimes.

Lin Ruixi poked her head out of Lin Xinyan’s arms and looked up at Zong Jinghao. “Daddy, are you the one who found mommy?”

Zong Jinghao responded in agreement.

“Thank you,” said Lin Xichen. Although he was very concerned about what his father did before, this time he helped find Mommy.

He was willing to thank him.

“Why don’t we have dinner together?” Shen Peichuan stood by the door, unable to stand the affection-instigating scene before him.

He had never been a father, so he couldn’t understand their feelings.

“I have reserved a private room downstairs. Why don't we celebrate Ms. Lin's safe return?” Shen Peichuan suggested.

Lin Xinyan wiped her son's face, stood up holding her son and daughter's hand, and bowed to Shen Peichuan. “Thank you for helping me to take care of them when I am away.”

Shen Peichuan was taken aback and took a step back. I don't deserve this.

“Jinghao and I are buddies. This is what I should do. I don't deserve your thanks.” As he spoke, he glanced at Zong Jinghao.

Unexpectedly, Zong Jinghao didn't look at him at all, as his eyes were on the two children and Lin Xinyan, and he had no time to look at him.

Lowering his head, he touched his nose awkwardly.

Why do I feel like I'm so unnecessary here?

Lin Ruixi tugged at Lin Xinyan's hand. “Mommy, I'm hungry.”

Lin Xinyan looked down at her daughter, finally understanding where the flesh on her face came from.

“Let's go then,” Shen Peichuan said with a smile.

“Okay.” Lin Xinyan took the two children out of the room. Lin Ruixi was used to being carried by Zong Jinghao, so she asked, pouting, “Mommy, can you carry me?”

Lin Xinyan didn't have the heart to say no to her daughter, so she stopped and picked her up even when her leg was injured.

Lin Xichen looked at his sister and sighed.

“This kid is too willful.”

Lin Xinyan touched her son's head. “You are also a kid.”

Lin Xichen pouted. I wouldn't be as insensible as Ruixi, who only wants others to carry her. What's the use of legs then?

They walked into the elevator, while Zong Jinghao frowned. Why do I seem superfluous?

His daughter stopped being clingy to him, and Lin Xinyan also 'forgot' him.

They were on the third floor, so they went down quickly. After the elevator stopped with a ding, Shen Peichuan wanted to lead the way. He stepped out of the elevator first but was stopped by Zong Jinghao. “Wait a minute.”

Shen Peichuan turned around wanting to ask him what's wrong, but when he met his eyes, he couldn't say anything.

He silently retracted his foot and stood inside.

Lin Xinyan thought they had something to talk about, so she took her son and daughter out of the lift first.

After Lin Xinyan left, Shen Peichuan asked, "What's the matter?"

Isn't it something to be happy about after finding Lin Xinyan? Why does he look so sullen, as if someone has offended him?

Shen Peichuan reflected: It seems that I haven't done anything wrong to offend him, have I?

Just get straight to the point. Don't leave me hanging.

"Umm..."

"She and I aren't divorced."

Just when Shen Peichuan couldn't help but speak again, Zong Jinghao finally spoke.

Shen Peichuan blinked. What is he trying to say?

Could it be that it's wrong for him to call her Ms. Lin earlier?

"Umm, so I call her Ma'am from now on?" Shen Peichuan asked tentatively.

Zong Jinghao was the eldest among the trio, whereas Su Zhan was the youngest.

"Okay."

Speechless, Shen Peichuan replied, "Anything you say."

Shen Peichuan asked if he wanted to leave, otherwise, the elevator would go up again.

Zong Jinghao pondered for a moment and asked, "Tell me, how do people date?"

Shen Peichuan was caught off guard.

What kind of question is that?

The topic changed so quickly that he couldn't keep up.

How do people date?!

This isn't his style.

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"I've never dated anyone. Anyway, do you still need that 'thing' now?"

You have a wife and kids.

Who are you going to date?

Shen Peichuan widened his eyes. "Are you—"

But thinking about it carefully, he was not that kind of 'flirty' man. He was so anxious during Lin Xinyan's disappearance, so he should like her very much.

Zong Jinghao frowned. Recalling the light in Lin Xinyan's eyes when she said that, he especially wanted to satisfy her.

Shen Peichuan squinted his eyes at him, and asked cautiously, "Did Ma'am turn you down?"

Zong Jinghao shot him a cold look.

I can't tell him that Lin Xinyan turned me down. Otherwise, he will surely laugh at me.

Shen Peichuan smacked his lips. "Su Zhan is the man to go to if you want to know how to please a woman."

Ding!

At this time, the elevator returned to the original floor and its door slid open.

Lin Xinyan did not go to the private room but stood in the lobby and talked to Bai Yining. Zong Jinghao, couldn't hear what they were talking about as he was far away from them. Just seeing them chatting made his expression change instantly.

He walked out of the lift, whereas Shen Peichuan slowed down to stay a little further from him.

He was apparently unhappy, so Shen Peichuan decided not to ask for trouble.

When Bai Yinning saw Lin Xinyan with her two children, he didn't come back to his senses for a long time.

So it's true when she said she had gotten married and had kids?

"Why didn't you go back?" Lin Xinyan did not expect to see him here.

Bai Yinning told her the truth. "I'm waiting for you."

“Why are you waiting for me?” Lin Xinyan asked.

Bai Yinning initially wanted to find out the relationship between her and Zong Jinghao. At this moment, he knew that his suspicions were all wrong as she was really married.

He felt disappointed but put up a smile on his face. “Do you think that we’re destined to meet?”

Lin Xinyan didn’t understand why he said that.

At that time, he did see Lin Xinyan jumping into the river, and later asked someone to rescue her out of human nature, as he didn’t want to watch a life vanish from this world just like this.

After rescuing her, he saw the jade bracelet on her wrist and thought she was Yuxiu’s daughter, so he took her back and made sure He Ruize couldn’t find her.

In order to follow his adoptive father’s last wishes, he did not allow Lin Xinyan to contact her family so soon but made her stay at his home. Since he wanted to marry her, they had to spend time together to bond.

This was the reason why he did not allow Lin Xinyan to contact her family.

After they got acquainted, they would still be acquainted and be friends even if she went back, and it was natural for him to pursue her then.

But...

Not only did he make a mistake in mistaking her for Yuxiu’s daughter, but she was even a married woman.

His eyes fell on the two children who were holding Lin Xinyan’s hands. They looked so cute, looking like her, and also that man.

“Can you tell me how you get your jade bracelet?” If she is not Yuxiu’s daughter, then why would she have Yuxiu’s jade bracelet?

What is the relationship between her and Yuxiu?

Lin Xinyan didn’t know the relationship between Bai Yinning and Yuxiu.

He seemed to be very interested in this jade bracelet.

She didn’t tell the truth, as she was still wary of him deep down.

“Maybe this looks like the one you know, and is not the same.”

She obviously didn’t want to tell him.

Not forcing her, Bai Yinning looked at her two children and asked, "Did you come down to eat?"

Lin Xinyan nodded her head.

"I know what food is good here. Why don't we eat together?" Bai Yinning asked tentatively.

"No, we are waiting for Daddy." Lin Ruixi quickly refused.

The uncle is in a wheelchair and is also not as handsome as my daddy.

But Lin Xichen's reaction was different from hers. After looking for a long time, he didn't find anyone who was more good-looking and richer than Zong Jinghao was.

However, even though the man in front of him was in a wheelchair and wasn't as handsome as Zong Jinghao, he had a bright smile.

Lin Xichen felt sorry deep down. It's a pity that he is lame.

If he is not lame, I will definitely support him in pursuing mommy, so that Zong Jinghao knows mommy is very popular.

It's just that now I can't let a cripple pursue mommy, as that would be a shame.

Being rejected, Bai Yinning was not embarrassed, as he looked at Lin Ruixi and smiled faintly. "I don't mind eating together with your daddy too."

The little girl blinked her big bright eyes, looking puzzled.

Why does this uncle want to be with us?

At this moment, she saw Zong Jinghao approaching, so she let go of Lin Xinyan's hand and ran over. "Daddy."

Zong Jinghao stooped to carry her in his arms.

Lin Xichen reacted quickly. "Uncle, you want to have dinner with us, right? Let's go then."

I don't care anymore. Even though he's lame, I have to let Zong Jinghao know that my mommy is very popular and regret not cherishing her previously.

It's impossible for us to follow him home so easily now.

He has to show his sincerity and love for mommy first.

Otherwise, I'll be the first to reject him.

Bai Yinning looked at Lin Xinyan. This child seems to be quite calculating?

Lin Xinyan lowered her eyes to look at her son. He was her son, so she naturally knew what he was up to. She reached out and touched his head.

“I heard that you saved my wife.” Zong Jinghao walked over carrying Lin Ruixi.

He seemed to be telling Bai Yinning that Lin Xinyan was his wife and that he should not fall for her.

“Just a small thing that’s not worth mentioning.” Bai Yinning smiles.

Zong Jinghao held Lin Xinyan’s hand that was slender and soft, while his broad palm could completely envelop her hand. He said in a deep, cold voice, “I don’t like to owe any favor. Mr. Bai, just tell me if you need anything.”

In one sentence, he laid claim to Bai Yinning’s kindness in saving Lin Xinyan, as if he was telling Bai Yinning that he needed to get him to repay him, not Lin Xinyan.

Lin Xinyan turned her head slightly to look at him, as warmth flowed through her heart. He was doing it for her sake, so that she wouldn’t owe Bai Yinning’s favor.

Favors had always been hard to be returned.

No matter what Bai Yinning’s purpose was in the beginning, he did save her life.

Bai Yinning’s gaze fell on his hand that was holding Lin Xinyan’s for just a second before he looked away. He naturally understood the meaning of his words. Then, he looked at Lin Xinyan’s feet in high heels and asked, concerned, “Why are you still wearing high heels? The injury on your foot has not fully recovered yet, don’t you know?”

She was too excited to see her kids earlier and didn’t bother about it since it had gotten better.

“I’m fine now.”

Zong Jinghao’s face suddenly changed, as he wasn’t as calm as just now. I don’t even know that her foot is injured.

He held her hand and said, “We should go.”

“Our private room is here.” Shen Peichuan was particularly attentive. This was Bai Yinning’s territory, but he couldn’t let him take control.

“This way, Mr. Bai.” Shen Peichuan made a gesture of invitation.

Bai Yinning glanced at him, and said, “Let’s go.”

Only then did Gao Yuan, who was behind him, push the wheelchair.

Shen Peichuan asked for the largest private room in the hotel, with a dining table in the middle that could accommodate twenty people. The private room was spacious and bright.

With her knees on his lap, Lin Ruixi put her arms around his neck, and said, face to face with him, "Daddy, when will we eat?"

Zong Jinghao pinched his daughter's plump face and replied to her that they will eat soon.

When he was speaking, he glanced under the table at Lin Xinyan's feet. There were no obvious injuries on her ankles.

Where is the injury?

While waiting for the food, Bai Yinning took the initiative to chat with Lin Xinyan. "Are you free tomorrow? I will take you to see the master."

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"Yes," Lin Xinyan replied without the slightest hesitation.

It would be good for her store if she could persuade the master to go back to B City with her.

Besides, she also wanted to settle the things here as soon as possible, and then return to B City with her two children.

"Okay, then I'll make the arrangement." Bai Yinning smiles.

Zong Jinghao's face completely darkened.

Throughout the meal, he didn't even drink the water. If it weren't for the presence of his two children, he would have left with Lin Xinyan, as he didn't want Bai Yinning to find out that the relationship between him and Lin Xinyan was not like a normal husband and wife.

After the meal, Bai Yinning looked at Zong Jinghao, and said, "Thank you for your hospitality today, Mr. Zong."

Zong Jinghao glanced at him coldly. "You're welcome."

Bai Yinning had long discovered that Zong Jinghao was unhappy since Lin Xinyan promised him to meet the master who could make tea silk. So, he tried to add fuel to the fire, as he turned to look at Lin Xinyan, and said, "I will pick you up at the hotel tomorrow morning."

As he spoke, he cast a glance at her feet. "You should wear flat shoes tomorrow. The master lives in a remote area, so the road is not easy to walk on."

“Okay.” Lin Xinyan didn’t say things like ‘thank you for the reminder’, because he said that on purpose. She turned her head to look at Zong Jinghao, and sure enough, his face became ghastlier than before.

Obviously, Bai Yinning said that on purpose.

“Mommy, carry me.” Lin Ruixi stretched out her arms and asked Lin Xinyan to carry her.

Zong Jinghao stopped her and grabbed her by her waist. “I’ll carry you.”

Her foot is injured, and I’m not sure if the injury is serious.

Lin Ruixi pouted. “I want Mommy to carry me.”

It’s been a long time since she saw Lin Xinyan, so she wanted to get close to her.

“Be a good girl.” Zong Jinghao planted a kiss on her forehead. “I’ll get you some nice food when we go back.”

“Really?” Lin Ruixi tilted her head.

“Yes.”

“All right, I’ll let you carry me, but I want to sleep with Mommy.”

Lin Xichen grabbed Lin Xinyan’s hand, glanced at Zong Jinghao, and said, “Mommy, I want to sleep with you tonight.”

Zong Jinghao was speechless.

Lin Xinyan happily agreed. “Okay.”

After being separated from the two children for so long, she missed them as well.

After going upstairs, Lin Xinyan bathed and changed clothes for them. Dressed in pajamas, they rolled around and played on the bed.

Lin Xinyan wore the bathrobe provided by the hotel after a shower, as there were no clothes for her.

“Mommy.”

Seeing Lin Xinyan come out, the two children rushed over together, Lin Xinyan caught them, and the three of them hugged each other. Lin Ruixi raised her head, and said, “Mommy, you must bring along when you play hide and seek again in the future. I don’t want to be separated from you.”

Lin Xinyan hugged her daughter tightly in her arms and said that she would never leave them again.

Outside the room, at the end of the corridor, Zong Jinghao was standing in front of a floor-to-ceiling window. It was the riverside outside the window, illuminated by the lights. The faint pearlescent light was reflected on his face, which was then reflected on the window. The outline of his face looked dark and unclear, while his entire back was upright and broad. His waist was very narrow, free of fat, which commensurate with his firm hips, looking even and straight.

With one hand in his pocket, he unbuttoned his shirt with the other hand, and said calmly, "Is there no trace of him?"

Shen Peichuan shook his head. "No, I think he should be in hiding. If he wants to stay alive, he must leave here. If he is resentful, I am afraid he will still wait for an opportunity to strike again."

He Ruize's whereabouts weren't known, making him like a time bomb, as they didn't know when he would appear.

He couldn't be kept alive.

"Not many people are brought. You can send two people out to find his whereabouts, and the rest will stay." There must be people standing guard over the two children and Lin Xinyan.

"Okay, I'll make the arrangements now." Shen Peichuan turned around to leave.

Zong Jinghao stood alone at the window as if thinking about something. After a while, he took out his phone to call Guan Jing and asked him to do a check on Bai Yinning and the Bai Group he managed. Guan Jing understood.

He hung up the phone and turned back to go back to the room.

After the door was pushed open, the room was dim and quiet.

The two children were tired of playing and fell asleep in Lin Xinyan's arms.

Lin Xinyan was afraid that they could not sleep well, so she turned off the light, leaving only a dimly lit bedside lamp.

Zong Jinghao closed the door and walked in to stand by the bed.

Lin Xinyan was leaning against the bed, and lying on her side, with the two children sleeping on one of her arms. Lin Ruixi was next to her with her hand resting on her chest.

This was Lin Ruixi's habit.

He bent over and lifted a corner of the blanket, exposing Lin Xinyan's feet. She wasn't deep asleep and, feeling the chill, instinctively flinched, before she slowly opened her eyes and saw Zong Jinghao at the bedside. She tried to sit up, but her arm was restricted by the two children. She did not dare to move too much for fear of waking them up, so she asked him in a low voice, "What are you doing?"

"Where did you hurt your foot? Let me see it." As he said, he reached for her feet.

Lin Xinyan flinched again, biting her lips. "I've recovered."

Zong Jinghao looked up at her and said after a long pause. "I want to listen to the truth."

Lin Xinyan said nothing. This man is so persistent.

Zong Jinghao sat on the edge of the bed, put her feet on his lap, and asked, "Which one?"

"The right one."

His touch made her feel a little itchy, and she even felt like something was scratching the area around her heart.

She clasped one hand tightly on the edge of the bed.

Zong Jinghao lowered his head and looked at her foot carefully, only to find that there was a wound on the arch of her foot and that her ankle still appeared a little red. "How did you get this injury?"

"During my escape, I accidentally sprained my ankle and got pierced by something." Lin Xinyan told the truth.

"Does it still hurt?"

Lin Xinyan shook her head.

Putting her feet down, Zong Jinghao went to the bathroom to soak a hot towel with hot water, and then took it to wrap it around her ankle.

The warm heat pierced through the skin and rushed into her blood, seemingly warming her up. Her grip on the edge of the bed grew tighter.

Zong Jinghao sat on the bed again, and gently massaged her ankle.

He asked unintentionally, "Are you familiar with the man with the surname Bai?"

Lin Xinyan shook her head. "No"

"Yet, you agreed to go out with him?"

Zong Jinghao did not admit that he was upset.

Lin Xinyan grabbed the dress she took off. "Look."

Zong Jinghao didn't know much about this, so he couldn't make out what it was.

"This fabric is tea silk, which is no longer available on the market now, but he knows a master who can make this kind of fabric, so I want to invite this master back to our store." When it came to clothes, fabrics, and designs, her face always lit up.

"This fabric is soft, light, thin, does not wrinkle, and is particularly drapable. It is very suitable for summer clothes."

She could always speak confidently when it was about her field.

Zong Jinghao looked at her quietly, as she was particularly charming.

"So, I must invite him over. If not, I can learn it too myself."

"Since it is a craft on the verge of being lost, it must be complicated and difficult to learn." If it were simple, someone should have learned it long ago.

Lin Xin said melancholically, "Yes, so much of our traditional crafts have been lost." But she was a nobody and couldn't prevent it, so she pulled herself together. "I am not afraid of hard work. This is my career."

And also my dream and passion.

"By the way." Thinking of Bai Yinning and Yuxiu, her expression turned serious. "He saved me because of Yuxiu."

Zong Jinghao's hands that were massaging her froze for a moment, as he was indeed a little surprised to know this.

There is a relationship between Bai Yinning and Yuxiu?

Lin Xinyan stretched out her hand, and carefully looked at the transparent jade bracelet on her wrist through the dim light. What secret does this bracelet hold?

"I think he has a secret." Lin Xinyan expressed her guess.

She did not completely believe in what Bai Yinning said to her.

If he is adopted by Bai Hongfei, and he saved me because of Bai Hongfei's last words and he thought I was Yuxiu's daughter, then what is the relationship between Yuxiu and Bai Hongfei?

Zong Jinghao didn't want to discuss Yuxiu.

He took away the towel that had turned cold and put it in the bathroom. Soon, there was the sound of running water.

About forty minutes later, Zong Jinghao came out wearing a bathrobe, with his collar slightly open, while his honey-colored skin was covered in water droplets, and his short black hair was wet and messy. He wiped his hair as he walked over, whereas Lin Xinyan squinted her eyes, feeling drowsy.

He threw the towel on the table and lay down on his side. There wasn't much space here, and yet there was a lot of space inside.

But he wanted to sleep with Lin Xinyan.

Lin Xinyan nudged him. "Go inside."

Zong Jinghao put his arm around her waist, pulled her into his arms, and kissed her earlobe, saying in a low and hoarse voice, "I want to sleep with you."

Lin Xinyan moved inside a little while avoiding his kiss and gave him some space. "Sleep early."

Zong Jinghao moved in a little so that his body was pressed against hers. Since he had slept during the day, he was not at all sleepy at the moment, and just wanted to hug her and kiss her.

Chapter 195

Zong Jinghao felt that he was the saddest man in the world. He was obviously holding his wife in his arms, but he could not touch her.

He buried his face in her hair, smelling the faint scent of shampoo. He then nibbled and kissed the back of her neck.

With half of her face sinking deep in the pillow, Lin Xinyan looked at her son and daughter who were sleeping soundly and reached out to touch their cheeks.

Through them, she thought of the crazy memory that night. There wasn't any lust, but sadness.

"Zong Jinghao, how many women have you slept with?"

Thinking that he had been in bed with other women before, she felt her heart ache somehow.

He was her first man.

Although she had been deliberately ignoring it, he left her with such a deep impression.

She agreed that women were emotional.

A woman always had special feelings for her first man.

Zong Jinghao abruptly stopped kissing her, while his nostrils were still filled with the scent of her body, which was faint but refreshing.

His voice was still a little hoarse. "Why do you ask this suddenly?"

Lin Xinyan buried her face deeper in the pillow. "Just asking. I'm sleepy. Let's sleep."

But Zong Jinghao didn't think she was just asking.

Grabbing her shoulders to turn her over, Lin Xinyan resisted, and said in a low voice, "Don't touch me. I'm sleepy."

Regardless of her resistance, Zong Jinghao turned her body over and looked at her face. "Tell me, what's wrong with you?"

Lin Xinyan pretended to be calm. "I'm just sleepy."

Zong Jinghao pinched her chin, and lifted her face up, so that she was looking at him. "Are you jealous?"

"No." She immediately denied.

She just felt like it was unfair for her, as she gave him the most precious thing, while he didn't.

She wasn't jealous.

She firmly refused to admit it.

"Why are you angry then?" Looking at her glowingly, he rubbed his fingers against her pink lips. Her lips were soft and bouncy, bringing an especially comfortable sensation to his fingers.

"I'm not angry." She just refused to admit that she was upset and jealous.

He smiled. "Alright, not angry..."

As soon as he finished speaking, he pressed his lips against hers. When Lin Xinyan moved, he threatened her, "Keep moving if you want them to see it."

Concerned about being seen by the two children, Lin Xinyan stopped resisting, while her eyes turned red while feeling aggrieved.

Zong Jinghao gently rubbed his lips against hers, and said vaguely, "I have never slept with another woman. Only you."

He only wanted this woman and nothing else in his life.

"What about He Ruilin?" She had seen how well he treated her.

He Ruilin even spent a night at the villa.

She didn't believe that they had not slept together.

Even Zong Jinghao didn't believe it himself.

"I used to think I was abnormal." It was not that he was uninterested in He Ruilin, but he wasn't interested in any woman.

He didn't have the slightest desire toward any woman.

He treated He Ruilin well back then because she said she was the woman that night.

A woman gave him the most precious thing of a woman, so he should be responsible for it.

It was neither love, nor fondness, but responsibility.

"Mmm—Mommy..." Lin Ruixi seemed to be having a nightmare, as both her hands were searching for something.

Lin Xinyan quickly turned around to hug her daughter. "Mommy is here."

She patted her daughter on the back lightly. "Good girl, mommy is here."

Lin Ruixi's little hand touched her chest, as if she wanted to make sure if this was mommy, and then she quieted down again.

With her daughter in her arms, Lin Xinyan covered her son with the blanket, and said to the man behind her, "It's getting late. Sleep tight."

Zong Jinghao was rendered speechless.

He moved closer and hugged her.

Zong Jinghao didn't sleep well that night, as he didn't fall asleep until it was the middle of the night.

Lin Xichen had a nice dreamless sleep and was the first one to wake up in the morning. Seeing Zong Jinghao's arms around Lin Xinyan, he knitted his brows angrily while sitting on the bed.

He couldn't hold back in the end, as he took Zong Jinghao's arm away, got into the space between them, and separated them from each other.

With his movements, both Zong Jinghao and Lin Xinyan woke up, so he quickly wrapped his arms around Lin Xinyan and acted like a baby in her arms. "Mommy, hold me."

He rarely behaved like this.

So Lin Xinyan's heart melted, as she embraced him and kissed his forehead.

Speechless, Zong Jinghao turned over and stared at the ceiling quietly.

I just want to get my wife back, why does my son have to go against me?

"Mommy, how was your life in the past?"

Lin Xinyan was baffled. What nonsense is he saying early in the morning?

She reached out to touch her son's forehead, whereas Lin Xichen turned his head. "I don't have a fever."

"So, what do you mean?"

Lin Xichen glanced behind her. "When you were pregnant with us, you were being criticized. Later, you gave birth to us and raised us alone. It was very hard for you. Therefore, you must not be soft-hearted toward those who have failed you and abandoned you at the most difficult time of your life. Otherwise, he will think you are very easy to be coaxed, so he won't cherish you, and will hurt you again."

Lin Xinyan finally understood why her son was behaving weirdly early in the morning.

She reached out and pinched his face. "Where did you learn these 'preaches' from?"

"Promise me that you must not easily forgive those who hurt you." Lin Xichen had a solemn expression on his face.

Seeing her son's seriousness, Lin Xinyan was pleased yet distressed. She even didn't have the heart to refuse him, so she nodded her head. "Okay."

Zong Jinghao turned over again to lean on the side of the bed. Lin Xichen obviously directed those words at me.

Yet, I actually couldn't refute him at all.

As the saying goes, the evils we bring on ourselves are the hardest to bear.

If he hadn't believed He Ruilin so easily just because she had saved him, he would not have fallen into such a state, so he couldn't blame anyone.

The blackout curtains made the room very dark even though it was almost seven o'clock. Lin Xinyan got up to put on clothes for her two children and help them wash up.

Zong Jinghao buttoned his shirt and stood by the door of the bathroom. "Let's go to the mall."

She has no clothes to wear.

Lin Xinyan nodded her head.

After washing up, she put on the dress, and when she went to the door to change shoes, Zong Jinghao stopped her. "Just wear slippers. We'll buy shoes at the mall."

The wound on the arch of her foot had not healed completely, and wearing high heels was not good for the ankle either.

Lin Xinyan looked down at the hotel slippers on her feet and blinked. That's not very appropriate, isn't it?

"I don't mind." To make her feel at ease, Zong Jinghao put his arms around her shoulders. "You have me."

Lin Xinyan looked up at him, who was dressed in a suit and leather shoes, looking tall and outstanding, along with the aura of a successful man. She dropped her head. Even if he doesn't mind, why should I mind?

After having breakfast downstairs, they got in the car, and left the hotel with people in two other cars.

After about twenty minutes, they arrived at the largest mall in Baicheng.

Zong Jinghao got out of the car carrying his daughter, whereas Lin Xinyan held her son's hand.

The shopping mall was not very big. There were four floors in total—the elevators were at the lobby, with the surrounding area full of entertainment facilities for children; clothing was on the second floor; jewelry on the third floor; cinema and restaurants on the top floor.

Lin Ruixi didn't want to go up when she saw that there were places for her to play on the first floor.

"Wait for me down here. I will go up to buy some clothes and come down." Lin Xinyan knew her daughter well. If she wasn't allowed to play, she would throw a tantrum.

Lin Xinyan let go of her son and asked him to play with Lin Ruixi downstairs. "Look after her for Mommy."

Lin Xichen nodded. "Make it quick then, Mommy."

"Okay."

Lin Xinyan went upstairs alone, followed by a bodyguard arranged by Shen Peichuan.

Lin Xinyan was a fashion designer herself, so she had a keen eye for her clothing. First of all, it must be comfortable. Besides, she did not participate in important events, so she chose casual clothes.

She saw casual wear of the brand MO, which she had bought before. She liked the style and the comfort of wearing it, so she walked into the store.

She was quite surprised that there was such a store in a small place like Baicheng.

Lin Xinyan fell in love with a beige sweater with a hood. She looked at the shop assistant who was playing with her phone on the sofa. "Does this have a size S?"

The assistant didn't even raise her head, as she said, "That one costs 4800. Are you sure you want to try it?"

Lin Xinyan was speechless.

In the past, she received enthusiastic service when she was at stores. So the attitude of this shop assistant really surprised her.

Lin Xinyan took a breath. "I'm sure."

The assistant finally got up. Glancing at the slippers on Lin Xinyan's feet, she curled her lips and mocked, "Is wearing disposable slippers outside a thing now?"

Obviously, the assistant felt that Lin Xinyan could not afford such expensive clothes judging from her outfits.

The assistant was still nagging while taking the sweater. "Our store is full of famous brands, the big brands, and they are all designed by foreign designers. You have to buy them after you try them on..."

"Don't need to bring it for me anymore. Thank you." Lin Xinyan just wanted to buy clothes. Why does she talk so much?

Have to buy after trying?

What an imparity clause!

It was her first time to encounter such a thing.

The assistant threw away the clothes she took out forcefully, stood up, and looked at Lin Xinyan. "What do you mean? Didn't I ask you if you are sure you want it? You said yes, so I took it for you. But after I took it out, you don't want it anymore. Are you messing with me?"

"No..."

"What no?" The shop assistant was aggressive.

Lin Xinyan found that she was unable to communicate with this kind of person, so she just turned around and wanted to leave, but was grabbed by the arm by the shop assistant. "You can't leave. I have already taken out the sweater, so you have to buy it!"

"What kind of reasoning is this?" Lin Xinyan was really shocked at the domineering behavior of the shop assistant. Logically speaking, the employees in a clothing store like this were all professionally trained. How could she be so unreasonable?

"If you can't afford it, just admit it. Stop pretending." The shop assistant curled her lips and snorted coldly, looking as if she wouldn't let Lin Xinyan leave if she didn't buy it today. "Since you ask me to take it out, you must buy it. I told you about the price. It's 4800. Hand me the money."

"I want to talk to your boss." Lin Xinyan could see that she wouldn't be able to talk it out with her.

"The boss is not here. Just talk to me. I'm the boss's cousin, so I'm able to call the shots."

Lin Xinyan finally understood. It turned out that she had powerful connections, so she was so arrogant.

"Miss, this isn't the way to do business..."

"Knock it off. Just give me money and leave with your sweater!" The shop assistant was arrogant and behaved like she was the owner just because she was the relative of the boss of this shop.

"What if I don't want to give the money?" Lin Xinyan's expression turned cold as well.

"Heh, don't ever dream of leaving here then. To tell you the truth, my cousin knows Bai Yinning. Do you know Bai Yinning, Chairman Bai? He's my cousin's friend, and this mall belongs to him. How dare you come to keep up appearances here? This isn't the place for you."

Those who climbed up from the bottom tended to be conceited and arrogant once they had a backing, just like this shop assistant.

Chapter 196

When she was speaking, she sized Lin Xinyan up again. She didn't find anything special about the dress she was wearing. In her eyes, it was just a dress.

Judging from the pair of disposable hotel slippers on her feet and the hickey left by Zong Jinghao on her neck the night before, she sneered. "You're an escort? How much for a night? How many nights will it take for you to make enough money for a piece of clothing?"

Speechless, Lin Xinyan knitted her brows, while her expression tensed up. The shop assistant's words had really angered her.

I just came to buy some clothes, why would I meet such a freak?

And I'm even called an escort for no reason! This is so insulting!

But her good upbringing prevented her from lashing out at the shop assistant.

"Please let me go immediately, otherwise I will call the police?!" Lin Xinyan's voice was extremely cold, like the ice during winter which exuded a chilling aura.

The shop assistant was taken aback for a moment. She didn't expect her—an escort—to have this kind of aura, but soon she calmed down, thinking she was just pretending!

"Do you think I'll be scared if you call the police?" The shop assistant looked up and said, "This is Baicheng. As long as my cousin goes to Bai Yinning and has a word with him, the police also have to listen to Chairman Bai. Enough nonsense, and give me the money, otherwise, don't think of leaving here!"

Such a person was so unreasonable and difficult to deal with.

Lin Xinyan was trembling with anger. How could there be such an unreasonable person in this world?

"The money." Seeing that Lin Xinyan didn't move, the shop assistant reached out to grab the purse in her hand. Just when she was about to touch Lin Xinyan's purse, the bodyguard who had been standing outside finally sensed that something was wrong and rushed in to push the shop assistant away.

The man that Shen Peichuan picked was very skillful. The shop assistant fell over with just a slight push from him. She instinctively wanted to grab something to support herself, but she pulled down a row of the rack, causing all the clothes to be scattered all over the ground.

The shop assistant landed on her back, and it hurt so much that she grimaced and glared at the bodyguard who rushed in. "Who are you? How dare you cause a stir here? Do you want to die?"

Then she took out her phone and called her cousin. "Sis, come to the store. Someone is smashing our store."

The bodyguard frowned and took out his phone to call Shen Peichuan, saying that Lin Xinyan was in trouble.

The expression on Shen Peichuan's face tensed up. Has He Ruize shown up?

He looked at Zong Jinghao, who was playing claw machine with his daughter and son. Then, he walked quickly over. "Ma'am is in trouble upstairs."

Zong Jinghao looked back at him.

"Could it be that He Ruize couldn't stand it and come out?" Shen Peichuan speculated.

Zong Jinghao picked up his daughter with one hand, took his son by the hand, and walked up the elevator. Shen Peichuan quickly followed, and a few bodyguards went up together as well.

As soon as they arrived upstairs, they saw Lin Xinyan through the glass windows of a clothing store.

"Mommy's there." Lin Ruixi pointed at Lin Xinyan who was standing behind the window.

"Yeah," Zong Jinghao replied.

Shen Peichuan was a little confused. What's going on?

After entering the store, they noticed the mess in the clothing store.

"Mommy." Lin Xichen rushed over and hugged Lin Xinyan's leg. "Why are you so slow in buying clothes? By the way, what's with the mess here?"

"I saw her grabbing Madam by the hand, and even wanted to raise her hand, so I—I failed to control my strength, and she fell down along with the clothes." The bodyguard came up to explain. He was standing outside the door when the shop assistant went to grab the purse in Lin Xinyan's hand. From his perspective, it seemed that she was raising her hand to her, so he rushed in.

Zong Jinghao lowered his eyes, with an evident chill on his face. He looked at Lin Xinyan and asked, "Did you get hurt?"

Lin Xinyan shook her head and said she was all right.

The shop assistant saw that something was not quite right. Why are there so many people? Did this man just call her Madam?

But the most powerful person in Baicheng is Bai Yinning, and I've never seen this person.

As she thought, she regained courage. "Don't you try to scare me. Let me tell you, I am not afraid of you. These clothes have become dirty because you caused them to fall to the ground, so you have to compensate me!"

Lin Xinyan had already known how unreasonable she could be. So at this moment, she didn't want to waste any more time with her, and said, "How much in total? I will give you the money."

The shop assistant curled her lips, and said with her sharp tongue, "Sure enough, you bring so many people here to scare me. Baicheng belongs to the Bai family. Do you really think you're somebody despite being just an escort?"

The air became still in an instant, as several bodyguards and Shen Peichuan looked at Zong Jinghao. The shop assistant was unreserved in her words, so they, despite being a bunch of unrefined men, could know what she was talking about.

Zong Jinghao's pupils darkened, as he pretended to be calm and said, "Repeat what you just said."

Sensing her father's anger, Lin Ruixi hugged him, and buried her face in his shoulder blades, not even daring to breathe too loud.

The shop assistant, who was using the calculator, trembled, as the inexplicable deterrence made her nervous. She looked at the man in front of her, who had a seemingly calm but uneasy expression, and said in an uncontrollable trembling voice, "D-D-D-Don't try to scare me. My cousin and Chairman Bai are friends. Touch me if you dare."

Lin Xinyan walked over with her son, reached out and shook his hand. "Forget it."

It's hard to sort things out with such people.

Zong Jinghao lowered his eyes slightly and looked at her. She was not an unreasonable woman, but the shop assistant didn't look like a pushover, as she kept showing off her background. He wondered how she must have been treating Lin Xinyan domineeringly when he wasn't here.

The corners of his lips turned upward. "Only I can bully my woman."

His meaning was very clear. He couldn't just let this matter slide!

Background?

His face grew darker.

"Wreck up this place." He gave the order calmly. "Contact whatever connections you have. I'll be waiting."

After speaking, he took Lin Xinyan out of the store.

The few bodyguards who followed, rushed into the store, and smashed everything in the shop. The shop assistant was completely stunned, as she stood at the checkout counter yelling in fright.

Shen Peichuan raised his eyebrows slightly. It was the first time that he saw Zong Jinghao get irritated by such a thing, but the shop assistant did ask for it. Escort? He would be angry too if it was him, let alone Zong Jinghao.

No man could stand his own woman being called an escort.

Lin Xinyan wanted to dissuade him from doing it, but Lin Xichen stopped her and refused to let her speak.

“There is no action without consequence. If we don’t teach her a lesson, there will be others in the future who will teach her an even harder lesson. If she doesn’t know how to be a good person, we will teach her.”

Zong Jinghao looked down at his son, reached out and touched his head. “You’re indeed my son.”

Lin Xichen turned his body sideways to dodge his hand. Zong Jinghao was not angry, and said to him instead, “We don’t bully others, but we can’t be bullied either. Sometimes we can tolerate it, but sometimes we cannot. We don’t need to go easy on those who keep provoking us.”

“He’s still a kid...”

“He’s my son.” Zong Jinghao interrupted Lin Xinyan. “The society is cruel. It’s the law of the jungle.”

In the future, he was going to hand over the company to him. If he didn’t have the courage, he would be devoured by others.

When he graduated from college and took over the company, many people refused to accept him and create trouble for him.

Without stratagems, how can he gain a foothold in the company in the future?

He held the back of Lin Xichen’s head to make him look at the store, and asked him, “Are you afraid?”

After all, he was only five years old. Looking at those tall men wrecking up the place like ‘gangster’, he was indeed a little afraid.

“You said you are a man. How do you protect your mommy like this?”

"I didn't say I was afraid!" Lin Xichen raised his head to prove that he was not afraid.

At this time, the cousin of the shop assistant came to the store.

Everything in the store was smashed, while there was even a big hole on the dropped ceiling.

"Qingqing, you're finally here, Qingqing." The shop assistant cried and screamed, as she got out of the corner, and rushed in front of her. "These people have wrecked up our shop."

The woman was very young and beautiful. The shop assistant said that she was her cousin, but she looked slightly younger than the shop assistant. She had a solemn expression. "Why is this so?"

"She didn't pay for clothes, so she asked someone to smash our shop. Qingqing, you must not let them off!" The shop assistant pointed at Lin Xinyan while crying and complaining to her cousin.

At this moment, the woman turned to look at Lin Xinyan.

Chapter 197

Just as Lin Xinyan wanted to explain the situation, she was interrupted by the shop assistant. "Qingqing, don't listen to her. She brought all these people and wrecked up our store. Hurry up and get someone to arrest them all."

Lin Xinyan frowned.

Zong Jinghao handed his daughter over to Lin Xinyan. "Wait for me in the car."

He would solve the problem here. Although he wanted to train his son's courage, he did not want his daughter to be involved in this. Daughters were girls, so they were different from sons.

Lin Xinyan took her daughter over, and when she was about to leave, she was stopped by the shop assistant's cousin, Yao Qingqing, who said, "It happened because of you. If you leave, how can this matter be sorted out clearly?"

Zong Jinghao looked up, with a cold look on his face. "Sort it out with me."

Yao Qingqing felt scared the moment she met Zong Jinghao's eyes. He had an even more imposing presence than Bai Yinning, as his indifferent and sharp facial features were gorgeous yet expressionless, with a chill exuded from within him that made people shy away.

She clenched her fists tightly. “We are upright in our business dealings. Aren’t you too much?”

Zong Jinghao’s lips were half raised, and he sneered sinisterly.

The shop assistant hid behind Yao Qingqing. “They must be gangster. Hurry up and call Chairman Bai to come over.”

At this time, Shen Peichuan walked out of the store, and whispered in Zong Jinghao’s ear.

Yao Qingqing couldn’t hear what they were saying, but the store was wrecked, and she and her cousin—two weak women—would definitely not be able to out win them.

After thinking about it for a while, she still chose to call Bai Yinning, hoping that he would help her to solve this matter.

Obviously, they bully us just because they outnumber us.

Meanwhile, Bai Yinning was going to the hotel to pick up Lin Xinyan to meet the master who could make tea silk, but he received a call from Yao Qingqing.

“What is it?” he asked lukewarmly.

“My shop has been wrecked up by some people. Can you come over?” Yao Qingqing lowered her head. She and Bai Yinning grew up in an orphanage, so they had known each other since childhood. Later they were adopted by different families. It was not until a year ago that she and Bai Yinning met again.

It was Bai Yinning who gave her such a good storefront in this mall.

Bai Yinning glanced at the time and agreed to come over as he still had time.

It was just that he didn’t expect to meet Lin Xinyan and Zong Jinghao after coming over.

The shop assistant who had been hiding behind Yao Qingqing raised her head when she saw Bai Yinning who was coming over. “Look, I told you that Chairman Bai is very close with my cousin. How dare you make trouble here?”

Yao Qingqing frowned and looked at her cousin. Although she was friends with Bai Yinning, she did not want to use this friendship to cause trouble for Bai Yinning.

So when she heard her cousin’s words, she couldn’t help but frown.

Being smart as he was, Bai Yinning could roughly guess what happened when he saw the scene.

When he passed by Lin Xinyan, he looked at her and asked, looking concerned, "Are you okay?"

Lin Xinyan walked to stand beside Zong Jinghao and shook her head. "I'm okay."

She didn't understand Bai Yinning very much.

Besides, for the sake of her two children, she didn't want outsiders to see that her relationship with Zong Jinghao was not like a normal couple.

Bai Yinning's gaze wavered after noticing her movement, but he soon calmed down after a short while.

Her actions caused Zong Jinghao, who had always been sullen, to raise his eyebrows slightly, and even the corners of his lips were raised upwards.

"You've come just at the right moment. I was just about to look for an explanation from you, Chairman Bai." Zong Jinghao put his arm around Lin Xinyan's shoulders and walked into the messy store. Shen Peichuan asked his men to clean the sofa, whereas Zong Jinghao asked Lin Xinyan to sit down.

She had an injury on her foot and standing for a long time would slow down her recovery.

The shop assistant was completely dumbfounded. What's going on?

Why is this person not even afraid of Chairman Bai? Why does he even have a stronger presence than Chairman Bai?

Bai Yinning is the most powerful person in Baicheng. Who is this man?

Also, who is this woman?

Why is Chairman Bai even so caring for her?

She grabbed Yao Qingqing's arm nervously, causing Yao Qingqing to feel pain from her unconscious overexertion of force. Yao Qingqing frowned, and looked at her cousin. "They caused the trouble, why are you so afraid?"

The shop assistant was very flustered. She had been taking advantage of the relationship between Yao Qingqing and Bai Yinning to do as she liked in the mall, and no one dared to refute her every time.

This time, she felt that she had met a tough nut to crack.

Usually, she was used to bullying others. Therefore, when she saw that this man was someone Bai Yinning had to treat with respect, she was flustered.

"Q-Qingqing, who is this man?"

“No idea.” Yao Qingqing had never seen him either.

But it seemed that he was somebody.

The shop assistant didn't know what to expect, as he was someone even Yao Qingqing didn't know.

Gao Yuan pushed Bai Yinning into the store. The ground was in a mess, and there was almost no room to walk. After glancing around the store casually, Bai Yinning turned his gaze to Zong Jinghao, and asked with a smile, “Is it because the service was too poor?”

With his lips slightly raised, Zong Jinghao replied in a neutral tone, “Of course, no one dares to make trouble at your territory, Chairman Bai, but...” He cast a look at Shen Peichuan. “Let's talk about it after you take a look at this, Chairman Bai.”

Understanding his meaning, Shen Peichuan placed the laptop that was taken from the car on the desk at the counter, plugged in a USB drive, and said while opening the USB drive, “This video footage was taken from the CCTV in the store. We'll know what happened after we see this.”

The shop assistant was completely dumbfounded. How could I forget that CCTV has been installed in the store?

The content...

No, I can't let Yao Qingqing see the things I did in the store, otherwise, everything will come to light. She rushed up intending to destroy the computer and take away the USB drive. Shen Peichuan knew she would be frustrated, so he had asked his men to be prepared for that.

She was stopped as soon as she rushed up to them.

Soon, the footage was played on the screen.

Earlier when Shen Peichuan whispered in Zong Jinghao's ear, he was telling him that he had obtained the CCTV footage of the store and even found some other things.

The footage didn't start from the moment Lin Xinyan entered the store, but it was how the shop assistant took advantage of Yao Qingqing's absence and put the money she got from the customers who bought the clothes into her own pocket. She often threatened the customers who came to the store by saying that they must buy once they had tried the clothes on. Otherwise, she would threaten them using Bai Yinning's name.

Everyone in Baicheng knew Bai Yinning.

So, many people didn't dare to offend him, and just paid to settle the issue.

Bai Yinning's face took on a ghastly expression.

This was the ghastliest expression Lin Xinyan had ever seen on his face since she knew him.

Yao Qingqing's face went pale, looking even more ghastly than Bai Yinning's.

Seeing that her misdeeds were exposed, the shop assistant wanted to escape, but was stopped by Shen Peichuan. "Why are you leaving in such a hurry?"

"These are all forged by you to frame me!" The shop assistant firmly refused to admit it.

Shen Peichuan didn't bother to care about what she said.

Shen Peichuan only picked and played the important parts, but it also took half an hour before the footage of Lin Xinyan entering the store was played.

The shop assistant looked down on her at first, thinking that Lin Xinyan was someone who could not afford clothes. Later, she grabbed Lin Xinyan by the arm to stop her from leaving and insisted that she had to buy it. She even used Bai Yinning's name to scare her and called her escort...

It was just that Lin Xinyan didn't buy it and wanted to pay to get this matter over with after hearing Bai Yinning's name.

Then the bodyguard rushed in.

Obviously, the shop assistant had a bad attitude and talked wildly.

"Qingqing..." At this point, the shop assistant still tried to quibble. "Qingqing, this is all made up by them to frame me. Don't you believe them..."

Smack

Yao Qingqing rushed forward and gave her a slap in the face. She was shivering with anger. "The evidence is conclusive. Do you still want to deny it?!"

The shop assistant covered her face, her eyes widened in surprise, as if she didn't expect that she would rush up to slap her.

Half of her face was numb.

"Q-Qingqing, I was really framed." Now, she could only deny it until the end.

Otherwise, she would be doomed.

Yao Qingqing gritted her teeth. At this point, does she still refuse to repent and admit her mistake?

"If you insist on digging your own grave, no one can save you." Yao Qingqing was so anxious that she calmed down instead. The person her cousin 'blackmailed' today was not some common folk. She was afraid the man would not let her off even if she didn't pursue the matter.

"I'm sorry." Yao Qingqing walked up to Bai Yinning and bowed her head to apologize. "I really didn't know that she used your reputation to blackmail the customers just because I know you..."

Bai Yinning raised his hand, not wanting to listen to her explanation.

He still smiled and looked at Zong Jinghao. "What do you want to do?"

Chapter 198

Zong Jinghao looked at Lin Xinyan, who was sitting on the sofa holding her daughter, and gently put her hair behind her ear. "No one can hurt my people, let alone bully and insult."

He looked up, a faint smile tugging at his calm and serious face. "However, because you saved my wife, I won't assess blame for this matter, to repay the favor of you saving my wife."

After speaking, he stooped to pick up his daughter in Lin Xinyan's arms and said, "Let's go."

Lin Xinyan took a breath. She didn't expect things to turn out like this.

"Hold on."

Bai Yinning stopped Zong Jinghao.

The usual smile on his face faded a little. "Very well played, Mr. Zong. Deliberately making such a trivial matter big to repay me for saving..." When talking about Lin Xinyan, he paused. "Saving your wife."

Zong Jinghao didn't deny what Bai Yinning said, because since he heard the shop assistant keep emphasizing that Chairman Bai was backing them, he had concluded that the Chairman Bai she mentioned was Bai Yinning.

That was why he deliberately made the matter big, and when Bai Yinning came forward, he gave a favor of letting things slide to repay his favor of saving Lin Xinyan.

He didn't want Bai Yinning to keep appearing in front of Lin Xinyan because of his favor.

Zong Jinghao straightened out his daughter's wrinkled collar and looked at her with a gentle smile, while saying to Bai Yinning, "I'm flattered, Chairman Bai. It is your people who are too weak and gave me a chance."

Bai Yinning clenched his fists on the armrests. He had to swallow this insult, as someone was indeed taking advantage of his power to bully others.

He couldn't refute it.

He looked at Lin Xinyan. "I'm sorry about what happened today." When he was speaking, he looked at Lin Xinyan up and down, knowing why she came to the mall. "I own this mall. Just take whatever you need today, and I'll bear the cost. Think of it as my compensation to you for the trouble I caused."

"That's very kind of you, Chairman Bai, but my wife has no habit of spending other people's money." Before Lin Xinyan could speak, Zong Jinghao refused first.

Lin Xinyan raised her eyes to look at Zong Jinghao's chiseled profile. She really didn't expect him to have this intention, and only thought it was just to tell Lin Xichen some truth. She never expected him to be so scheming, cunning, and depressed deep down.

Lin Xinyan forced a polite smile. "Thank you, but there's no need for that."

Bai Yinning also smiled. "Well, then just let me know if you need me in the future. I'm afraid we will have to postpone our meeting with the master."

Lin Xinyan understood that he had to deal with the things here, so she said, "If you are free tomorrow, we can go tomorrow."

Bai Yinning replied after thinking for a moment, "Okay, I will pick you up at the hotel then."

"Okay." Lin Xinyan held her son's hand.

They didn't go back right away. This time, Zong Jinghao followed Lin Xinyan every step of the way, for fear of her being bullied again.

Lin Xinyan complained, "You following me like this makes me look like some kind of rare animal."

Who would go shopping with their 'husband', children, and a group of bodyguards in tow?

Everyone stared at her wherever she went, making her feel very uncomfortable.

Zong Jinghao said righteously, "I'm worried if you shop alone. What if you get bullied again?"

"I'm not a kid..."

"You didn't manage it well just now."

Speechless, Lin Xinyan actually found no words to refute him.

Compared to their ease, Bai Yinning was pissed off by this unprovoked disaster.

Yao Qingqing kept saying sorry, but this was not what Bai Yinning wanted.

The shop assistant was prevented from leaving the store by Gao Yuan. She stood by the door, and flinched to reduce her presence, hoping Yao Qingqing could plead for her.

“Qingqing...”

“Don’t call me!” Yao Qingqing was annoyed. She was originally adopted, and her adoptive parents were not kind to her, so naturally this girl wasn’t her real cousin either.

It was just that the mother of this cousin was very kind. Once she was beaten and scolded by her adoptive parents and got shut out of the house without any food. This cousin’s mother took her in and gave her food.

Remembering her kindness toward her, Yao Qingqing asked her cousin to come to help at the store when she was jobless, but she didn’t expect that she would not only steal the money from the store, but also threaten customers to buy clothes in such a manner.

No wonder she felt that business in the store had been getting worse recently.

It turned out that it was all because of her, who ruined the store’s reputation.

“I was wrong, Qingqing, I know I was wrong. Please beg Chairman Bai for mercy for me.” She would have rushed over if Gao Yuan didn’t stop her.

“You have to bear the consequences of your own doings. I can’t save you as well.” She could see that Bai Yinning was very angry. Regardless of the smile on his face, she knew that he was angry at the moment.

He has been like this since he was a child. He wouldn’t show his emotion on his face, and was always smiling, so even the dean liked him.

No one would like a child with a bitter and unpleasant look on his face all day long.

This was also why he was chosen by Bai Hongfei.

“Gao Yuan, don’t let me see this person from now on,” Bai Yinning said solemnly.

“Understood.” Gao Yuan held her back, ready to take her away.

The shop assistant panicked. “Yao Qingqing, have you forgotten that when you were beaten by your parents and were shut out of the house without any food, who took you in and kept you full? It was my mom...”

“Enough!” Yao Qingqing interrupted her sharply. “I have paid off these favors long ago!”

After she grew up, and was able to support herself, she had been helping them, and also gave her a job. But look at what she did. She made me lose face in front of Bai Yinning.

Bai Yinning waved his hand, not wanting to see this woman again. After Gao Yuan replied that he understood, he pulled the shop assistant out of the mall, ignoring her wailing.

Her voice was quickly drowned out, and the surrounding air became quiet.

“Sorry, I don’t know it was because of her, and even called you here...”

“What do you plan to do with your place here?” Bai Yinning interrupted her. With things as such, no more apologies would help, and would instead hurt their friendship.

After all, they knew each other since childhood, and had seen each other’s downfall. Moreover, they lived together in an orphanage for a few years, so there was a bond between them.

“I’ve already troubled you. This place becomes like this also because I believe people too easily.” Yao Qingqing sighed. “You have helped me a lot. If you didn’t give me this storefront, the head office would never let me open a store here. If the head office knew that this store becomes like this, I’m afraid I’ll have to pay compensation. I think I’ll close the shop on the excuse that the level of consumption here is too low.”

“Have you thought through it carefully?” Bai Yinning asked calmly.

Yao Qingqing nodded. “Yes.”

“Since you’ve thought through it carefully, I won’t dissuade you. About the mess here...”

“I can clean it up.” Yao Qingqing didn’t want to trouble him too much.

“Okay.” Bai Yinning didn’t say much. After all, they were all grown-ups with their own thoughts and ideas.

“I will see you out.” Yao Qingqing proposed.

Bai Yinning did not refuse either. There was a small step at the entrance of the store, so someone had to help him with his wheelchair.

“Can’t it really be cured?” Yao Qingqing looked down at him, with unspeakable emotion in her eyes. The fact that he was in a wheelchair upset her more than Bai Yinning himself.

His legs were sound when he was adopted, but he was now in a wheelchair, which must have been due to an accident.

Bai Yinning squinted his eyes slightly, recalling the past...

He could walk before he met with an accident.

At that time, he accompanied Bai Hongfei to inspect the factory, and there was a fire, which caused an explosion. In order to save Bai Hongfei, he got his legs injured, so he was now in a wheelchair.

"Very hard." The expression on Bai Yinning's face remained the same, but his emotion was stirring up deep down. After all, no one would be willing to be disabled or even unable to take care of himself completely.

"Do you know the woman just now..."

"Qingqing, I don't like people asking me about my private matters."

Bai Yinning interrupted her.

He knew that Yao Qingqing wanted to ask him about Lin Xinyan.

"I'm sorry."

"Don't keep saying this." The expression on Bai Yinning's face became calm again.

Meanwhile, Lin Xinyan bought a few sets of clothes before returning to the hotel with Zong Jinghao.

As Lin Xinyan was going to see the master who could make tea silk, she would not return to B City for the time being, whereas Zong Jinghao also wanted to find out the whereabouts of He Ruize here.

So they reached a consensus and planned to stay here for a few more days.

After getting out of the car, they saw people waiting for them in the lobby of the hotel as soon as they walked into the hotel.

Chapter 199

Su Zhan and Qin Ya were sitting by the window, with a few empty glasses on the table. It seemed that they had been sitting there for a long time.

After seeing them coming in, Su Zhan rushed over without a care for his image. "You are finally back. We have been waiting for you for a long time."

Shen Peichuan pushed him away disgustedly. "Did you get lost? What took you so long?"

He said that he was leaving long ago, so it stood to reason that he should have arrived early.

When he was speaking, he glanced at Qin Ya who was walking towards Lin Xinyan. Why did he bring her along?

What did this brat do to her?

Su Zhan was frustrated and didn't notice Shen Peichuan's ambiguous gaze. When he came, he was caught by his grandmother, who demanded him to tell her when he would get married, or she wouldn't let him go out.

He only managed to come out after he lied about getting married at the end of this year.

That was why he was late.

The main problem was that he didn't even have a serious girlfriend.

"Don't mention it. It's my grandma again." Seeing Su Zhan's distressed look, Shen Peichuan knew why.

Although the Su family was not a wealthy family, it was considered to be a family of scholars, but Su Zhan's parents died early, and he was left with his only grandmother. Su Zhan was now a man in his thirties, so it was normal for his grandmother to be worried about his marriage.

"She urged you to get married again?" Shen Peichuan bumped his shoulder with his.

"Yeah."

"Isn't there already a girl for you?" Shen Peichuan raised his chin at him. Not far away from them, Qin Ya was holding Lin Xinyan and didn't let go. "I finally see you. During your disappearance, I was terrified and afraid that you would be in danger. Our trip back to China this time is so thrilling and exciting."

"Okay, don't worry. Look, I'm fine now." Lin Xinyan patted her on the shoulder.

Su Zhan looked at Qin Ya and pouted. "This girl is good, but she's a difficult one."

"Can't you even get a woman with your means?" Shen Peichuan jokes.

Su Zhan glared at him. "Am I such a low-class person?"

"Haha." Shen Peichuan laughed, thinking that now he was a good man again. He is the one who used to have different women every day.

But Shen Peichuan knew that he was not serious and was just fooling around.

“By the way.” Shen Peichuan put his arm around his neck, and whispered to him on the side, “I noticed that Jinghao and...”

“Daddy, what are they talking about?” Lin Ruixi lay on Zong Jinghao’s shoulder and looked at the two men who were standing not far away and whispering by the window.

“Don’t bother about them.” Zong Jinghao took her upstairs.

Lin Xinyan went to help Qin Ya drag the suitcase. “You must be tired from the journey. Let’s go up and rest.”

“Okay.” Qin Ya refused to let Lin Xinyan help her. “I can take it myself.” She reached out to touch the top of Lin Xichen’s head. “Xichen.”

“Aunt Qin, why did you come with him?” Lin Xichen looked at Su Zhan and then Qin Ya.

Initially, Lin Xinyan also wanted to ask why they came together.

“He went to the store to tell me that you’ve been found. I was anxious to see you, so I followed him here. We couldn’t get any order when you’re gone, so there are no customers.” Qin Ya was a little disappointed and felt that she still wasn’t good enough. Although the two clients she received were satisfied with her design, they said that her design was rather less impressive, and didn’t place any orders afterwards.

Ellen was now looking after the store, while she came here.

Lin Xinyan patted her on the shoulder to comfort her. “It’s okay. It will get better.”

After she successfully invited the master who knew about tea silk, she was sure that their business would be good.

Qin Ya told Lin Xinyan about what happened in the store during her disappearance, while they went upstairs.

Shen Peichuan arranged a sumptuous dinner to welcome Su Zhan and Qin Ya.

Lin Ruixi was sleepy and insisted on being carried by Zong Jinghao. “Daddy, I want to sleep in your arms.”

The little one was very coquettish, as she put her arms around his neck refusing to let go, and called him sweetly, “Daddy.”

Kissing his daughter’s face, Zong Jinghao was unwilling to say no to her, as his heart had melted.

Zong Jinghao said in Lin Xinyan’s ear, “I will take her up first.”

Lin Xinyan nodded her head.

After Zong Jinghao left, Lin Xinyan placed some food on her son's plate. After taking a bite, Lin Xichen put down his chopsticks and slid off the chair. "I'm done too."

Being sensible like a small adult as he was, he wanted to go back to the room by himself, but Lin Xinyan was worried. "I will go up with you."

"No, it's not like no one is following me." He pointed at the two bodyguards behind him.

Without knowing He Ruize's whereabouts, Zong Jinghao was worried that he would hurt the kids and Lin Xinyan again, so he asked the bodyguards to follow them all the time.

"Come on, Ma'am. We came all the way from B City to find you. Do you really want to leave us alone?" Su Zhan looked at Lin Xinyan aggrievedly. "Since I spared no pains to bring Miss Qin to you, I shall toast you, okay?"

He wanted to say that you should toast me, but she was Zong Jinghao's wife, he dared not ask her to toast him.

So he changed his words and proposed to toast her himself.

Looking at Su Zhan and then at Shen Peichuan and Qin Ya, Lin Xinyan took the glass of wine that Su Zhan handed over, and said with a smile, "I toast all of you. Thank you for taking care of the people around me during my absence. "

She downed the glass of strong white wine, and her throat burned as soon as she gulped it down. Frowning, she put down the glass, took a sip of the plain water to relieve the discomfort.

Su Zhan blinked. "What a good drinker, Ma'am, I'll down mine too."

After drinking the wine, Lin Xinyan thought of her two children and said, "You guys, enjoy. I will go upstairs first."

Su Zhan stopped her. "Ma'am, apart from bullying us, Zong Jinghao, that inhumane guy, doesn't treat us like a human being at all. I feel bitter, but I dare not say it out."

Su Zhan complained 'tearfully' about Zong Jinghao.

Lin Xinyan was rendered speechless.

What does it have to do with me?

"Is he really so inhumane?" Lin Xinyan asked Su Zhan, who was pestering her like a 'puppy'.

Su Zhan pouted, nodded his head vigorously, and even pointed at Shen Peichuan to ask him to second his complaint. "If you don't believe me, ask him."

Knowing that he had deliberately pestered Lin Xinyan to drink with him, Shen Peichuan pretended not to hear him, as he turned his head to Qin Ya, and asked, concerned, "You must be tired from the journey, right?"

Qin Ya shook her head. "No."

"Did the brat bully you?" Shen Peichuan hinted at something.

Lowering her head, Qin Ya pursed her lips, and shook her head. "Mr. Su looks after me very well."

"See? Am I the kind of man who will only bully women? Shen Peichuan, you've really underestimated me!" Su Zhan stood up abruptly, and pointed at Shen Peichuan, "You guys just left like that, and left the mess to me."

Su Zhan was not drunk at all, but deliberately pretended to be drunk, as he stopped Lin Xinyan from leaving, and complained to her that he had done a lot of work. In fact, he deliberately said that to let her know how anxious Zong Jinghao was during her disappearance. "You know what? After you went missing, I accompanied Jinghao to look for you everywhere. Later, when he learned that you were here, he came here with Shen Peichuan, and left me in B City to take care of He Ruilin's mess, but don't you worry. I've dealt with it, and she won't be able to make trouble again..." Su Zhan moved closer to Lin Xinyan. "She committed homicide, so she wouldn't live long."

Lin Xinyan looked at Su Zhan with mixed feelings, and her heart was overwhelmed with emotions. At first, He Ruilin used the safety of her two kids to threaten her to come out. For the safety of her children, Lin Xinyan fell into the trap set by He Ruilin and was controlled by He Ruize.

She was already surprised that Zong Jinghao could come here to find her.

She didn't expect that he would also take action against He Ruilin.

Su Zhan poured a glass of wine for Lin Xinyan, and for himself as well. "I've helped you so much. Don't you think you have to have a drink with me?"

Lin Xinyan knew that he might have said this to her on purpose and picked up the glass of wine. "You guys are really good buddies."

Su Zhan was taken aback, deliberately pretending not to understand her words.

Watching them from the sidelines, Qin Ya was anxious, as it was obvious that Su Zhan deliberately made Lin Xinyan drink.

She wanted to persuade him, but was stopped by Shen Peichuan, who purposely held her up. "Miss Qin, it must be tiresome for you to bring Su Zhan all the way here. Thank you for bringing him, my good-for-nothing buddy, here safely."

As he said, he made Qin Ya take a glass of wine.

Qin Ya was speechless. Isn't this reason a little too far-fetched?

"But—"

"Thank you, Miss Qin." Shen Peichuan said his thanks first, leaving Qin Ya no room to refuse.

So she was forced to drink the wine.

The intentions of Shen Peichuan and Su Zhan were too obvious, so Lin Xinyan knew what they were trying to do. She didn't mind getting drunk. "It's what you think it is. Zong Jinghao and I are actually not that close like you see on the surface..."

Su Zhan and Shen Peichuan looked at each other. Does this woman actually see through our intentions?

The pair silently retracted their gazes, pretending to not get what she said. "Ma'am, what are you saying? The fate between you and Jinghao is predestined, so both of you are a match made in heaven."

Lin Xinyan smiled. "There's indeed fate between us. As for other things, I'm not too sure."

It was indeed fate that they were engaged in an arranged marriage since childhood.

Su Zhan asked cautiously, "Are you still angry about him divorcing you?" Suddenly Su Zhan changed his tone, and said righteously, "If it's me, I'll be angry too. I will never forgive him for divorcing me because of another woman."

Soon, Su Zhan's tone softened again. "But can you give him a chance for the sake of your two children?"

Lin Xinyan took a sip of wine. They don't understand the twists and turns.

The reason why she didn't accept Zong Jinghao wholeheartedly was not because of the divorce. After all, they didn't like each other at the time, and were only tied together by an agreement made by their parents.

She was just not sure if Zong Jinghao's kindness to her was because of their two children.

She was not sure if she really liked him.

If she did, she was not sure how much she liked him.

She didn't like her romantic relationship being judged by others. "You should not do so again from now on. Or I will be angry next time."

Shen Peichuan glared at Su Zhan. After noticing the strange atmosphere in the relationship between Zong Jinghao and Lin Xinyan, he told Su Zhan about it, who then came up with this idea that solved everything by getting Lin Xinyan drunk and sending her to Zong Jinghao's bed.

However, she saw right through his intention.

Su Zhan smiled awkwardly and muttered softly, "Smart women aren't likable."

"Don't force Qin Ya to drink. I will go back to see Xichen and Ruixi." Since Lin Xinyan had made it so clear, Su Zhan didn't dare to pester her again, and could only watch her leave.

Only then did Qin Ya realize that Su Zhan had been deliberately making Lin Xinyan drink the wine, but she didn't know why.

"It's not very good for you to do this." Qin Ya glanced at Su Zhan. "It's very low-class of you, as a man, to make a woman drink on purpose. Fortunately, Ms. Lin is clever and saw through your trick."

Su Zhan felt aggrieved. I'm just helping my buddy here, and yet this girl actually dared to criticize me.

He pulled the chair and sat down beside Qin Ya. "What do you know? Huh? How dare you criticize me?"

He deliberately got close to her, and his alcohol breath when he was speaking filled her nostrils, making her frown. "Go away!"

"Where to go? This place is just so small." Su Zhan was next to her, while his mouth was getting closer to her face.

Shen Peichuan shook his head. It was obvious that Su Zhan was flirting with her. He didn't want to be a third wheel, so he quietly got up and left the private room.

Seeing that everyone was leaving, Qin Ya also wanted to leave, but was stopped by Su Zhan.

"Don't go. Drink with me..."

"You're crazy. Let go of me..."

Shen Peichuan closed the door. This brat may be able to get married at the end of this year.

In fact, Qin Ya was pretty good, young and beautiful.

When Lin Xinyan went upstairs, Lin Ruixi and Lin Xichen were already asleep. The sound of running water was heard from the bathroom, and the frosted glass door was left ajar. She gave it a light push, and the door was opened.

Chapter 200

Zong Jinghao was standing in front of the sink, with his sleeves rolled up his arms, and his white shirt tucked into his trousers. His slender legs were wrapped in trousers, where the smooth lines outlined the arc of his hips and connected to the crotch. Coupled with his wide shoulders and narrow waist, his figure was impeccably perfect.

Looking through his arms, Lin Xinyan saw that he was actually washing clothes.

It was Lin Ruixi's dress, which had been stained with soup earlier during dinner.

Lin Xinyan had never seen him do this. All his basic necessities were managed by someone, so he didn't need to do things like this himself.

Yet, at this moment, he was washing his daughter's clothes.

It felt subtle.

All of a sudden, she actually felt that this was the taste of home—ordinary yet heartwarming.

Almost without thinking, she walked in and reached out to hug him from behind, her face pressing against his broad back. "Are you a heartless man or an affectionate man?"

The sudden embrace made Zong Jinghao freeze, but he quickly returned to normal.

He looked down at her hands that were wrapping around his waist, and joy suddenly gleamed in his eyes, but he suppressed it to not let it show through his voice. "Why do you say so?"

Lin Xinyan told him frankly, "I heard Su Zhan say that He Ruilin was jailed and may not be able to be released forever. You're behind it."

She paused thinking about how to phrase her words next. "In any case, she used to be with you, yet you could do that to her."

Zong Jinghao seemed to have not heard Lin Xinyan's words and focused on washing his daughter's dress.

It was not that he didn't hear it, but he just didn't want to explain.

He gave He Ruilin a lot of chances, and yet she kept crossing the line with her deception, conspiracy, and scheme.

He believed her only because he thought of the fact that she had saved him before.

But, what had she done?

Lin Xinyan bit her lip, leaving a row of clear teeth marks on her pink lips. She hoped that Zong Jinghao could explain that there was a reason for him to do this, and that he was not such a heartless man.

“Don’t you have anything to say to me?”

“What do you want me to say?”

Zong Jinghao turned around. Two buttons on the collar of his shirt were undone, and his strong chest was looming. When he bathed Lin Ruixi, he got his shirt wet, so the damp shirt stuck to his skin. When he leaned over, Lin Xinyan was overwhelmed by his invasive manner. She couldn’t help but turn her head, not daring to look directly at his enchanting eyes.

Lin Xinyan hesitated. “Will you also treat me like this for other women in the future?”

Although he did that to He Ruilin because of her, He Ruilin used to be with him. Yet, the fact that he could ignore their past relationship and be cruel to her made him no different from Lin Guoan, who could abandon his wife and children.

She had seen her mother’s failed marriage, and her father’s ruthlessness, so she was always uncertain, sensitive, and skeptical about romantic relationships.

Zong Jinghao frowned, his pupils flickering. Then he stared into her eyes. “Do you think I’m that kind of man? Am I that kind of man to you?”

Lin Xinyan looked away. “I don’t know!”

“Heh.” He chuckled softly, and, without any sign or limits, pushed her back against the wall. Before Lin Xinyan could react, he put his weight on her, pressing her soft body against the tiled wall tightly.

It was cold, but her body was made burning hot by his fiery hot body.

“W-What are you doing?”

Her anxiety and helplessness at the moment were apparent in her tone.

Zong Jinghao pecked her on the forehead, and immediately moved his lips down to press it against her parted lips, leaving no gap between their lips. She smelled faintly of wine, which made her addictive. He grabbed her tongue with his tongue and sucked it deeply. His deep kiss was painful, making it feel more like a punishment.

Lin Xinyan twisted her face in pain, as she hit his shoulders with both her hands. “You hurt me. Hurry up, and let go of me—Mmm—”

Probably due to her big movements, her body rubbed against his private part that he pressed against her waist. She obviously felt the change there, and her expression changed instantly. "Zong Jinghao, you bastard, let go of me!"

His Adam's apple bobbed up and down, as he slowly moved his lips away from hers. His thick and long eyelashes brushed across the corners of her eyes, giving her a tickling sensation, and causing her to tremble slightly.

He put his lips to her ear. "Every time you question me, I will punish you in this way."

He deliberately got closer, and said in an ambiguous and teasing tone, "Do you think it's fair?"

Lin Xinyan didn't dare to move and was even holding her breath. Her whole body tensed up, for fear of stimulating him.

Smiling, Zong Jinghao did not continue to tease her, and asked softly, "After I left, did you drink?"

Lin Xinyan's eyelashes flickered. "Would you not know?"

He raised his eyebrows. What does she mean?

"Shen Peichuan and Su Zhan seem to notice our relationship, and deliberately made me drink..."

Zong Jinghao's mouth twitched, and he pulled Lin Xinyan into his arms. "Be nice to me in front of them from now on."

If they knew that Lin Xinyan wouldn't let him touch her, they would laugh out loud.

Lin Xinyan also hoped to give her children a good living environment. Like Zong Jinghao, she did not like her private life being in the spotlight, especially her love life.

It was her negligence just now, as a proud man like Zong Jinghao wouldn't talk about his love life with others.

"Okay." Lin Xinyan agreed. They should be 'loving' couples at least in the eyes of outsiders.

"Let's go to bed." Zong Jinghao got into the bed with her. He did nothing, and just put his arms around her.

The next morning, Lin Xinyan woke up at the crack of dawn. She slept very soundly last night probably because of drinking, and only felt that Zong Jinghao kept kissing her in his arms at night. She couldn't sleep after she woke up in the morning, so she got up early, whereas Zong Jinghao and the two children were still asleep in the room. She wanted to go outside the hotel to get some fresh air.

At this time, the entire corridor was quiet, as everyone hadn't gotten up yet.

She trod lightly, for fear of waking up those who were still sleeping.

When passing by Qin Ya's room, the door of her room was suddenly opened from inside. Su Zhan was seen with a suit hanging slantingly over his body, and his hair was messy as well. When he saw Lin Xinyan, he slammed the door shut reflexively.

Standing at the door, Lin Xinyan didn't come back to her senses for a long time. Why would Su Zhan come out from Qin Ya's room?

Am I seeing things?

She looked around and was certain that this was indeed Qin Ya's room.

Inside the room, Su Zhan was not doing well either, as he stood behind the door with a guilty expression on his face. Why would Lin Xinyan be outside the room so early?

"What are you still doing inside here? Get out." Qin Ya hid under the blanket, only showing a pair of her bloodshot eyes.

Last night after everyone left, she was pestered by Su Zhan to drink with him. She had no choice but to have a few drinks with him. Later, Su Zhan told her about him being pushed to get married.

So, Qin Ya asked him, "Don't you have a girlfriend?"

Su Zhan then remembered his first love, Liu Fei, and his mood got even worse.

Qin Ya felt that he made her drink because she had mentioned something that upset him.

So she apologized to him, "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to mention those things."

Su Zhan flashed a nice smile, and took the opportunity to say, "If you have a few drinks with me, I will accept your apology."

As a result, both of them drank too much, and she didn't even know how she got upstairs.

When they woke up in the morning, they lay naked on a bed together.

As an adult, they immediately understood what had happened.

Su Zhan said that he would be responsible for her.

Holding the blanket, Qin Ya was trembling violently. She obviously even felt like killing Su Zhan, but she still pretended to be calm, and said, "We're adults. Don't say such naive words."

Is it necessary to tie two persons together because of a mistake?

Moreover, she could clearly see that Su Zhan was a playboy, who was not suitable for marriage at all.

Besides, she didn't like him.

"This is the 21st century, not pre-liberation. It's just a one-night stand. I hope we can forget it and assume that nothing happened." Qin Ya was so calm that even Su Zhan was surprised.

He used to fool around, but he had never had a one-night stand. Whenever he had the needs, he would pay for it, so that there was only business between him and the girl.

However, Qin Ya was actually more open-minded than he was, as she said that he didn't need to be responsible for it, and even wanted him to forget about it, assuming it never happened.

Why do I feel so upset?

"It happened. I remember very clearly. You were beneath me with your arms wrapping around my neck..."

"Get out!" Qin Ya was angered by Su Zhan's words.

The shame suppressed in her heart exploded all at once.

She was too agitated that they couldn't talk about it at all, so Su Zhan suggested, "Let's calm down first before we talk."

Unexpectedly, he saw Lin Xinyan at the door as soon as he opened the door.

He stood behind the door and looked at the undulating 'hill' on the bed, knowing that she must be crying under the blanket.

No girl could pretend that nothing happened after encountering this kind of thing.

She was just feigning when she said those words.

Not wanting to keep it from her, Su Zhan told her that Lin Xinyan saw him when he opened the door.

"What?" Qin Ya abruptly sat up from the bed, her eyes widened in shock. So now Lin Xinyan knows that...

She didn't even dare to imagine further.

Tears were streaming down her face, as she felt ashamed and hateful.

It's all Su Zhan's fault!

"You ruined me." Qin Ya held the blanket, with her entire face buried in it, as a muffled sob was heard.

Knock knock

At this time, there was a knock on the door of her room.