

## **Covenient Marriage: Mr. Nelson's Love Trap by Hannah Baker**

### **C1 I Regret Nothing**

The burning sensation wouldn't stop, Lin Xinyan realized as she stood there—tall and unmoving. His cold hands clasped around her waist as the heat slowly enveloped her. "Is it your first time?" His hot breath fanned against her neck.

The overpowering aura lingered in her earlobe, and she shivered. However, she didn't dare make a sound. She was going to go through this...as the deal had already said.

Suddenly, the man paused. "If you regret it, you can always—"

"No." Lin Xinyan immediately shook her head, letting her fingers dig into her palm. "I regret nothing—"

Besides, she was already eighteen-years-old. It was just in time for her to—

As if the universe had heard her, she immediately jolted forward. The burning sensation returned; and this time, it wasn't the prickly heat in her skin, but something much greater.

She clenched her jaw, squirming under his grip before falling directly into his arms.

To preserve her last shred of dignity, Lin Xinyan didn't move, nor did she say another word. Instead, she bowed her head and steadied herself in his hold. Other than the feeling of fear biting into her insides, she also felt something else. It was as if all her senses were heightened as he burrowed deep into her, letting her feel his muscle clenching under her body.

While she was struggling to keep calm, the man kept going—forcefully taking every inch of her skin. The night was long and painful, but she steadied herself. There was no backing out now.

Finally, it was all over. As he climbed out of his bed in the middle of the night to head to the bathroom,

she dragged her exhausted body up and quickly dressed into her clothes. Without another word, she raced out of the room.

On the ground floor of the hotel, a middle-aged woman stood in the midst of the crowd. Lin Xinyan walked towards her, and the woman handed her a black bag. "Your reward," came her curt reply.

"Thank you." The young teen didn't even look the other way as she wrenched the bills and ran out of the lobby. Her waist throbbed, and her skin burned, but she didn't care. None of it mattered anymore. All she needed was to get to the hospital before it was too late.

The sky was dark when she had finally made it, and the corridors were quiet. Nothing else could be seen except for the two stretchers right outside the door of the operating room. They weren't taken in because she hadn't paid yet.... but it was different now.

"I have the money," she sobbed out, yanking out the bag from her sides. "Just. Just help save my mother, please." The doctor took one look at the bag and asked the nurse to count the money. During that time, he waved the paramedics to take one of the patients forward.

However, her brother's stretcher remained. "My brother," she whispered. "He's... Please save him."

"I'm sorry, but your brother—we couldn't save him." He sighed, rubbing his forehead.

They couldn't save him?

Everything around her had darkened, and she could feel herself stumbling back in shock. Her chest constricted. No...No...this can't be possible. "What do you mean?" she whispered, only to be met with silence.

Pain. It reverberated all around her, like a knife twisting into her chest. Sinking to the ground, her hands trembled. If it hadn't been for her father—the man who had cheated and abandoned them eight

years ago—they wouldn't have been like this. He left them.

Her brother was born soon after, only to be diagnosed with autism at the age of three. "You'd need these types of medications, if you want him to survive," the doctor had snapped at them then, forcing them to take up odd jobs to survive. They made it...but of course, fate had other plans—one that took the shape of a car accident.

She was forced to sell herself, but she was still unable to save her brother.

It was painful, but Lin Xinyan recollected herself soon enough. Although she felt discomfort, she knew that there were other things she needed to worry about. For one thing, her mother was still there.

Her mom still needed her.

The operation was long, but her mother's condition began to stabilize. At least, before she learned of her brother's death. "What did you just say? He—he's dead?" The older woman collapsed into tears.

"Mom," she cried out. "It's you and me now; we have to live well for him. Please."

During the month her mother was in the hospital, Zhuang Zijin would simply sit by her bedside in a daze. Who wouldn't? The moment she knew her son had died, it was as if her mind had snapped shut, but Lin Xinyan didn't give up. She even dropped out of school just to tend to her mother's condition, and her efforts soon paid off.

Things had slowly been looking up. However, one day, as she was carrying her tray towards the ward, she heard a voice that stopped her tracks.

Her insides turned cold. Of course, it had to be him.

After everything he had done, how dare he showed up?

"Zijin, don't you remember how close you and Madame Zong were? If anything, your daughter should be the one getting married to him—"

"Lin Guoan, what the hell are you saying?" Zhuang Zijin's body was frail. If anything, the man should be thankful for her weakness, otherwise, she would've already decked him right on the face. How dare he? How dare he asked for the daughter that he had left?

He was the one who had abandoned them—left them to rot! And now, he suddenly thought it convenient to show his face here?

"Young Master Zong is the son of a good friend of yours. I'm sure you're aware of them. If she marries him, she'd be blessed—"

"Blessed?" The Young Master was noble and handsome—yes, nobody could've doubted that. However, a month ago, he had been bitten by a venomous snake. Although he had lived, he was paralyzed.

Marrying him would be her next ticket to widowhood.

"I'll marry him."

Suddenly, Lin Xinyan burst into the doors. She gripped her tray and looked up. "I'll marry him," she repeated. "But I have one condition."

Lin Guoan glanced towards the door, only to be taken aback for a few seconds. It had been eight years since he had seen his daughter, and a lot of things had changed. She had only been ten years old when he had left, and now, she was already a full-fledged adult. Despite this, her small face still didn't reach the size of his palm, and her skin was white and papery.

She hadn't grown well into adulthood, not as adorable as his younger daughter.

The unwillingness in his heart lessened. After all, since she wasn't that good-looking, she wouldn't feel wronged to marry such a terrible husband.

"What condition?"

"I want to go back with Mom. Everything that had once belonged to us will be returned." She clenched her fists. "Only then will I allow you to marry me to him."

Although Lin Xinyan hadn't been in the country that long, she had heard of the Zong Family in B City ever since she was young. The young master was said to be incredibly noble, but there were rumors of his features and his flaws. It certainly wouldn't be a win for her.

But even so, it was worth the risk. If she was going to get married, then she might as well make use of the opportunity to take back the wealth that her mother had lost.

"Xinyan—" Zhuang Zijin struggled to grab her daughter's arm.

Her daughter had already suffered a lot. If this were to happen, then...

Worried that his ex-wife might convince her otherwise, Lin Guoan immediately said, "Sure. As long as you're willing to marry him, then I'll let the both of you return home."

"And Mom's dowry?" Lin Xinyan's voice was icy cold.

When Zhuang Zijin had married him, her parents had given him a dowry. Although back then, it wasn't

as large, it was worth hundreds of thousands now. Just the thought of it made Lin Guoan reluctant.

"My sister's beautiful, and she should have better things in life," Lin Xinyan slowly mused, shaking her head in pity. "If she were to marry a man with a physical defect, then her whole life's done for. Besides, you and mom had already divorced—might as well return the money that she had given you."

Lin Guoan clenched his fists.

How the hell did she know about the Zong family? She had been abroad this entire time!

What he didn't know was that she was merely basing it on speculation.

"Fine! I'm going to give it to you when you marry him!"

How was he going to subject his little daughter to such a terrible fate?

No matter how honorable the man was, he was just a cripple! He couldn't do anything that's worth her time.

Thinking about this, Lin Guoan straightened his back. He did the right thing.

Even then, he couldn't help but feel annoyed by Lin Xinyan. The woman was trying to capitalize on his decision, trying to snatch all the money away from him like some greedy golddigger!

"Your mother obviously didn't raise you well," he snapped.

'As if you were any greater of a father,' Lin Xinyan wanted to snap. In fact, if anything, she wanted to

throw the tray in her hands up against his face. Maybe then he'd feel the pain she felt when he had upped and left.

However, she kept silent. At this point, all she needed to do was wait...

"Get ready." With one last nod, he turned his back at them. "The both of you can go back tomorrow."

## C2 You're Pregnant

Zhuang Zijin understood Lin Xinyan's intentions, but that didn't mean that she agreed to it. Placing a hand on her daughter's shoulder, she quickly warned, "Marriage is a lifelong commitment. You shouldn't just toss it so carelessly to a stranger—I can't let you go through with that."

"I'm not marrying just anyone, you know." She placed her tray on the bedside cabinet. "It's your friend's son."

"My friend had died a long time ago, and her son..." A few seconds had passed, and Zhuang Zijin sighed. "I don't know anything about him. Even if things were different, I'd still want you to marry someone whom you actually love—not use it as some bargaining chip for the both of us. I'd rather just rot here for the rest of my life."

Someone she loved?

Even if she were to meet him in the future, she wouldn't be qualified—especially after everything that she had gone through.

Lin Xinyan simply lowered her head in response. It didn't matter who she married. Whether he had a physical or mental defect, none of it mattered anymore as long as she could get everything back.

Seeing her daughter like this, Zhuang Zijin sighed and turned her head. There was nothing else she could do to convince her, so they returned to China the next day.

Lin Guoan had long since despised the mother-and-daughter pair, especially after the conversation they had back in the hospital. By the time they had returned, he didn't bother letting them into the Lin family door. Instead, he rented a place for them to stay until the long-awaited wedding day.

Lin Xinyan didn't bother to complain. After all, the last thing they needed was for her mother to confront the woman who had ruined their marriage. She'd rather stay here in this dump than be subjected to years of animosity.

They sat inside the apartment.

"Xinyan, there's still time to back out," the older woman warned. "It won't fall on your head—I promise you."

"Mom, hurry up and eat something. The vegetables will grow cold." Not wanting to talk about this any further, she quickly placed bits of pork on top of her mother's bowl.

"I..." Zhuang Zijin sighed. No matter how many times she had brought the topic up, her daughter would always just turn the other way. She had done nothing but help her all these years, and now, she had to sacrifice herself one more time.

Lin Xinyan held the chopsticks in her hand, but she had no appetite. Even when she tried to dip her vegetables into soy sauce, all it had done was increase her urge to vomit. "I...I need a minute."

"Hey, are you not feeling well?"

"I'm probably just airsick from the flight. I'll head back to my room."

Without another word, Lin Xinyan placed her chopsticks on the side and sprinted into the bathroom.



As soon as the doors slammed shut, she leaned against the surface, breathing heavily. Although she had never been pregnant, she saw how her mother acted when she was. Zhuang Zijin had always felt lightheaded, with absolutely no appetite.

That was exactly how she was feeling right now.

It had been more than a month since that dreaded night, and her period was already more than ten days late. Did that mean—

No. Lin Xinyan turned her head to the side, trembling. The night was more than humiliating enough. "Stay calm, Xinyan, stay calm," she murmured to herself, staring into her reflection. Maybe it was all just in her head.

Maybe everything will be fine. However, she had spoken too soon.

"You're already six-weeks pregnant."

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Lin Xinyan clutched her bag as the doctor's words repeated in her mind.

At this point, she didn't even know what to do. Lin Xinyan stared up at the sky, as her nails dug into her skin. Should she raise it? Or should she have an abortion? The possibilities were dire, but...

Her hands moved towards her lower abdomen. Although she had felt surprised, and even disgusted at

first, she couldn't help but feel a little reluctant for the child—for her child.

She was finally becoming a mother. But at eighteen...was that even reasonable?

Even when her mother was done with her assessment, Lin Xinyan was still in a trance. They didn't speak the entire duration of the walk, and she didn't say anything about the news. After all, it was best not to add too much stress to her plate.

When they finally returned to their residence, she shoved the medical forms into her pocket and pushed the door open.

However, as soon as she stepped inside, she saw Lin Guoan standing in the middle of the room. Her face darkened.

What the hell was he doing here?

The man didn't look like he was in the best of moods either. "Go and change," he snapped.

"I—why?" She frowned.

"You said you wanted to marry into the Zong family, didn't you? Well, you should meet him." Glancing at her up and down, he sneered. "Do you think I'll let you see him dressed in that—that rags? Are you trying to humiliate me?"

Why was her pain never ending?

She had once thought that selling herself had already numbed her, that her brother's death had already cooled her heart.

Yet, upon hearing her estranged father's heartless words, she couldn't help but ache in silence.

Lin Guoan was the reason they had been this way. Not only had he sent them to a poorer country in the West, but he had all-out abandoned them.

Where the hell was she going to get the money like this?

If he had been there...maybe her brother wouldn't have died.

Her jaw clenched. And now he thought he had the right to speak to her like this? Like a father to a daughter? Fuck him!

Lin Guoan must've had a similar thought because he immediately turned away. Looking slightly embarrassed, he waved his hand. "Let's go," he murmured. "The Zong family should already be there. It wouldn't be good for us to let them wait."

"Xinyan," Zhuang Zijin weakly called out, wanting to persuade her still. She had already lost her son in the accident. If she were to lose her daughter too—the thought was enough to make her insides stir. Money was not as important as family.

She didn't want her to step into the burdens she had created for herself, and she certainly didn't want her to get mixed up with the Zong family.

The wealthy class had always been very complicated, and she didn't even know what kind of man the young master was.

To say she was worried was an understatement.

"Mom, I'll be fine. I promise."

"Hurry up," Lin Guoan urged impatiently. A part of him was afraid that she'd back out last minute, so he quickly gave her a shove towards the door—only to receive a dirty look.

Doesn't matter. The dislike was mutual.

Eight years had passed, and all the blood ties they had tied were already worn out.

Lin Xinyan's clothes were too shabby—especially if she planned on meeting the young master of the Zong family. He quickly took her to an upscale women's clothing store to buy her a decent set of clothes.

Once they entered the store, a staff came to receive them. "She can afford them," the older man snapped, giving his daughter a little nudge towards the dressing room. "Let her in."

The assistant looked her up and down, before slowly nodding. "Come with me."

"Why don't you try this out?" The assistant pulled a light blue long skirt and handed it to her.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

"Thanks." She walked over to the fitting room.

As she was walking over, she heard a woman's voice echoing from the back. "Hao, do you really have

to marry someone from the Lin family?"

Lin Xinyan suddenly heard a voice from the back and glanced at the room next door. Through the crack, she could see a woman wrapping her arms around the man's neck and acting like a spoiled child. "Do you really want to marry some stranger?"

Zong Jinghao glanced at the woman, only to feel helpless. If not for his mother's arranged marriage, this wouldn't have happened, but he couldn't go back on his word.

Thinking about the night he had, he couldn't bear to disappoint her. "Were you in pain that night?"

A month ago, he had gone abroad to some lesser privileged country in the West to study for a project, only to be bitten by a venomous snake. The snake's venom was incredibly strong, as was the lust that had contained him. If he hadn't vent it on a woman, then he would've already died from the heat.

Bai Zhuwei was the one who had cared for him.

Otherwise, he would've been unable to control himself anymore.

There were rumors how a woman's first time could be painful, yet he had spared no pity that night. One could only imagine how much pain she had felt during those hours.

Yet, instead of screaming, Bai Zhuwei didn't utter a sound. Instead, she simply trembled against his arms.

Zong Jinghao knew how much the woman had liked him, but he had never really given her a chance.

Not only did he not love her, but her mother had already secured an arranged marriage for him. Falling in love was definitely not on his list.

However, there was no denying how steadfast Bai Zhuwei had been as she stood right by his side. After that incident, he had felt more responsible for her—wanting to give this woman a chance.

Even now, he could still remember the stain on the sheets and her skin against his—everything was vivid.

Bai Zhuwei simply tilted her head against his chest in acknowledgment, lowering her eyes.

She liked Zong Jinghao, and she had accompanied him as his secretary all these years. However, she wasn't a virgin anymore, but she wasn't planning on letting him know. That was why she had gone out and spent a fortune on a stranger.

After the girl had gone out, she went in to make it look like she was the one who had slept with him that night.

"If you like these clothes, then buy more, okay?" Zong Jinghao stroked her hair.

"You can't enter the VIP room, but you can use the other one on the right," the assistant immediately reminded.

In this kind of high-end clothing store, there were fitting rooms built on the far end. But they also had VIP rooms—one created for their most privileged guests. It was far larger than the fitting room she had been directed to.

"Ah..." With one last glance at the VIP room, she grabbed her clothes and left.

Even while she was changing clothes, Lin Xinyan couldn't help but think back to the conversation she had overheard.

Could it be that he was...

### C3 I'll Marry You

After changing into her clothes, Lin Xinyan stepped out of the fitting room and glanced at the VIP room on the other side of the store. It was now tightly sealed. Perhaps, the pair had already left.

"The dress suits you."

The salesman had good eyesight. After many years of working in the clothing industry, he knew what clothes were suited for the person just by looking at them. Lin Xinyan had on a light blue dress that accentuated her fair skin. The belt around her sides outlined her thin waist. If anything, the fabric brought out the best of her.

As soon as Lin Guoan saw her walk out of the fitting room, he nodded and went to pay. "Thirty thousand?" His eyes widened momentarily, but upon thinking whom they were visiting, he gripped his bills and nodded. Turning to the side, he scowled. "Let's go."

She knew that her father had hated her, but she never really experienced it to an extent—that was, until now.

Lowering her head, she followed him into the car.

The car had stopped in front of the Lin family's villa.

"Sir," the driver called out, opening the car door for the both of them. The two quickly made their way down the paved road.

As soon as Lin Xinyan saw the villa in all its glory, she couldn't help but fall into a trance. While she and her mother were struggling to make ends meet, her father and his tramp were too busy enjoying

the grand villa.

Her hands clenched. The irony of it all.

"What are you doing?" Lin Guoan felt something was off, so he turned around, only to see that his daughter was still standing in front of the door—still in a daze. It had been years since she had stepped inside the villa, and now...

Lin Xinyan shook her head and caught up with him. This was not the time to think about this. "Wait in the living room," he commanded when he heard from the servant that the man still hadn't arrived.

The interior was just as beautiful as the architecture. With its French windows, high ceilings, and dripping chandeliers—it was like she had entered into heaven. Everything was so well-kept. As she was turning around, she saw a piano perched by the floor-to-ceiling windows. Her mother had bought that for her on her fifth birthday.

What many wouldn't have known was how much she had loved to play the piano. At the ripe age of four, she had remembered practicing almost every hour—wanting to play a new piece for her parents whenever they came home. However, after the incident, she hasn't touched any musical instrument since.

Her fingers trailed along the familiar keys as a smile spread across her face.

Placing her forefinger on the zither, she pressed against it. Ding! A melodious sound rang out, and she continued—letting her fingers jump along with the keys as the familiar tune played in her mind. Although her fingers were stiff, she was still able to play.

Just as she was enjoying, a clear voice sounded from behind her. "Who allowed you to touch my things?"



**Her things?**

**Lin Xinyan turned around to see Lin Yuhan standing behind her. Her arms were crossed over her chest, and her eyes were narrowed into slits. From what she had remembered, the young woman was younger than her by a year—meaning she was already seventeen. 'Must've gotten Shen Xiuqing's looks,' she thought, thinking back to the tramp.**

**And she even had her personality.**

**Don't want to watch ads?**

**Get premium to remove ads**

**"Yours?"**

**The two had ruined her mother's marriage and used their money for all their luxuries. Now, they wanted to take her mother's gift from her too? Just the thought of it was absurd enough!**

**Clenching her fists, Lin Xinyan wanted nothing more than to slap her stepsister's face, only to let it fall to her sides. There was no point in starting a scene here, not when she still hadn't taken back what belonged to her.**

**All she needed was to wait.**

**She wasn't the little girl her father had sent away anymore. She had already grown up, and she wasn't going to cry and act rashly.**

**"Wait—you're Lin Xinyan, aren't you?" Suddenly, Lin Yuhan stumbled back in realization. Today was the day that the Zong family would come in visit, and from what she had heard, her father would be**

bringing his estranged wife back into the country.

She could still remember the day when Lin Guoan sent them out. "Please!" Lin Xinyan had screamed over and over again, hugging his leg. "Please, don't do this to us. Please..." Yet, he wouldn't even look at them.

"You must be happy that Daddy brought you back, huh?" Lin Yuhan didn't look too amused as she regarded her older sister with disdain. "Don't be too pleased with yourself. The only reason he brought you back was to marry into the Zong family. I heard that man—"

Immediately, she clamped her mouth shut into a sneer.

"It doesn't matter." Remembering that Lin Xinyan was marrying a cripple, she couldn't help but gloat. Now, she obviously had the last laugh.

Marriage was a lifelong commitment, and it was one of the defining points of a woman's life. If she had married a man like that, wouldn't her life be ruined? That was enough satisfaction for the day.

Lin Xinyan simply frowned in reply. Whoever the man was, she was only going to suck it and move on. There wasn't any point in refusing anymore anyway.

Just then, one of the maids walked over. "The Zong family has arrived."

"Open the doors." Lin Guoan quickly assembled his family right by the staircase as the doors swung open.

Lin Xinyan turned her head to the side to see a man being pushed inside. His facial features were impressive. With high cheekbones, narrowed eyes, and full lips—he could've been on the cover of any magazine. Even if he was in a wheelchair, nobody would've dared looked down on him. However, there was something about his face that struck her as odd.

Wasn't he the man she had seen flirting with the woman in the fitting room?

He was the Young Master of the Zong family?

But in the dressing room, she had clearly seen him standing up as he hugged the woman from behind. There was obviously nothing wrong with his leg. She eyed him for a while before turning away.

What was going on?

"Xinyan," Lin Guoan quickly called her out, snapping her out of her reverie. "Come over. This is the Young Master of the Zong family."

Turning to the side, he bowed. "Young Master Zong, this is my daughter, Xinyan."

Even the old man couldn't help but pity the man in the wheelchair. Young Master Zong was handsome, rich, and incredibly smart, yet he had been deprived of such a wonderful life ahead of him—all because of that snake.

Zong Jinghao's firm gaze fell on Lin Xinyan. Her cheeks—despite looking full and bright—were slightly sunken. There were dark circles under her eyes, and her arms looked frail and malnourished. The corners of his lips tilted downwards.

Was this the marriage his mother had arranged for him? It doesn't matter. It wasn't as if he could go back on his mother's words. That was the reason why he hid the fact that the poison had been dispelled, wanting to see if the Lin family could go back on their word.

Who would've thought that they wouldn't?

His expression had turned gloomy. Assuming that the man wasn't satisfied with her, Lin Guoan quickly butted in, "She's still young, Young Master. I'm sure that by the time she'd grow, she'd turn into a beauty."

A beauty? Was the man already selling his daughter? That was one of the firsts. Zong Jinghao sneered in his heart. There was something off about this arrangement, and he was going to find out what.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Suddenly, his lips curled upwards. "A snake had bitten me, and its poison had already spread," he slowly said. "I'm unable to walk, and as such, I won't be able to perform my duties—"

"I don't mind," she answered immediately.

Lin Guoan had already promised her that as long as she married into the Zong family, he'd return her mother's dowry. Even if she got married on that day and divorced on the next, she'd still agree.

Only then did she understand the true meaning of his little 'excuse'. Zong Jinghao could clearly stand up and move around, but because of that woman, he didn't want to fulfill his promise. He had gone through these crazy lengths just to get the Lin family to go back on their words.

He may have failed to realize how willing Lin Guoan was in sacrificing his estranged daughter.

As if he had read her thoughts, his narrowed eyes fell on her frame.

Lin Xinyan stood still, feeling the chills rush down her spine. There was confusion in his gaze, and she could feel the bitterness swirling inside of her. It wasn't as if she was willing to marry him either—not

because of his physical state, but because she didn't love him. However, love was overrated.

Taking back what she had lost was her priority, and if that demanded some sacrifices—so be it.

Pursing her lips, she smiled. "We had been engaged ever since we were kids," she slowly said. "No matter what happens, I'll marry you."

His gaze darkened. She really knew how to speak.

Unaware of what was going on, Lin Guoan followed up with a question, "This wedding—"

"Of course. As this arrangement had been planned by both our parents, it would be ridiculous to break it, wouldn't it?" Zong Jinghao's expression changed drastically. Calmly glancing up at the older man, he slowly nodded. "Let's follow through with it."

It was obvious that he was dissatisfied with the marriage.

He had only agreed to it because of a promise his mother had made.

"That's fine." Lin Guoan suppressed a smile. Now, he had finally hit two birds with one stone. Not only did he lose nothing, but he gained everything. Despite the young man's condition, being related to the Zong family was a dream anyone could've asked for.

Although the Lin family was rich, they were incomparable to the Zong family. Comparing the two would be like comparing a shark to a shrimp.

It was that far out!

"I already have someone to prepare for our dinner." Lin Guoan clasped his hands. "Why don't you stay over to eat?"

Zong Jinghao frowned. If anything, the man's flattery only disgust him even more.

"No need, I still have other things to take care of." As Zong Jinghao passed by Lin Xinyan's small frame, he quickly signaled Guan Jin to stop. Squinting his eyes, he turned to her. "Is Miss Lin free?"

#### C4 A Marriage Without a Ceremony

Even though he had phrased it as a question, it was a request that no one could reject. After all, when you're asked by Zong Jinghao himself, you'd be crazy if you wouldn't agree to it.

Lin Xinyan knew this herself as she nodded. Besides, the man looked like he wanted to say something to her.

And she also wanted to talk to him.

As they were leaving, Lin Guoan warned, "Know your limits."

The last thing they needed was for Lin Xinyan to offend him right before the wedding. It was obvious enough that Zong Jinghao wasn't satisfied with her from the moment they met, but that didn't really matter. As long as the wedding processions were set forth, then he'd finally be able to reap the benefits.

The catch was already made, and he didn't want her to lose the great fish.

Lin Xinyan followed behind Guan Jin, pretending not to have heard a word.

Even then, she couldn't help but think back to his confidence. Did he really think that after she had married into the Zong family that she'd assist him? What reason would he have against her?

Because he was her father?

She resisted the urge to snort. The man had already lost the privilege of calling her daughter the moment he left them. If she had lived without a father for the last eight years, then she could make do with this.

She had been so lost in her thoughts that her head had knocked against the hard wall. Suddenly, everything reverted back to her, and she jerked up, only to see that the impeccable face was staring down at her.

He had already stood up.

Guess she was right after all.

Even then, the knowledge of his lies still didn't soothe her anxiety. Lin Xinyan could feel her hands growing limp from the glare, and she resisted the urge to tremble. "You did it on purpose." Her tone was neither meek nor accusatory, but simply factual.

His eyes narrowed. "I'm a cripple, yet you wanted to marry me. Why? Do you like my money? Do you like the privilege that comes with it?" His voice was a mix of displeasure and annoyance as if he was already wasting his time from the minute he laid eyes on her.

Lin Xinyan twisted her wrists at his words. His stare was like a hand to her neck—gradually getting tighter with every second he watched. Despite this, she pretended to be calm and composed. "Sure," she said, her voice dripping with sarcasm. "When I was two years old, I knew all about the benefits of entering into this marriage. That's why I asked both our mothers to engage us. You've seen right through me, Mr. Zong."

There was a pause. "I had been two years old then. You, however, were ten. Do you really think that I had a thing for older men?"

Zong Jinghao suppressed a sneer. From the moment he had seen her, he knew that she wasn't as easy to deal with. But perhaps he had underestimated her chatter.

She was very talkative.

And from the way she had phrased her words—was she turning it on him?

The atmosphere felt suffocating all around them.

As soon as their gazes met, sparks flew in all directions. Neither one of them was willing to back down, and as they continued to glare at each other, they realized that they may have finally met their match.

Lin Xinyan clenched her fists. The only reason that she had married into the Zong family was that Lin Guoan had already promised her that he'd return her mother's dowry.

Not wanting to be enemies with this man, her tone immediately softened. "Look, Mr. Zong, I know you don't want to marry me, but there may be a way we can both get what we want."

She deliberately stopped to glance at Zong Jinghao's expression. The darkness of his face had cleared slightly, and she continued,

"So how about we make a deal?" The last thing she wanted was to be associated with the Zong family. The only reason she had agreed to it in the first place was that it provided an avenue for her to get everything back herself.



He chuckled. "A deal with me? What could I possibly want?"

"I know you're pretending to be a cripple to make the Lin family back out on this arrangement. Since that didn't work, perhaps you'd need someone by your side—someone who doesn't care about any of this." Her hands were already growing clammy. "I just need one thing in return."

This piqued Zong Jinghao's interest.

"What do you want?" Like any deal, there must be a condition.

"We'll be married for a month, then I'll divorce you—as simple as that." That was enough, wasn't it? As soon as she had gotten hold of her mother's dowry, she'd finally be able to part ways with him.

"That's the deal you're willing to discuss with me?" The corners of his lips twitched downwards.

"Our mothers were the ones who agreed to this, so it's only fair that we follow through with it—to show respect. However, as our personalities may contradict each other, it's only best that we get divorced, wouldn't it? Plus, it's best that we don't spend our whole lives with someone we don't like and—"

Seeing his eyes flicker, she slowed down. "I also think that you have someone else that you like. That's why you've gone through all this trouble just to get my family to back out, right?"

"I didn't realize you were so inquisitive." Zong Jinghao's face darkened.

Although nothing was set yet, he had wanted to marry Bai Zhuwei. After everything that she had done for him, it was only time that he made things right for the both of them.

But they weren't done yet. "What benefits would you be getting from the month?"

He doubted that she was thinking this up only for his sake.

Her heart tightened. Could she say that she was thinking of her mother's dowry? No...if she had said it—it would just make everything too personal. This was her burden to bear.

But if she told him that she had none, he wouldn't believe her.

"My mom values this engagement, and she—she's not in good health lately. I just don't want to disappoint her." As she spoke, her gaze shifted slightly. Her mother had practically begged her to discontinue the engagement.

"Really?" Zong Jinghao's voice held skepticism and mistrust as if he could already see right through her.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

There was a reason why the man was the most feared man in the city. His stare was enough to push anyone to run for the hills. Hell, if she wasn't so determined in getting what she had wanted, she would've done the same. Just as he was about to say something, his phone rang.

He glanced at her before taking out his cell phone. Immediately, his face softened, but just as he was about to turn around and answer it, he glanced back at her. "As we're only married for a month, it's fair that we don't have a ceremony."

"That's fine with me."

On August 12, Guan Jin came to pick her up.

It was the day she'd finally be known as Mrs. Zong. Yet, there weren't any grand ceremonies or even a beautiful wedding. Just a marriage certificate sat on her lap—proof to ensure that she hadn't been dreaming.

Lin Xinyan wasn't discouraged. After all, from the moment she had entered into this marriage, she already knew that this was nothing more than a transaction—for her and him.

If it weren't for the fact that their mothers had known each other, then they wouldn't have met at all.

Soon, the car stopped in front of the villa.

It was beautiful. Although the Lin Family's villa was already large and elegant, there was something about the stone buildings before her that created a more majestic feel. It was like entering a castle—with an extremely large patch of green right at the front gates.

"You may go in, Miss." He made a gesture towards the door.

The man was neither warm nor helpful towards her. If anything, he acted as if she was just another stranger on his list. He must've already known that the marriage between her and Jinghao was nothing more than to fulfill an arrangement.

To him, she wasn't the real Young Mistress of the Zong family. That spot had already been filled by another woman.

Although the mansion was huge, it wasn't crowded with maids and assistants. In fact, there was only one maid in the quarters. As such, as soon as she had entered the living room, he had already upped and left.

Lin Xinyan turned to the older woman standing right in front of her. "...hello."

"I'm Nanny Yu, the one who had taken care of him ever since he was little." A slow smile threaded across her lips as she led her up to her room. "Welcome to the Young Master's residence. If you need anything, please let me know."

One month wasn't a long time, and she had already brought all her daily necessities with her. Not wanting to give her any trouble, she simply smiled and nodded. "Okay."

Nanny Yu was just about to leave when something held her back. At Lin Xinyan's questioning gaze, she sighed. "It's possible that Young Master wouldn't be back for the night. Today is Miss Bai's birthday."

Although they didn't have a formal wedding, she was still his wife by name. After all, today was the first day of their union, yet he had accompanied another woman for the night. Nanny Yu couldn't help but pity her. Lin Xinyan had gotten married, only to be treated so coldly on her first night. If he had disregarded her so quickly, what more for in the future?

#### C5 Our Wedding Night

Despite being under Nanny Yu's piteous gaze, Lin Xinyan could only smile in response. What else she could do but sit and nod? It wasn't as if she had the right to do anything around here.

Besides they were only going through with the deal that they had agreed upon. This was nothing more than a transaction that they would like to see finished. She gazed up at the ceiling.

Plus, she felt more at ease knowing that he wasn't there.

It was only after Lin Xinyan had entered the room did she notice the furnishings in the bedroom. It was minimalist—far from what she had expected from such a grand mansion. There was an elegant feel to everything—from the plain wallpapers to the hardwood floors.

"This is the Young Master's bedroom." As they were already married, it was fair that they'd sleep together.

She opened her mouth, only to be left speechless. Of course, it wasn't as if she should ask the nanny to switch rooms. In her eyes, they were already husband and wife. Resigned, she could only nod in agreement.

It was the first night she had slept in such a strange place, so it was hard for her to get some sleep. Leaning against her headboard, she scanned the web page on her phone, trying to find a job. If she wanted to take care of her mother and give her baby a proper future, then it was only right that she start looking for an opportunity.

"Huh?"

Lin Xinyan blinked before narrowing her eyes at the screen. Although it wasn't strange to see a company recruiting for translators, she wasn't expecting for there to be a company that required translators from the A Nation.

That was the same country that Lin Guoan had sent her to. Not only was it located in the tropics, but there weren't many people in the world who would bother even learning the language. Why would they when they could learn more useful languages from developed nations?

The wages were good too.

Seeing as she had nothing to lose, she left her personal information and moved on to the next job ad.

A few minutes had passed and she finally placed her phone on her bedside. It was weird. A few days ago, she was in the hospital—desperately trying to save her mother and brother. And now, she was here.

**Moonlight poured into the windowsill, highlighting her serene face. The sheets wrapped around her body were smooth and silky—like a cot, pushing her to sleep.**

**Lin Xinyan had fallen asleep unknowingly. As she did, a beam of white light flashed across the yard as a Maybach stepped in.**

**The door opened, and a strong figure stepped out of the car. Zong Jinghao strode into the house, nodding when Nanny Yu had greeted him on his arrival. The stiffness of his arms was nowhere to be seen as he stumbled across the room.**

**As soon as he reached his kitchen, he immediately poured himself a cup of water, tugging his collar in annoyance. His pupils were dilated, and his cheeks were tinged red. Not being able to help himself anymore, he threw his head back and chugged the glass down, desperately trying to ease the burning sensation in his throat. It was Bai Zhuwei's birthday, so he had drunk a few more glasses of wine.**

**Although he was quite good at drinking, this was far more than what he had expected.**

**Throwing his sofa onto the couch, he didn't even bother to do anything else as he headed straight towards his bedroom.**

**The bedroom was dark, but that didn't bother him. After all, he was already familiar with this villa, given that this was also his childhood home. Not bothering to check his surroundings, he found his way to his side of the bed.**

**Don't want to watch ads?**

**Get premium to remove ads**

He laid down.

Lin Xinyan felt the mattress dipping beside her while she was asleep, but she immediately turned around and buried herself deeper into the cushions. Not bothered by it, she was immediately consumed with darkness once again.

The next day, however, was a different story.

Wisps of light soared through the small cracks from the curtains, illuminating the entire room. The birds chirped overhead. The minimalistic designs looked even cleaner under the bright light.

It was a peaceful sight. On the bed, a woman was curled up in the crook of the man's arm. The two of them were sleeping soundly—unaffected by the things happening all around them.

They looked like a pair of sweet lovers.

Zong Jinghao shifted slightly before opening his eyes. Immediately, the bright light streamed across his face, and he couldn't help but squint in annoyance. He could already feel the hangover taking effect from the incessant pounding in his head.

Turning his head, he stared at the woman in his arms.

Lin Xinyan's head was on his chest. Her dark hair was scattered all around her, like a silky waterfall falling across his arms. Her cheeks were pale with a tinge of red, and her eyelashes were curled up like the wings of a butterfly. Her pink lips were slightly parted as she exhaled.

His gaze moved downwards—from her slender neck, her delicate collarbone, to her heaving chest. She had learned to the side, so he could vaguely see the roundness of her breasts.

There was something about the way she laid there that made him feel so entranced.

His Adam's apple rolled downwards. He had never felt this type of impulse towards Bai Zhuwei, yet this woman already elicited a reaction from him even when he had only seen her twice!

His eyebrows furrowed, obviously displeased from the way his body was reacting to her, but he couldn't find it in himself to turn away.

Lin Xinyan was unaware of the conflict in his heart as she twitched and stirred. In her dreams, she was in the great lands of Africa. She was staring down a ferocious lion who wanted. take her head.

Only when the mammal had gotten a hold of her arm did she finally wake up.

However, the moment she glanced up, she found herself wishing that she was back in the lion's den instead. She froze as soon as she spotted a pair of dark eyes staring at her face.

Her mind went blank.

A few seconds later, she immediately jumped up to the side of the bed and wrapped the blanket around her chest. "You!" she accused, tightening the sheets around her top. "Why are you in my bed?"

In an instant, the man withdrew his gaze and slowly lifted the blanket. "This is my bed."

"But..." Not knowing how else she should defend against the claim, she immediately stopped herself and swallowed her words entirely. She glanced at him one last time before turning away.

"I thought you were celebrating your girlfriend's birthday. Why did you come back so early?" Getting up, she stood at the other side of the room—not wanting to get any closer.



Even then, she couldn't help but gaze at him curiously.

Nanny Yu had said that he wouldn't be back in the evening. That was why she wasn't expecting that he'd come home at night and went straight to sleep. Hell, from how relaxed she was, she wasn't even aware that he had entered the room.

They had actually slept together...on the same bed.

Thinking of how she had woken up in his arms, her cheeks flushed dark red.

Her heart skipped a beat.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

There was a short pause as Zong Jinghao slowly unbuttoned his shirt. He went straight to sleep last night that he still had a stench of alcohol. He glanced at the woman standing by the side of the bed, feeling amused by her helpless expression. The corners of his lips curved upwards. "Aren't we supposed to celebrate our wedding night?"

"I..."

They weren't even husband and wife!

In response, he slowly took off his shirt.

Lin Xinyan was just turning her head when she saw that the man had already taken off his clothes. The redness on her cheeks darkened even further, and she resisted the urge to squeak.

Ever since that night, she had been particularly averse to men. The last thing she wanted was to come in close contact with them—especially him, for that matter.

"I'll go first."

Not knowing what else to say, she sprinted out of the bedroom.

Zong Jinghao didn't pay any attention to her absence as he unbuckled his belt and entered the bedroom.

The first thing he needed was a shower.

The sound of water dripping against the tiles echoed across the bathroom. About half an hour later, the stench of alcohol was slowly replaced with the fragrant smell of shower gel and aftershave. He wrapped a white bathrobe around his slender figure, showcasing his tanned skin and firm muscles. Just the sight of his casual figure was enough to get him on the covers of Vogue.

Walking over to his wardrobe, he opened it up, only to be distracted by the little bag right under his shelf. There was a sunflower sticker printed on the fabric, and it was something he couldn't even recognize.

Was it hers? It was printed with flowers and stickers—how could she be so childish?

And she didn't even ask for his permission to put her things in the closet.

Frowning, Zong Jinghao pulled out his clothes and put them on, accidentally knocking off her bag in the process.

The zipper suddenly unzipped wide open, and all of the contents fell out. From her packed clothes to all the simple necessities like toothpaste, toothbrush, and even some shampoo.

He was just about to pick it up when he saw something else.

Lin Xinyan, Woman, 18, Early Pregnancy, 6 Weeks.

His eyes narrowed. She's pregnant?

C6 Mutual Dependence

Zong Jinghao stared at the paper for a long time, trying to see if he had read it wrong. However, every time he glanced at the scrawled words, the shadow upon his face darkened even more. Different thoughts ran through his mind. Did she have any ulterior motives? What did she plan to do with a child?

While the bedroom was reeking with mistrust and coldness, the living room was a different matter. Nanny Yu had already woken up the prepare breakfast. The light streamed through the windows as she hummed enthusiastically.

Glancing at the side, she saw Lin Xinyan sitting alone on the sofa. She was still in her pajamas. "Did you sleep well, Miss?" A small smile threaded across her lips.

At first, she had initially thought that Zong Jinghao wouldn't come back last night, assuming that he'd be spending the hours with Bai Zhuwei. However, upon hearing the movement a few hours ago, she couldn't help but go up to take a look, only to see that her boss had really come back last night. What's more, was that he slept in his room—on the same bed that Lin Xinyan was sleeping in.

This was the wife that Madame had arranged for the Young Master to marry, so Nanny Yu was

naturally ecstatic with the sudden development. 'Maybe they have hope after all,' she thought, almost as if he was reassuring herself.

While the older woman was more than ready to hear the details, Lin Xinyan was the complete opposite.

Stiffening, she withdrew even more. "It was a good sleep." At least, until she realized what had happened in the morning.

"Then hurry up and change your clothes," Nanny Yu ordered kindly. "I'll be preparing breakfast now. We'll be eating in a bit."

Right. Change clothes. Glancing at her pajamas, she gazed at the door of the Master Bedroom, which was just right across the stairs. The clothes she had brought were still in that room.

He should be dressed by now, right?

Standing up, Lin Xinyan walked towards the bedroom before knocking on the door.

There was no response.

She knocked again, and still, no one answered.

"I...Hello?" Blinking, she grasped the handle and pried the door open. Luckily, it wasn't locked on the inside so she was able to push it easily. "Are you dressed? Nanny Yu's preparing breakfast, so—"

However, as soon as the door was pushed open, she felt as if she was being drowned under the cold, December air. Her body immediately trembled, and her hands shook from the sudden premonition.

The man on the edge of the bed was glaring coldly at a piece of paper.

That paper —

She didn't even need to see what was in his hand to know what it was. Glancing at the mess on the floor, she stomped inside and snatched it out of his fingertips. "Were you spying on me?" she demanded. "Don't you have any respect for other people's privacy?"

Immediately, the coldness that had once radiated around the piece of paper was no directed at her.

The corners of his lips inched up into a mocking smile. "Privacy?"

Zong Jinghao's smile was a far more frightening sight than his anger. "You've got a bastard in your stomach, and you're talking about privacy? Who the hell are you trying to fool?"

"Look, I..." she tried to explain, wanted to say what was on her mind, but all the words were caught up in her throat. Now, all she could do was stare and choke.

As if he had sensed her hesitation, he immediately stood up and strode towards her. He looked unhurried, like an animal stalking his prey. Dark clouds shadowed in his eyes as he glared down at her. "What are you planning?"

Had she wanted to trick him into becoming a father?

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Was the deal all just an act?

The more he thought about it, the darker his expression had become.

"I—I didn't mean to hide it from you." Her bottom lips trembled as she continued to retreat from him. Her hand went to her stomach, afraid that he'd do something to the child. "We were only planning to be together for a month, so I didn't bother to say it. I didn't have any other purpose."

"Are you sure about that?"

"Yes. I mean, how can I get away with that sort of thing?" Her back had hit against the wall now, and she forced herself to meet his harsh gaze. "If I had any sort of thoughts, you would've already made sure that I die a horrible death. If I'm truly deceiving you...do you think I'll be able to live to see tomorrow?"

Although her movements were small, Zong Jinghao still noticed the way her hand immediately wrapped around her abdomen.

"When did you know?" His gaze was still fixed on her face.

There was no way that he'd believe her that easily.

But that didn't mean that Lin Xinyan was going to give up either. The hands on her stomach clenched into fists. Although the child was unexpected to her, he was still a blood relative. After losing her brother, she wasn't planning on giving him up.

In the future, the three of them could only depend on each other to survive.

Her thoughts drifted to what had happened that night, and she couldn't help but shiver in response. "I—I just found out a few days ago," she stuttered. Her palms were already sweaty from the sudden integration.

She couldn't even tell Zhuang Zijin about what had happened, afraid of what her mother would do when she discovered it.

What she didn't expect was that the hidden paper would cause such a commotion.

Zong Jinghao sneered.

She was only eighteen years old, yet she...

What the hell had she been doing all her life?

At the thought, Zong Jinghao's face shifted into a sneer as he gripped the paper even more. "If there's been a slip-up this month, or if I find out that you're causing any trouble, I will—"

"I'll behave," she hurriedly promised. "If I do anything out of the line, then you can punish me as you please."

Even if she couldn't gain his trust, the least she could do is to get him to understand that she had absolutely no motives when it came to her child.

Lin Xinyan was already in a predicament, to begin with. If she garnered more enemies in this stay, it would be too disadvantageous for her to get everything back. The least she could do is have someone by her side.

He stared at her for a long time, as if trying to judge the credibility of her words.

However, before he could even respond, Nanny Yu has already called out. "Breakfast is ready!"

Retracting his gaze, he turned away. "Clean up the floor."

He left without saying another word.

When he finally stepped right out the door, Lin Xinyan suddenly felt the urge to collapse onto the hardwood. Her hands clasped around the cupboard behind her as she struggled to steady herself. Crouching down, she slowly picked up the clothes that were scattered all over the ground.

Glancing at the paper in her hands, the tears started to fall, and she sniffled.

No. She mustn't cry. She couldn't cry. This was a sign of weakness, and she wasn't weak. She couldn't be.

Her mother and baby still needed her.

"You can do this, Xinyan," she murmured to herself as she folded the paper and shoved it into her bag. Without another word, she changed into her clothes and headed out.

There was no one else in the dining room. All she could see was an empty coffee cup and an empty plate. He must've already finished eating at this point. Relief flooded her chest as she sat down.

Just being with the man was already giving her an anxiety attack.



Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Not knowing what else to do, she started to eat.

Nanny Yu didn't bother her after that, so after she was finished with her breakfast, she immediately went out into the city. She had promised Zhuang Zijin that she'd come and visit her after the wedding procession. Plus, she was afraid that her mother would worry about her if she didn't come home immediately after that.

She was right. As soon as Lin Xinyan entered the household, she was immediately pulled into Zhuang Zijin's embrace. "The Young Master of the Zong family—"

"He's nice," she said harshly, ending the trail of concern. "I've already told you. You shouldn't worry about me too much.

Flinching from her tone of voice, the older woman sighed. It seemed that her daughter had truly grown up after all of these years. "I'm just saying this because I care about you."

She was afraid that the man wouldn't be good for her daughter.

Lin Xinyan tightened her hug. Burying her head into her mother's shoulders, she shook her head. After what had happened with Zong Jinghao, she didn't need another confrontation.

"Mom, I'm sorry. It has just been a long day," she murmured. "I didn't mean to—"

"I know, dear. I don't blame you." She squeezed her shoulders. "If you're tired, then go to sleep, okay?"

"I...Thank you." It was weird. Lin Xinyan had just woken up, and now she already felt exhausted. Was this what it felt like to be pregnant? As soon as she returned to her room, she had already fallen asleep.

At noon, Zhuang Zijin knocked on her door. "Lunch is ready."

"I already made you your favorite fish," she added as they walked out of the bedroom.

After everything that her daughter had been through, she couldn't help but feel guilty. Not only couldn't she give her a good childhood, but she had also allowed that Lin Xinyan suffered with her. She had never deserved this.

The young woman gazed at the beautiful red dish sitting on the plate. In the past, she would've immediately devoured the fish in the flesh. However, as soon as she was about to dig in, the sweet smell made her stomach lurch violently. No.

She clasped her mouth and stood up.

"Xinyan."

Not having the time to explain, she covered her mouth with her hands and rushed into the bathroom.

Zhuang Zijin followed worriedly. She had been a very experienced woman, so she could already see through her daughter's actions that something was up. However, she couldn't find it in herself to believe it. After all, her daughter had always been conservative and honest...She never had a boyfriend!

However, as soon as the sight had befallen her, even she couldn't help but tremble. "Xinyan, what happened?"

Lin Xinyan couldn't help but stiffen as she gripped the edges of the washbasin. As she had already decided to have this child, there was no point in hiding from her mother anymore.

Turning to the older woman, she gulped.

"Mom, I'm pregnant."

"I...but you're..." Zhuang Zijin stumbled back in disbelief. Her daughter was only eighteen, and now she was.... pregnant?

**C7 Painless Abortion**

"What happened?" Zhuang Zijin stared at the stomach for a long time before a thought finally occurred to her. Not wanting it to be true, she forced herself to look into her daughter's eyes. "This child—did someone pay you to—"

After all, she wasn't stupid. After the car accident, her hospital expenses and her son's funeral expenses cost them a lot of money. She had initially thought that they weren't able to pay it off until her daughter showed up with a suitcase filled with cash—saying that it was the perpetrator's compensation.

Lin Xinyan stayed silent.

However, that was the only response that she needed. "How could you have done such a thing?" Zhuang Zijin trembled as she struggled to point at her. "How could you have betrayed yourself too—"

Not knowing what else to do, she grabbed ahold of her wrist. "You can't have this child! Come with me to the hospital right now!"

"What? But mom!" No matter how much she tried, she couldn't break free from her hold.

"If you give birth to that bastard's child, what would your life become?" Her daughter was already married, and it wasn't just to anyone. He was the most powerful man in the city. If anyone were to know about this, she'd already be ridiculed.

"But, mom, please—I want to give birth to this child. Let me..."

Lin Xinyan had begged her. She even tried pushing the older woman away. However, even as they were mere steps away from the hospital, Zhuang Zijin wouldn't even budge. Silent tears fell down her cheeks.

Now, she had no other choice.

If she wouldn't go through with the process, then she'd threaten both of their lives.

What other choice did she have? Even if she was adamant about having the baby, her mother wouldn't have agreed. "Wait here for your appointment," Zhuang Zijin had warned. "It will just be a painless abortion, so you should be fine."

The weight of her stomach became much heavier, and she sniffled.

What was wrong with the world?

"Hao, I'm fine. You shouldn't be so nervous, you know—it's just a little burn." From afar, a perfect couple stood in the midst. Bai Zhuwei was wearing a tight black dress that highlighted her curves and hips. Zong Jinghao had his sleeves rolled up, revealing his muscled arms.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

"A burn could leave a scar if it isn't properly treated," he warned.

"If it scarred, would you hate me?"

"Nonsense!"

Of course. The man she loved wasn't a shallow person.

Lin Xinyan turned her head from the familiar voices.

There, she could see Bai Zhuwei and Zong Jinghao striding across the hallway. They were too busy conversing with each other that they couldn't even be bothered to notice the world around them.

They looked like a perfect couple.

It made her look even more like a clown. No wonder Zong Jinghao was disgusted with her. Not only had she lost her chastity at such a young age, but she had even borne that man a child. Hell, she didn't even know who the father was.

Suddenly, a call snapped her out of her reverie.

"Next patient." The operation door opened, and the nurse stood by the doorway. Behind her was another young woman, holding her stomach. "I thought it was painless. Why the hell was it so painful?" A shiver shot down Lin Xinyan's spine.

From the sound, Zong Jinghao turned to the side to see a familiar young woman waiting on the benches. When she stood in front of him, she acted as if she'd risk her life for the child. And now, she was planning to get rid of it? How the tables have turned.

He sneered.

Bai Zhuwei followed his gaze and looked over.

The moment she saw Lin Xinyan, a sense of familiarity rushed towards her, but she just couldn't pinpoint where she had seen her before. Glancing up at the man beside her, she tugged on his sleeves. "Do you know her?"

"No." Immediately, he withdrew his gaze.

He had already given her a lot of labels in his heart. She was just eighteen years old, and she figured out a way to knock herself up. She had professed how much she loved her kid, only to abort him in the next.

He didn't have time for hypocrites.

On the other side of the room, Lin Xinyan listened to the nurse droning on the protocols. She had only looked up when the woman had asked her a question, "Have you already thought it through?"

"I've thought it through." Did she really have any other choice?

"Then follow me in."

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

She lowered her head, not wanting to look at anyone as she followed the nurse into the operating room. She was unaware of the cold atmosphere that she had left behind as soon as the operation doors were closed.

Bai Zhuwei, however, felt it easily. Sensing the darkness that had shadowed over his expression, she slowly placed a hand on his upper arm. "Hao, are you...are you okay?" she asked hesitantly.

He didn't answer her question as he turned back. "Let's go."

She held his hand tighter as they walked away, but even then, she couldn't help but glance over at the closed door of the operating room. From his reaction, it didn't seem like he didn't know her. But after following him for so long, there had never been a woman by his side.

So, who was she?

And why was he so angry?

"Hao, the girl just now ..."

Zong Jinghao simply wrapped her arm around her waist and looked away. "You don't need to worry about insignificant people."

"I...of course." Although she was curious, Bai Zhuwei kept her mouth shut and moved on. After all, if he said that she wasn't significant, then who was she to worry about such a thing?

In the operating room, Lin Xinyan shivered at the sight of the cold instruments lying on the tray beside her. It was the wake-up call that she needed. "No," she murmured to herself, backing away. She couldn't do this. She couldn't abandon her child.

"Miss. I need you to lie down." The doctor hovered over her, and she immediately withdrew from their gazes.

"I...no!" Not knowing what to do, she turned her head and ran.

Lin Xinyan had sprinted too fast that she didn't even notice everything around her. All she wanted was to get away from it all, from the surgical tray, from the doctor, from the nurse, and even from her mother. Suddenly, she felt herself crashing into someone else.

"I-I'm so sorry—"

"Lin Xinyan?" He Ruize gazed at her. Unsure if it was really her, he called out her name.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Report

Share

Read next chapter

Comments



|

Enter your comment here...

### C8 What Do You Want Me to Say?

Lin Xinyan slowly raised her head from the exclamation. However, when she realized who was calling her, she visibly relaxed. "Doctor He," she exclaimed. "It's you."

Behind him stood a group of people. All of them sported the usual white coats that were expected of a doctor. Blinking, she glanced back at the man in front of him. "...why are you here?"

When her brother had been diagnosed with autism, He Ruize was the one who had assisted him through that process. During those times, they had gotten to know each other.

A warm smile slipped into his lips, but before he could even answer, the hospital's president immediately interrupted, "Doctor He is here to work as our lecturer in the autism spectrum."

Of course, the man was a famous psychiatrist back in the A Nation. Not only was he known for his marvelous job, but he was also known for his achievements in the autism spectrum.

"What about you? What are you doing here?" Turning his attention back at her, the corners of his lips twitched downwards. "Are you feeling okay?"

"I..." At the sound of his voice, she was immediately reminded of the operation table and the dozen of tools crowding her view. She shuddered involuntarily, staggering backward.

"Xinyan!" Before she could calm herself, she could already hear her mother's words echoing across the hall as she raced right after her. Zhuang Zijin was waving a checklist in her hand. As soon as she

heard the news from the nurse, she didn't waste any time running after her.

"I...Mom..." Her nose was already feeling sore.

He Ruize immediately turned to the dean beside him. "Go back first. I have something else that I need to do."

"Of course. We will not disturb you any longer." The president bowed his head before ushering his doctors to the other side of the corridor. "I sincerely wish that you work in our hospital. If you have any request or specifications, we will do our best to extend our welcome to them."

"I will consider it."

Once they were gone, He Ruize turned to the mother-and-daughter duo. "Aunty, why don't we go outside and talk about it? This place isn't suitable for these types of conversations." After all, with people coming in and out of the hospital, who knows what they'd here?

Zhuang Zijin also knew who he was. If it weren't for him, she wouldn't have gathered enough money to treat her son. He was the one who had assisted her throughout all the processes.

That was why she treated him with the utmost respect.

"I...yes..." The older woman continued to grip on her daughter's wrist, afraid that she'd run away again.

However, as they were walking out of the hospital, Lin Xinyan immediately knelt in front of Zhuang Zijin. Ignorant of the crowds of people, she simply stared up at her mother. "Please," she begged. "Xin Qi had just passed, and he's...I just want them to stay with me."

Who's staying with her? He Ruize frowned, glancing at the way she had wrapped her arm around her abdomen. Suddenly, everything came falling into place.

He looked at the checklist in the older woman's hands and knew that she was pregnant.

But how?

A part of him wanted to know what was going on, but now wasn't the right time to ask. After all, they had far bigger fish to fry.

Tears rolled down Lin Xinyan's cheeks as she stared up at her. Even when her little brother had died, she never really broke down in front of Zhuang Zijin. In fact, this was the only time she had ever really shown her true feelings.

But if she did follow through with giving birth to the child, would there still be a future left for her to claim?

Knowing that it may be difficult for her to give it all up, the older woman sighed and turned away. "Fine. It's up to you."

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Without another word, Zhuang Zijin walked out, suddenly feeling very uncomfortable with what had just transpired. Somehow, every time she glanced at her daughter, all she could feel was the itching amount of guilt piling onto her plate.

Lin Xinyan crouched down, hugging her knees. She desperately wanted to be brave, for her and her

child, but even she couldn't stop the tears from falling down her cheeks. She didn't want to cry, but it wasn't as if she could help it. All the pain and injuries she had sustained had accumulated.

He Ruize could only watch in discomfort. He had called them when he returned home, learning that they had also returned and that her brother had died in a car accident.

As to what sent them home, he didn't exactly know.

She had just been a teenager when they met, but if anything, she had always been so selfless when it came to taking care of her family. He Ruize squatted down, feeling his own chest ache at the sight.

Even when she had enough money to buy two meals, she'd sacrifice herself and give the two bowls to her mother and brother. She excused herself as to say she had already eaten.

She was so selfless.

He Ruize reached out to touch her head, but before he could, she immediately raised her head up to look at him. "Thank you for helping me in the past," she whispered. "I'll repay you someday—once everything settles down."

The hand stopped right above her head before settling back to his sides. "Idiot," he teased. "I volunteered to help, didn't I? You don't have to pay me back."

"You're kind, but I'll still remember either way."

That had always been the promise she'd say whenever they crossed paths.

"Then I'll remember it too." Helping her up, he looked around. "Where are you staying? I'll send you home."

"I...Right, my address." Worried as to where her mother had run off to, she immediately gave him the address to her residence. Her mother would've most likely headed home after the entire ordeal, so it was best to check it out.

The car ride was short and silent, but when she had finally arrived, He Ruize held her back. "Will you be coming back in the future?"

There was a short pause before she shook her head. "No."

She had come back with great difficulty, and the last thing that she wanted was to head back to that country empty-handed. After everything she had gone through, she'd be damned if she'd abandon her mother's dreams as well.

"Thank you for driving me back." Without another word, Lin Xinyan returned to her residences when she saw Zhuang Zijin sitting on a lone chair. The lights were turned off, but even then, she could still see the tears streaming down her cheeks. Her breath caught up with her throat.

Seeing her, she hurriedly wiped them away. "I'm fine," she stuttered out. "You should go back."

"Mom!"

"I'm sorry. I—I didn't take good care of you." Zhuang Zijin gazed at her lap. Her fingers were still twitching from all the commotion. "It's my fault that you're like this—that you're stuck with raising a child...if I hadn't..."

"Mom..." Lin Xinyan threw herself into her arms, and the two cried together, venting out all the pain in their hearts. It had been years, yet all the struggles were still as fresh as blood. It built so high up that none of them could take it anymore.

Only after they had calm down did she finally tell her about the agreement that she and Zong Jinghao had made. "You don't have to worry about him because we'd be divorced in a month," she said resolutely.

"A month? Just like that?"

Although she had first disapproved of the marriage, she had initially thought that the two of them would honor their vows and treat it with the utmost respect. But now that she knew her daughter was pregnant, maybe it was only best that they separate after that period of time.

She'd take care of her daughter right after.

Once everything had finally settled down, Lin Xinyan returned to her mansion later in the evening. Zong Jinghao still hadn't returned, so she took this time to take a walk around the villa's yard, taking in her surroundings.

When it was late, she finally returned to the living room and grabbed herself a bottle of water in the kitchen.

She had been so busy thinking about all the events that had transpired, that she didn't even notice the sound of the door opening and closing.

It was only a few seconds later after she had turned around did she see a tall silhouette walking into the household. Immediately after, another beautiful figure walked right behind him.

Lin Xinyan blinked.

She had never thought that Zong Jinghao would bring back the woman he loved this late at night.

When Bai Zhuwei glanced at the woman in his kitchen, she was also stunned to silence. Wasn't this the woman from the hospital that day as well? Why was she here?

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Raising her head, she glanced at Zong Jinghao. The darkness in his eyes had returned, and so did the coldness of his features. The deep-seated anger that had fueled him this morning had returned in full force.

He had been so angry earlier...

Was it because of her?

Bai Zhuwei pursed her lips. Maybe it's time that she kept a close eye on her as well.

"Right. I'll head back to my room first." Not wanting to play the third wheel for the lovebirds, she stepped towards the staircase, planning to retreat into one of the guest rooms.

"Wait." Zong Jinghao gazed at her with sunken eyes. She was wearing a pair of conservative pajamas with a white dress that reached her ankles. Even then, it still didn't disguise her pale arms and elusive collarbone. There was something about her that seemed pure and beautiful—like a nymph that had just gotten out of the waters.

However, when he thought about her actions a few hours back, disgust rose in his heart. "Bai Zhuwei's the master of this house besides me. Do you understand what I mean?"

Of course, she did. It wasn't like she had staked her claim in any furniture of this household. Was

there any other reason for him to emphasize this? Blinking, she slowly nodded.

"I know that. If that's it, I'll head back to my bedroom." Without another word, she turned around and took another step.

"Miss Lin," she called out. "I'm sorry."

Sorry?

Turning around, she saw the sincerity in Bai Zhuwei's features as she bowed her head. "Even though you and Hao are to be engaged, we've known each other longer than you. I—I'm really sorry for interfering." As if that wasn't enough, she bowed her head even lower. "If it weren't for you, the one who'd marry him today would be me. But I understand if—"

"Is that all you have to say?"

It wasn't as if she was mad about this arrangement. There wasn't a need to stay sorry.

And for her to emphasize her hold on the man...

"I just feel guilty that Hao wouldn't love you as much as he loves me. I made everything complicated, so I'm sorry," she still continued to apologize profusely, much to her annoyance.

"There really is no need."

Did she have to be like this in front of Zong Jinghao?



Lin Xinyan pursed her lips. There was just something off about the woman's personality.

"What's with your attitude?" Zong Jinghao squinted at her.

What's with her attitude? All she wanted was to go through with this month in peace. After obtaining everything she needed, she'd leave just like that. She pursed her lips.

There was no need for any of this nonsense.

Besides, after speaking, what response would they even like?

Not knowing what else to say, she cocked up an eyebrow. "What exactly do you want me to say?"

**C8 What Do You Want Me to Say?**

Lin Xinyan slowly raised her head from the exclamation. However, when she realized who was calling her, she visibly relaxed. "Doctor He," she exclaimed. "It's you."

Behind him stood a group of people. All of them sported the usual white coats that were expected of a doctor. Blinking, she glanced back at the man in front of him. "...why are you here?"

When her brother had been diagnosed with autism, He Ruize was the one who had assisted him through that process. During those times, they had gotten to know each other.

A warm smile slipped into his lips, but before he could even answer, the hospital's president immediately interrupted, "Doctor He is here to work as our lecturer in the autism spectrum."

Of course, the man was a famous psychiatrist back in the A Nation. Not only was he known for his marvelous job, but he was also known for his achievements in the autism spectrum.

"What about you? What are you doing here?" Turning his attention back at her, the corners of his lips twitched downwards. "Are you feeling okay?"

"I..." At the sound of his voice, she was immediately reminded of the operation table and the dozen of tools crowding her view. She shuddered involuntarily, staggering backward.

"Xinyan!" Before she could calm herself, she could already hear her mother's words echoing across the hall as she raced right after her. Zhuang Zijin was waving a checklist in her hand. As soon as she heard the news from the nurse, she didn't waste any time running after her.

"I...Mom..." Her nose was already feeling sore.

He Ruize immediately turned to the dean beside him. "Go back first. I have something else that I need to do."

"Of course. We will not disturb you any longer." The president bowed his head before ushering his doctors to the other side of the corridor. "I sincerely wish that you work in our hospital. If you have any request or specifications, we will do our best to extend our welcome to them."

"I will consider it."

Once they were gone, He Ruize turned to the mother-and-daughter duo. "Aunty, why don't we go outside and talk about it? This place isn't suitable for these types of conversations." After all, with people coming in and out of the hospital, who knows what they'd here?

Zhuang Zijin also knew who he was. If it weren't for him, she wouldn't have gathered enough money to treat her son. He was the one who had assisted her throughout all the processes.

That was why she treated him with the utmost respect.

"I...yes..." The older woman continued to grip on her daughter's wrist, afraid that she'd run away again.

However, as they were walking out of the hospital, Lin Xinyan immediately knelt in front of Zhuang Zijin. Ignorant of the crowds of people, she simply stared up at her mother. "Please," she begged. "Xin Qi had just passed, and he's...I just want them to stay with me."

Who's staying with her? He Ruize frowned, glancing at the way she had wrapped her arm around her abdomen. Suddenly, everything came falling into place.

He looked at the checklist in the older woman's hands and knew that she was pregnant.

But how?

A part of him wanted to know what was going on, but now wasn't the right time to ask. After all, they had far bigger fish to fry.

Tears rolled down Lin Xinyan's cheeks as she stared up at her. Even when her little brother had died, she never really broke down in front of Zhuang Zijin. In fact, this was the only time she had ever really shown her true feelings.

But if she did follow through with giving birth to the child, would there still be a future left for her to claim?

Knowing that it may be difficult for her to give it all up, the older woman sighed and turned away. "Fine. It's up to you."

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Without another word, Zhuang Zijin walked out, suddenly feeling very uncomfortable with what had just transpired. Somehow, every time she glanced at her daughter, all she could feel was the itching amount of guilt piling onto her plate.

Lin Xinyan crouched down, hugging her knees. She desperately wanted to be brave, for her and her child, but even she couldn't stop the tears from falling down her cheeks. She didn't want to cry, but it wasn't as if she could help it. All the pain and injuries she had sustained had accumulated.

He Ruize could only watch in discomfort. He had called them when he returned home, learning that they had also returned and that her brother had died in a car accident.

As to what sent them home, he didn't exactly know.

She had just been a teenager when they met, but if anything, she had always been so selfless when it came to taking care of her family. He Ruize squatted down, feeling his own chest ache at the sight.

Even when she had enough money to buy two meals, she'd sacrifice herself and give the two bowls to her mother and brother. She excused herself as to say she had already eaten.

She was so selfless.

He Ruize reached out to touch her head, but before he could, she immediately raised her head up to look at him. "Thank you for helping me in the past," she whispered. "I'll repay you someday—once everything settles down."

The hand stopped right above her head before settling back to his sides. "Idiot," he teased. "I

volunteered to help, didn't I? You don't have to pay me back."

"You're kind, but I'll still remember either way."

That had always been the promise she'd say whenever they crossed paths.

"Then I'll remember it too." Helping her up, he looked around. "Where are you staying? I'll send you home."

"I...Right, my address." Worried as to where her mother had run off to, she immediately gave him the address to her residence. Her mother would've most likely headed home after the entire ordeal, so it was best to check it out.

The car ride was short and silent, but when she had finally arrived, He Ruize held her back. "Will you be coming back in the future?"

There was a short pause before she shook her head. "No."

She had come back with great difficulty, and the last thing that she wanted was to head back to that country empty-handed. After everything she had gone through, she'd be damned if she'd abandon her mother's dreams as well.

"Thank you for driving me back." Without another word, Lin Xinyan returned to her residences when she saw Zhuang Zijin sitting on a lone chair. The lights were turned off, but even then, she could still see the tears streaming down her cheeks. Her breath caught up with her throat.

Seeing her, she hurriedly wiped them away. "I'm fine," she stuttered out. "You should go back."

"Mom!"

"I'm sorry. I—I didn't take good care of you." Zhuang Zijin gazed at her lap. Her fingers were still twitching from all the commotion. "It's my fault that you're like this—that you're stuck with raising a child...If I hadn't..."

"Mom..." Lin Xinyan threw herself into her arms, and the two cried together, venting out all the pain in their hearts. It had been years, yet all the struggles were still as fresh as blood. It built so high up that none of them could take it anymore.

Only after they had calm down did she finally tell her about the agreement that she and Zong Jinghao had made. "You don't have to worry about him because we'd be divorced in a month," she said resolutely.

"A month? Just like that?"

Although she had first disapproved of the marriage, she had initially thought that the two of them would honor their vows and treat it with the utmost respect. But now that she knew her daughter was pregnant, maybe it was only best that they separate after that period of time.

She'd take care of her daughter right after.

Once everything had finally settled down, Lin Xinyan returned to her mansion later in the evening. Zong Jinghao still hadn't returned, so she took this time to take a walk around the villa's yard, taking in her surroundings.

When it was late, she finally returned to the living room and grabbed herself a bottle of water in the kitchen.

She had been so busy thinking about all the events that had transpired, that she didn't even notice the sound of the door opening and closing.

It was only a few seconds later after she had turned around did she see a tall silhouette walking into the household. Immediately after, another beautiful figure walked right behind him.

Lin Xinyan blinked.

She had never thought that Zong Jinghao would bring back the woman he loved this late at night.

When Bai Zhuwei glanced at the woman in his kitchen, she was also stunned to silence. Wasn't this the woman from the hospital that day as well? Why was she here?

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Raising her head, she glanced at Zong Jinghao. The darkness in his eyes had returned, and so did the coldness of his features. The deep-seated anger that had fueled him this morning had returned in full force.

He had been so angry earlier...

Was it because of her?

Bai Zhuwei pursed her lips. Maybe it's time that she kept a close eye on her as well.

"Right. I'll head back to my room first." Not wanting to play the third wheel for the lovebirds, she stepped towards the staircase, planning to retreat into one of the guest rooms.

"Wait." Zong Jinghao gazed at her with sunken eyes. She was wearing a pair of conservative pajamas with a white dress that reached her ankles. Even then, it still didn't disguise her pale arms and elusive collarbone. There was something about her that seemed pure and beautiful—like a nymph that had just gotten out of the waters.

However, when he thought about her actions a few hours back, disgust rose in his heart. "Bai Zhuwei's the master of this house besides me. Do you understand what I mean?"

Of course, she did. It wasn't like she had staked her claim in any furniture of this household. Was there any other reason for him to emphasize this? Blinking, she slowly nodded.

"I know that. If that's it, I'll head back to my bedroom." Without another word, she turned around and took another step.

"Miss Lin," she called out. "I'm sorry."

Sorry?

Turning around, she saw the sincerity in Bai Zhuwei's features as she bowed her head. "Even though you and Hao are to be engaged, we've known each other longer than you. I—I'm really sorry for interfering." As if that wasn't enough, she bowed her head even lower. "If it weren't for you, the one who'd marry him today would be me. But I understand if—"

"Is that all you have to say?"

It wasn't as if she was mad about this arrangement. There wasn't a need to stay sorry.

And for her to emphasize her hold on the man...



"I just feel guilty that Hao wouldn't love you as much as he loves me. I made everything complicated, so I'm sorry," she still continued to apologize profusely, much to her annoyance.

"There really is no need."

Did she have to be like this in front of Zong Jinghao?

Lin Xinyan pursed her lips. There was just something off about the woman's personality.

"What's with your attitude?" Zong Jinghao squinted at her.

What's with her attitude? All she wanted was to go through with this month in peace. After obtaining everything she needed, she'd leave just like that. She pursed her lips.

There was no need for any of this nonsense.

Besides, after speaking, what response would they even like?

Not knowing what else to say, she cocked up an eyebrow. "What exactly do you want me to say?"

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

**Report**

**Share**

**Read next chapter**

**Comments**

|

**Enter your comment here...**

**C9 Applying for a Translator**

Lin Xinyan stared at the couple for a long time, yet they still hadn't uttered another word. Her fingers twitched, and her eyes suddenly shifted towards the floor. "Well?" she demanded again, but this time there was still no answer.

What the hell did they want her to say? 'Yeah, I'm also incredibly sorry. I shouldn't have broken your engagement with Zong Jinghao. It was all my fault.' Although she had initially felt pity for the woman he had chosen, Bai Zhuwei wasn't pitiful at all. In fact, the woman was far more manipulating than she had initially thought.

There were just so many shadows behind her smile. The hypocrisy was evident.

Besides, it wasn't as if she was the one who had proposed the engagement in the first place! His mother was the one who had asked them to marry each other on her death bed! Who's the one at fault now?

Zong Jinghao narrowed his eyes, and he took another step forward. The darkness in the atmosphere had returned in full force. The hairs at the back of her neck stood, and she staggered back. "Have I provoked you?" Lin Xinyan struggled to keep her voice as monotone as possible.

Just as he was about to say the word, Bai Zhuwei grabbed his arm. "It's my fault Hao," she immediately said. "I shouldn't have said anything. After all, her marrying you is not her fault either. I shouldn't even come here—I...I'll head back first."

"You're not the one who should leave." Without another word, he grabbed her wrist and pulled her upstairs.

A burst of joy fluttered in her heart. Although the man had already proposed that he'd be with her, he had never really shown any action that made him seem that he wanted it. She couldn't help but gaze at the way his jaw had clenched and his eyes had glazed over.

There was a change in his actions.

The corners of her lips twitched up. That was the only thing she could hold on to. After all, she wasn't the woman he had slept with that night, so the best she could do was grasp onto the man's heart when they have a real relationship.

Lin Xinyan didn't even look up. Instead, she turned around and headed back to her room.

It was also the time when Bai Zhuwei had turned her head to look at her retreating figure. The woman was slim, some might even say bony thin—with her shoulderblades well defined under that shirt. However, as she narrowed her vision, her eyes widened. Wasn't this the girl she had hired that night in A Nation?

Afraid of his life and her relationship with him, she overcame her jealousy and found a virgin for him to sleep with. That was the bottom line. When she had hired the girl, she didn't even want to look at her to see what kind of girl he had slept with.

But as the woman had hurried out of the hotel, Bai Zhuwei glanced and stared at her back. It was the same back she was seeing now.

No wonder she felt familiar in seeing Lin Xinyan again.

Because they had already met.

Could it be? Her cheeks flushed deep red as she recalled that night, trying to see if she had glanced at her face while she was handing the money, but she couldn't remember. The amount of alcohol she had drunk that night was immeasurable, so the rest of her memories were hazy and bleak.

No. Lin Xinyan can't stay for any longer.

If they spent more time together, he might have a clue as to what had happened that night. And she might be more keen in capturing his heart.

After all, if she could recognize the ripples on her back from just one look, Zong Jinghao might recognize her from a touch. Her hands trembled at the thought. No. That couldn't happen. She needed to do something.

As soon as they had entered the room, Bai Zhuwei didn't care about all the pretenses anymore. Hugging him from behind, she buried her head against him. "Hao," she whispered. "Let me be your woman again."

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

The words slipped past her lips before she could think about it, and she leaned forward. Just as she was doing so, the softness on his face had completely faded. It was soon replaced with something stoic.

Except for that night, he had no impulsive desire for her.

Before their lips could even touch, he immediately turned his head.

"It's getting late. Why don't you go to bed early?" Zong Jinghao pulled at his collar. There was something about the way that she had thrown herself at him that made him so annoyed. His fingers twitched.

What the hell was he so upset about? Was it because he had felt no impulse towards her? No feelings of desire? After what had happened that night, he would've expected that he'd finally yearn for her body. Yet, it seemed that hasn't happened.

Bai Zhuwei's arms fell to her sides, suddenly feeling wronged. "Hao, do you not—"

"Don't let your imagination run wild." He clasped onto her shoulders. "We'll rest here for the night."

Bai Zhuwei was a woman. She could be the most obstinate woman in the world, and she could still tell what he was trying to say. The man wasn't interested in her—that was enough confirmation. "I...okay." Her voice was barely even above a whisper as she trudged towards her side of the bed.

The cushions on the bed enveloped her. It would've made a comforting sight if not for her bloodshot eyes and teary cheeks.

She may be wronged now, but she was patient. Not uttering another word, she turned her head and squeezed her eyes shut, not wanting to look at him.

Zong Jinghao's heart was slightly moved. She had also been like this that night. No matter how much he tried, she hadn't uttered a word. All she had done was trembled in his arms—yearning for his touch.

He took a step forward.

"When we're finally married, I'll be good to you," he whispered one last time.

This time, Bai Zhuwei nodded. This was something that she wasn't so worried about. After all, she had been by his side for far too long that she had an understanding of his temperament. Even if he didn't love her, he still felt responsible for her. That was a start.

Taking off his coat, Zong Jinghao stepped out of the room and walked down the living room. He then sank into the sofa, resting his long legs on the tea table with the back of his head right up against the cushions. Before he knew it, darkness had enveloped him.

It was silent that night. While one couldn't care less for the world, the other two were conflicted—one for himself, and the other for them. As the sunlight streamed into the villa, neither said a word as they prepared for their day.

As soon as Lin Xinyan was finished washing up, she noticed that Zong Jinghao was already seated at the dining table. In his hand was the financial newspaper. Bai Zhuwei was sitting right beside him, stirring him up a pot of black coffee.

Nanny Yu was at the kitchen preparing their breakfast. Seeing the harmonious sight, she reduced her presence by seating herself at the end of the table. She kept her head down this entire time as she drank her porridge, afraid that she'd attract their attention.

The older woman carried a plate of fried eggs onto Lin Xinyan's side, before frowning. She was the young master's wife, yet she was the one who had been cast aside by the couple. This just wouldn't do!

"Madame," she purposely raised her voice. "Shouldn't you be sitting next to the Young Master?"

Huh?

Lin Xinyan raised her head.

Zong Jinghao lowered his financial report. Bai Zhuwei also managed to glance up from her plate.

All four pairs of eyes were stunned for a moment as they shared a glance. However, as soon as Lin Xinyan thought of the man's cold eyes, her heart could only shudder in fear. No way she'd find herself in between them again.

Nanny Yu, however couldn't be bothered. As his mother had died when he was young, she had taken it upon himself to care for him.

That was how they had gotten along for years.

That was also why she was the only one who could speak so casually on this matter. Bai Zhuwei couldn't even find herself saying a word, afraid that she'd anger the old woman and Zong Jinghao in the process.

Lin Xinyan gripped her spoon tightly. This marriage was simply just another form of transaction. As soon as they had gotten what they needed, they could easily move on into their own respective lives. Finishing the last mouthful of congee, she slowly smiled. "I'm done eating. I'll excuse myself first."

It was obvious that Zong Jinghao cared a lot for Bai Zhuwei. Although she didn't have the best impression of the woman sitting beside him, she still needed to act more sensible. After all, the last thing she'd want to do was make an enemy out of him.

**Don't want to watch ads?**

**Get premium to remove ads**

**Feeling as if a bunch of ferocious beasts were chasing after her, she jumped up from her seat and sprinted out of the way.**

**He couldn't help but stare at her retreating figure as she left in a hurry. The curve of her back shone under the sunlight, and he couldn't help but narrow his eyes at her.**

**Noticing this, Bai Zhuwei gathered her thoughts and whispered, "Maybe it's me. After all, she's probably not used to my presence. Maybe after this, we can—"**

**He placed a glass of milk in front of her. "She'll leave in a month. Then you can make yourself at home."**

**She simply lowered her gaze in reply. The month was just far too long.**

**Lin Xinyan headed back to her room and turned on her cell phone. There, she saw that someone had replied to her email. "Ms. Lin, we are happy to inform you that you've been moved to the next step of the application...."**

**She was accepted for the interview! Her heart pumped with joy, and she didn't waste any time as she threw on some clothes. Without another word, she headed out of the villa and called a taxi.**

**The moment she had arrived, she couldn't help but stare at the tall building in front of her. Wanyue Group was a well known firm, and it was even more majestic up close. Could it be that she had finally found the job of her dreams?**

**Taking a deep breath, she stepped inside.**



As she hadn't graduated from college, it wasn't easy for her to find a suitable job. That was why she had been so eager in taking them up on this offer. "You got this, Xinyan," she whispered encouragingly to herself.

The waiting room was filled with people. While she was wearing a white tee and a pair of jeans, the others were dressed in blazers and pencil skirts. All of them had resumes in their hands. It was obvious that they were well-prepared.

Hell, she didn't even look like she was applying.

Her face flushed as she stood at the side, ignoring the peculiar gazes that were thrown towards her.

It took around an hour before it was finally her turn.

However, as she headed inside, the interviewer wasn't the most impressed with her work experience. After all, working as a waitress and as a delivery lady weren't really aspects he holds dear.

He frowned. "How do you know A Nation and its language?"

After all, A Nation wasn't really the most popular city.

The recruitment had been going on for such a long time, and they still had no candidates.

Thinking back to the many years that she had lived there, Lin Xinyan slowly shook her head. "I've lived there before, so I needed to find a way to communicate better with the locals. It was actually why..."

That sound...

Bai Zhuwei had been passing by the interview area with a document in her hand. As soon as she heard a familiar voice, she took a step back and turned around. Seeing Lin Xinyan, her heart skipped a beat.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Report

Share

Read next chapter

Comments

|

Enter your comment here...

roselyzmambangmimie

August 10, 2021 12:25 PM

i would loved to continue reading. stress free and enjoyable

C10 Framed

Lin Xinyan actually knows how to speak their language.

If she hadn't been sure before whether or not she was the girl from that night, then she was a hundred percent sure now! There was no way this could all just be a coincidence? Her heart pounded.

"Secretary Bai?" Unsure why the woman had suddenly stopped in her tracks, her subordinate tapped her on the shoulder. "The meeting is about to begin."

Instead of following through, Bai Zhuwei simply handed the documents in her hands to her subordinate. Her eyes still hadn't left the meeting room. "Give the documents to Director Zong first," she said slowly. "I'll be there in a bit."

Although she couldn't hear everything from the room, she could get the gist of what they were talking about. "Come over tomorrow." After all, there were only a few people who knew the language of that country. Although she didn't have the working experience, Lin Xinyan knew the language, and that was good enough for them.

"All right. Thank you."

However, as she happily walked out of the interview room, Bai Zhuwei immediately stepped in. She blocked the interviewer and leaned against the side of the wall. The anxiety still hadn't faded from her gaze.

"The woman you've just met didn't meet the requirements you have set," she snapped. "And you're hiring her?"

"She may not have the work experience, but she could easily—"

"I don't think you've heard what I said." Her eyebrows furrowed. "Are you really planning to disobey me?"

Bai Zhuwei was not only Zong Jinghao's secretary but also his girlfriend. She might even become the Young Madame of the Zong family. How the hell was he going to live if he had offended her?

Although the interviewer felt pity for the woman who had just entered the room, he knew that he couldn't do anything about it.

"Of course."

While Bai Zhuwei exited the interview room, Lin Xinyan was still incredibly ecstatic as she was walking out of the building. She clasped her hands together in joy as she gazed at the bright blue skies around her.

Her life was finally getting back on track.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

As soon as she called for a taxi, she headed all the way to the Lin family villa.

"Thank you," she said to the driver, even tipping him extra as she headed out to the front gates. Even the little skip in her step was evidence enough for her mood. Her stretched smile couldn't be dampened.

Lin Xinyan walked up the steps.

In the living room, Shen Xiuqing was sitting on the sofa in her silk pajamas. She had just woken up and was already getting ready for the day ahead. Just then, the main door opened, and she couldn't help but glance at the new visitor.

Upon seeing that it was Lin Xinyan, her eyebrows raised. "Lin Xinyan, is that really you?"

The young woman's gaze fell on Shen Xiuqing's wrist. The jade bracelet glinted under the beautiful chandeliers, and the corners of her lips twitched downwards. She had remembered seeing that in her mother's jewelry box. "My mother had left it for me, and I'll someday leave it to you," she had said whenever Lin Xinyan had asked her about it.

Now, it was in the woman's hands.

Suppressing her anger, Lin Xinyan clenched her fists. "Where's Lin Guoan?"

"You're already married to the cripple aren't you?" Instead of answering her, the older woman took time to glance at her nails. "You're probably not living the best of lives, aren't you? What a pity."

"There's no need for you to worry about that," Lin Xinyan said lightly. As she still hadn't gotten what she needed, all she could do was stand and bear all their insults. "Tell me, is Lin Guoan here?"

"Hm, and you still look like a shriveled eggplant." Shen Xiuqing shrugged. "I bet that cripple from the Zong family also doesn't like you, huh? But then again, that doesn't matter. Beggars can't exactly be choosers."

Ha! Beggars? At that moment, she couldn't help but be a little thankful to Zong Jinghao for pretending to be lame. Otherwise, she wouldn't have a chance to get back to her home country.

If this woman had known that he wasn't a cripple, would she regret it?

After all, Zong Jinghao was the type of man that had already ticked everything out of any normal woman's list. He was smart, capable, handsome, and even rich. He had everything on his plate.

It was obvious that he'll have plenty of women chasing after him if they know the truth.

As Lin Guoan wasn't here, she didn't want to waste any time talking with the woman that had torn their family apart

However, just as she had reached the door, she saw a car parking right up at the front gates. It belonged to Lin Guoan. Her eyes narrowed and she stopped in her tracks. Guess she'd finally get what she came for.

The driver opened the door, and Lin Guoan stepped out of the car. However, when he saw Lin Xinyan standing at the front door, his face sank. He knew exactly what she was here for, but before she could say another word, he immediately intercepted, "If you're here to pick up your mother's dowry, you'd have to do something for me."

"Another condition?" She frowned. "You said that if I married him, you'll return everything!"

"And you think I'll do it?" He sneered. "I only said those things for you to help us."

What? But...Lin Xinyan's heart trembled and she immediately stomped forward. "You're not going to keep your word?" Not being able to help herself, she yelled out, "Are you still man?"

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

"You dare question me?" In an instant, his face turned ugly. "I'm your father, and you dare talk to me that way?"

Father? He had never been her father! Lin Xinyan froze, feeling like she had just been poured over by a bucket of iced water. Her heart pounded in her chest, and her fingers curled.

He had actually gone back on his word!

"But I'm very easy to talk to. As long as you ask Zong Jinghao to hand me the right to develop Shallow Bay, I'll give you everything." A glint appeared in his eyes. "That piece of land is incredibly important to me, so as long as you hand the document over, I'll return everything that your mother had given you—including the piano."

Although her father was an asshole, she had never imagined that he'd be this shameless—that he'd actually go back on his word. Yet, it seemed that he could never stop surprising her.

It was obvious that he'd go back on his word again.

So if she wanted to take it all back, then she had to think of another way.

If the land he wanted was in Zong Jinghao's hands...

Then she'd have to put in an effort for her 'new husband' to give her the document.

But how the hell was she going to do that?

Although the two of them were husband and wife, they were even more unfamiliar than strangers! Not only that, but he even hated her guts when he found out about her pregnancy. There must be some other way.

Even as Lin Xinyan arrived at her residence, she was still lost in her thoughts. It was only when she had received a phone call did she finally snap out of her reverie. "Hello?" Upon hearing her interviewer's

voice, her eyebrows furrowed.

"What do you mean I can't come home to work? I thought you told me—"

"You don't meet our qualifications. We're sorry." Without even asking her to finish, the interviewer immediately hung up.

Lin Xinyan stared at the screen, unable to recover from her shock. It seemed that she was back to square one.

C10 Framed

Lin Xinyan actually knows how to speak their language.

If she hadn't been sure before whether or not she was the girl from that night, then she was a hundred percent sure now! There was no way this could all just be a coincidence? Her heart pounded.

"Secretary Bai?" Unsure why the woman had suddenly stopped in her tracks, her subordinate tapped her on the shoulder. "The meeting is about to begin."

Instead of following through, Bai Zhuwei simply handed the documents in her hands to her subordinate. Her eyes still hadn't left the meeting room. "Give the documents to Director Zong first," she said slowly. "I'll be there in a bit."

Although she couldn't hear everything from the room, she could get the gist of what they were talking about. "Come over tomorrow." After all, there were only a few people who knew the language of that country. Although she didn't have the working experience, Lin Xinyan knew the language, and that was good enough for them.

"All right. Thank you."



However, as she happily walked out of the interview room, Bai Zhuwei immediately stepped in. She blocked the interviewer and leaned against the side of the wall. The anxiety still hadn't faded from her gaze.

"The woman you've just met didn't meet the requirements you have set," she snapped. "And you're hiring her?"

"She may not have the work experience, but she could easily—"

"I don't think you've heard what I said." Her eyebrows furrowed. "Are you really planning to disobey me?"

Bai Zhuwei was not only Zong Jinghao's secretary but also his girlfriend. She might even become the Young Madame of the Zong family. How the hell was he going to live if he had offended her?

Although the interviewer felt pity for the woman who had just entered the room, he knew that he couldn't do anything about it.

"Of course."

While Bai Zhuwei exited the interview room, Lin Xinyan was still incredibly ecstatic as she was walking out of the building. She clasped her hands together in joy as she gazed at the bright blue skies around her.

Her life was finally getting back on track.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

As soon as she called for a taxi, she headed all the way to the Lin family villa.

"Thank you," she said to the driver, even tipping him extra as she headed out to the front gates. Even the little skip in her step was evidence enough for her mood. Her stretched smile couldn't be dampened.

Lin Xinyan walked up the steps.

In the living room, Shen Xiuqing was sitting on the sofa in her silk pajamas. She had just woken up and was already getting ready for the day ahead. Just then, the main door opened, and she couldn't help but glance at the new visitor.

Upon seeing that it was Lin Xinyan, her eyebrows raised. "Lin Xinyan, is that really you?"

The young woman's gaze fell on Shen Xiuqing's wrist. The jade bracelet glinted under the beautiful chandeliers, and the corners of her lips twitched downwards. She had remembered seeing that in her mother's jewelry box. "My mother had left it for me, and I'll someday leave it to you," she had said whenever Lin Xinyan had asked her about it.

Now, it was in the woman's hands.

Suppressing her anger, Lin Xinyan clenched her fists. "Where's Lin Guoan?"

"You're already married to the cripple aren't you?" Instead of answering her, the older woman took time to glance at her nails. "You're probably not living the best of lives, aren't you? What a pity."

"There's no need for you to worry about that," Lin Xinyan said lightly. As she still hadn't gotten what she needed, all she could do was stand and bear all their insults. "Tell me, is Lin Guoan here?"

"Hm, and you still look like a shriveled eggplant." Shen Xiuqing shrugged. "I bet that cripple from the Zong family also doesn't like you, huh? But then again, that doesn't matter. Beggars can't exactly be choosers."

Ha! Beggars? At that moment, she couldn't help but be a little thankful to Zong Jinghao for pretending to be lame. Otherwise, she wouldn't have a chance to get back to her home country.

If this woman had known that he wasn't a cripple, would she regret it?

After all, Zong Jinghao was the type of man that had already ticked everything out of any normal woman's list. He was smart, capable, handsome, and even rich. He had everything on his plate.

It was obvious that he'll have plenty of women chasing after him if they know the truth.

As Lin Guoan wasn't here, she didn't want to waste any time talking with the woman that had torn their family apart

However, just as she had reached the door, she saw a car parking right up at the front gates. It belonged to Lin Guoan. Her eyes narrowed and she stopped in her tracks. Guess she'd finally get what she came for.

The driver opened the door, and Lin Guoan stepped out of the car. However, when he saw Lin Xinyan standing at the front door, his face sank. He knew exactly what she was here for, but before she could say another word, he immediately intercepted, "If you're here to pick up your mother's dowry, you'd have to do something for me."

"Another condition?" She frowned. "You said that if I married him, you'll return everything!"

"And you think I'll do it?" He sneered. "I only said those things for you to help us."

What? But...Lin Xinyan's heart trembled and she immediately stomped forward. "You're not going to keep your word?" Not being able to help herself, she yelled out, "Are you still man?"

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

"You dare question me?" In an instant, his face turned ugly. "I'm your father, and you dare talk to me that way?"

Father? He had never been her father! Lin Xinyan froze, feeling like she had just been poured over by a bucket of iced water. Her heart pounded in her chest, and her fingers curled.

He had actually gone back on his word!

"But I'm very easy to talk to. As long as you ask Zong Jinghao to hand me the right to develop Shallow Bay, I'll give you everything." A glint appeared in his eyes. "That piece of land is incredibly important to me, so as long as you hand the document over, I'll return everything that your mother had given you—including the piano."

Although her father was an asshole, she had never imagined that he'd be this shameless—that he'd actually go back on his word. Yet, it seemed that he could never stop surprising her.

It was obvious that he'd go back on his word again.

So if she wanted to take it all back, then she had to think of another way.

If the land he wanted was in Zong Jinghao's hands...

Then she'd have to put in an effort for her 'new husband' to give her the document.

But how the hell was she going to do that?

Although the two of them were husband and wife, they were even more unfamiliar than strangers! Not only that, but he even hated her guts when he found out about her pregnancy. There must be some other way.

Even as Lin Xinyan arrived at her residence, she was still lost in her thoughts. It was only when she had received a phone call did she finally snap out of her reverie. "Hello?" Upon hearing her interviewer's voice, her eyebrows furrowed.

"What do you mean I can't come home to work? I thought you told me—"

"You don't meet our qualifications. We're sorry." Without even asking her to finish, the interviewer immediately hung up.

Lin Xinyan stared at the screen, unable to recover from her shock. It seemed that she was back to square one.

**C11 Don't Let Her Appearance Fool You**

It was at this time that she found him treating her more satisfactorily. Lin Xinyan could not help but frown. Could it be that he had already found someone else?

Thinking about this, it didn't seem too impossible.

At night.

Once Zong Jinghao arrived back home, he went straight to his study room and locked himself in there. The matter seemed to be all work-related.

Earlier that afternoon, Lin Xinyan had found out about Zong Jinghao's favorite dish from Nanny Yu and had been throwing herself into preparing dinner for him.

Nanny Yu could not help but smile. "That is right. You are fulfilling your wifely duties."

Lin Xinyan lowered her head and modestly smiled. If there wasn't something she needed from him, she would never have gone out of her way to curry favor from him.

Nanny Yu sighed heavily. "Ever since Madam passed away a long time ago, Master has married a second wife, so it looks like Young Master has been avoiding going home; rarely is he seen here. Please don't pay attention to how cold he is. It's not his fault. He's actually a very emotional person."

Lin Xinyan just kept quiet and listened attentively.

"That Miss Bai has been hanging around Young Master since he was young, ever since she saved him. Young Master never liked her before, so his attitude towards her has changed noticeably since coming back from that business trip. But don't you pay her any mind. Your status as the Young Madam is irreplaceable."

Lin Xinyan lowered her eyes and on her lips was a bitter smile. Who was she to say anything about who he was good to?

Even though they were husband and wife, it was like they were strangers still.

It did not take a complete genius to see through this marriage.

Lin Xinyan looked in the direction of the study and thought back to the cup of black coffee Bai Zhuwei had made that morning. She asked, "Nanny Yu, point me to the beans. A pot of coffee will be just what he needs."

Nanny Yu thought that was a great idea. She gave her the coffee and told her, "There's no need to add sugar or milk. Young Master doesn't enjoy sweets."

Lin Xinyan nodded her head and quickly got together a pot of coffee. After the coffee finished brewing, she poured it into an exquisite cup and personally brought the coffee into the study.

Inside the study room, Zong Jinghao was talking into the phone with a slightly irritable expression plastered on his face. "What's with the HR Department? Is it really that hard to recruit a translator?"

Although he was quite fluent in a lot of languages, he was still unfamiliar with the language of A Nation. It was because his handle of the language was weak and that this project was still relatively new, so there were a lot of things to deal with. If there was a language barrier and he didn't understand what others were talking about, how did he expect everything to run smoothly?

"I am giving the HR manager one day. If he still has trouble finding someone, then tell him he can pack up straight away and leave!"

A sudden knock on the door interrupted his phone conversation.

Zong Jinghao was still dealing with his anger, so he was unable to hold back his tone as he aggressively barked, "Come in!"

**Don't want to watch ads?**

**Get premium to remove ads**

**Lin Xinyan's heart was racing in her chest. Did she come in at a bad time?**

**But she had already taken the initiative to knock on the door. Even if she wanted to back away because of his angry voice, she didn't want to give him the wrong idea, so she forced herself to walk through that door.**

**Lin Xinyan forced a smile on her face. "It's me. I made you a cup of coffee."**

**Zong Jinghao seemed to be taking everything in as his gaze slowly moved from her face to the cup of coffee in her hands. He squinted his eyes until they became small and continued avoiding Lin Xinyan's gaze like he was putting a barrier between him and something unpleasant.**

**What was she doing coming in to offer him some coffee?**

**More and more he was beginning to realize that this woman was too fickle!**

**Zong Jinghao put down his phone and sat back in his seat to quietly enjoy her performance. He really wanted to learn what else this woman had up her sleeve!**

**"I don't know if it's to your tastes or not." Lin Xinyan gently placed the coffee cup on the table.**

**Zong Jinghao did not make a move. His body seemed to have loosened up even more as he lazily leaned back against his chair.**

**Lin Xinyan tried flattering him. "How about you give it a try?"**



As a response, Zong Jinghao's eyebrows twitched on his forehead. After a bit, he seemed to have come to an understanding why she had changed so much.

"Why are you doing all this? Is it because you want to ask about the Shallow Bay?"

Lin Xinyan was momentarily stunned. Little did she know that he would be able to connect the dots so easily.

Unexpectedly, Zong Jinghao grabbed ahold of Lin Xinyan's chin roughly. "This is the Lin family's reasoning only. Is this why you still want to marry me even though I'm a cripple?"

His grip on her chin was so strong that Lin Xinyan was starting to feel an intense pain spread throughout her face.

She opened her mouth about to explain.

But how could she explain?

Tell him that she was actually the one who was abandoned?

Would he even believe it?

"It's not -"

"Leave right now!" Zong Jinghao pushed her away.

Lin Xinyan was tossed aside so suddenly that her arm accidentally knocked over the coffee cup. The black liquid completely soaked through the papers on the table, causing Zong Jinghao's face to noticeably darken.

Never expecting the situation to take such a drastic turn, she quickly went out of her way to stop the coffee from staining more documents.

Zong Jinghao took the papers she was wiping down out of her hands and scolded her harshly, "What?! Are you having difficulty hearing me? Go out!"

Such people were always a thorn in his side!

Lin Xinyan could do nothing further but leave.

"Wait, don't forget to take these out!" Zong Jinghao was unable to suppress the annoyance in his voice.

Lin Xinyan went back to grab the coffee cup.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

After dinner, Zong Jinghao went straight back to his room after finishing the meal.

Lin Xinyan could not help but sigh. This person was so difficult to get along with. It was hard for her to try and get close to him.

Not to mention that the land was completely out of bounds for her.

After Lin Xinyan took a shower, she laid down on the bed, tossing and turning. Sleep proved to be elusive, so she had no choice but to get out of bed.

Thinking about the documents she had ruined by spilling coffee on them, she began to feel a little sorry.

She wanted to make up for her clumsiness, so she went into his study.

Turning on the lights, she saw that the wet documents had yet to be removed from the table. At first glance, she had thought that the documents had been written in the language of A Nation.

Taking another look, some of the areas soaked by the coffee made it hard to distinguish.

Fishing out a clean piece of paper, she settled down to copy the words on the document. Lin Xinyan understood that the language of this country wasn't widely used. As an apology, she translated the documents so that he would be able to understand it better.

After hours of work, a dozen or so documents were translated and copied down. By the time she was finished, it was already 3 in the morning.

After a while, she put down her pen and rubbed her aching wrist. She organized the papers, placed them neatly on the desk, and went back to sleep.

Lin Xinyan was still asleep when Zong Jinghao woke up for breakfast the next morning. She had gone to bed too late last night. Plus, ever since she got pregnant, sleep was something she liked to indulge in, and she wouldn't be awake until noon every morning.

Zong Jinghao was frowning. "She didn't get up yet?"

Nanny Yu lowered her eyes and said, "No, you are husband and wife. I'm just an outsider. How should I know?"

Zong Jinghao could understand what Nanny Yu was hinting at.

"Forget about it." Zong Jinghao was never good at explaining things. Nanny Yu, who had taken care of him since he was young, could understand him.

"Young Master, I know that you and Miss Lin have not been getting along well lately, but your marriage was arranged for you by the Madam when she was still alive, and I think your wife cares a lot about you. She is putting more and more effort into being your spouse. Just yesterday, the moment she came home, she asked what dishes you liked, and all the food last night was cooked by her."

But wasn't all this because she was trying to please him in order for him to give her the piece of land so that she could obtain Shallow Bay?

Did she really care for him?

The situation was becoming more and more laughable.

He looked back at Nanny Yu and said, "Don't let her appearance fool you."

C12 From Now On You Can Call Me Big Brother

He was the one who knew first-hand what kind of woman she was!

Thinking back to the documents that had been ruined by the coffee last night, he went to his study to retrieve them. He needed to deliver them to the company right away. His files also needed to be

reprinted.

The instant he entered the room, Zong Jinghao discovered that the things on his desk had been messed with.

Other than Ms. Chan and Guan Jin, no one else was allowed in here. Even Bai Zhuwei never stepped foot inside his study.

Then who could it be?

Did that woman have the audacity to sneak into his study?

Walking over to the table, he saw a handwritten translation document on top of everything. He stretched out his hand to pick up the piece of paper and saw that the delicate handwriting was very neat and tidy.

His face scrunched up into a frown. Did the woman go out of her way to write this?

Did she know how to speak A Nation?

Zong Jinghao was filled with disbelief.

Just as he was putting down the document in order to get his bearings and in an attempt to find out more about the woman, a note fell out, which read: I'm sorry for entering your study without your permission. It was my fault for getting your documents wet last night, so as an apology I wanted to do something to fix it for you. A Nation is a difficult language to grasp. I have translated your papers into Chinese for you to better understand. These documents are now more readable to you, which is my way of compensating you for wetting your file.

— — Lin Xinyan

Still holding the note in his hand, Zong Jinghao took another look at the ten translated documents. Each document was meticulously handwritten. Under the cover of night, she had entered his study without him realizing it and his anger subsided knowing she did this to make it up to him.

Staring at the delicate handwriting, a twinge of curiosity about this woman was sparked in his heart.

She actually was so knowledgeable.

Zong Jinghao placed the note on the table and headed out to the company with the documents in tow.

It was noon by the time Lin Xinyan had woken up. Nanny Yu had already prepared food for her downstairs while she was still asleep. Lin Xinyan could not help but feel a little embarrassed for sleeping in so late.

On Nanny Yu's face was a pleasant smile as she said, "Usually, it's so quiet around here. Young Master always gets up early. It seems quite lively now that you're here."

Lin Xinyan smiled back. "That Miss Bai, didn't she show her face regularly in the past?"

Nanny Yu's facial expression noticeably shifted. Was she being jealous?

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Lin Xinyan didn't have any ulterior motives. It was just a casual question that she asked, and after the words left her mouth, she immediately regretted it.

"It's not often that she comes around. Young Master used to treat her coldly as well..." Nanny Yu was perplexed. Why the sudden change in attitude after he got back from his trip?

All these years and he had never fallen in love with her. In a matter of days, what made him change his mind?

No matter how hard she thought about it, Nanny Yu could not wrap her mind around it.

Lin Xinyan gave it some thought. There's a saying that women's thoughts are unfathomable, and men's thoughts are the same.

This was especially true for a man like Zong Jinghao.

She had no success with the previous job, and Lin Xinyan didn't want to be lazing around in the house. She needed a stable job now that for the time being, she didn't have access to her mother's dowry.

She had little money at her expense. Although she didn't need any money to live here, her mother needed the cash.

After breakfast, she left the house to go out.

Finding a job was difficult for someone like her who had no education or work experience.

After failing several times, Lin Xinyan had to settle on a few low-end jobs.

Then she found out that a high-end restaurant was hiring attendants.

This job did not require a degree. But as long as she was smart and quick, she would be qualified for the work. To ensure that she makes enough money, she went to the establishment to apply.

Upon first glance, Lin Xinyan was quickly able to prove that she was educated. She had gone to college and this showed in her speech and manners.

The hotel manager told her she could get started the very next day.

Getting the job put Lin Xinyan in a good mood, so she walked out of the restaurant and strolled by herself along the roadside.

As the setting sun was sinking in the west, the fading light left a trail of red across the horizon. The red colors lit up the street and dragging behind Lin Xinyan was her long and loyal shadow.

She was alone with only her loneliness to accompany her.

“Xinyan.”

Hearing her name being called out, Lin Xinyan turned around toward the source and could see Hee Ruize rushing towards her from the other side of the road.

“I thought my eyes were fooling me.” On his face was a smile.

“Doctor Hee.” Lin Xinyan was, too, shocked by his presence. “What are you doing still in the country?”



He looked at Lin Xinyan and seemed to hesitate before answering. "I'm currently back at work."

Lin Xinyan thought back to the day at the hospital when the dean had personally extended an invitation for him to work there. She could understand why he was still here.

"They must be treating you very well at the hospital, aren't they?" Lin Xinyan could not suppress the envy in her voice.

Because she had to take care of her mother for all those years, she couldn't get her graduation certificate. Because of this, it was hard for her to find a job right now.

Hee Ruize gave her a gentle smile. "Indeed."

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

But no matter how nice the treatment was, the only reason he was staying was because she wasn't going back.

There were too many people and things in this country that he wanted to avoid.

Lin Xinyan took the chance to peer up at the sky and saw that it was getting dark. It had been nearly two months since she had gotten back.

Now, she couldn't help but feel an inescapable helplessness and confusion overwhelm her.

It wasn't so easy to take back what belonged to them.

Sensitive to her mood just then, Hee Ruize pushed back her messy hair behind her ear. "If there's something weighing you down, feel free to tell me."

He had done a lot for her already. Lin Xinyan smiled at him and shook her head.

He had been around for a long time. So he knew this little girl's heart and mind. But she would rather suffer alone than be in debt of others.

"You've always been too stubborn."

It was heartbreaking to see her so stubborn.

With pursed lips, Lin Xinyan tried thinking about it. It's just not that she didn't want to owe him. But if she owed him anything, with what little she had, she wouldn't be able to pay him back for his troubles.

At this time, she was poor.

"It's getting dark. Doctor Hee, shouldn't you be getting home?" Lin Xinyan asked.

Lin Xinyan was used to calling him Doctor Hee.

"Xinyan." Hee Ruize was looking at her and said, "From here on forward, please don't call me Doctor Hee, okay?"

He gave Lin Xinyan a serious look. "Instead, call me Hee Ruize, or you can call me brother. We've known each other for so long, yet you always call me Doctor Hee. We look like strangers, don't you think?"

Lin Xinyan gave this some thought. He was older than her and he used to take care of her much like a big brother would. After careful consideration, she said, "I'll call you brother then?"

Seeing her so vulnerable, Hee Ruize took advantage of that moment to get closer to her. He hugged her and said, "Call me brother from now on."

"Hao, am I seeing things, or is that really Miss Lin?"

Zong Jinghao, who was behind the wheel, didn't pay attention to the people on the roadside. As soon as Bai Zhuwei pointed this out, he looked over...

**C12 From Now On You Can Call Me Big Brother**

He was the one who knew first-hand what kind of woman she was!

Thinking back to the documents that had been ruined by the coffee last night, he went to his study to retrieve them. He needed to deliver them to the company right away. His files also needed to be reprinted.

The instant he entered the room, Zong Jinghao discovered that the things on his desk had been messed with.

Other than Ms. Chan and Guan Jin, no one else was allowed in here. Even Bai Zhuwei never stepped foot inside his study.

Then who could it be?

Did that woman have the audacity to sneak into his study?

Walking over to the table, he saw a handwritten translation document on top of everything. He stretched out his hand to pick up the piece of paper and saw that the delicate handwriting was very neat and tidy.

His face scrunched up into a frown. Did the woman go out of her way to write this?

Did she know how to speak A Nation?

Zong Jinghao was filled with disbelief.

Just as he was putting down the document in order to get his bearings and in an attempt to find out more about the woman, a note fell out, which read: I'm sorry for entering your study without your permission. It was my fault for getting your documents wet last night, so as an apology I wanted to do something to fix it for you. A Nation is a difficult language to grasp. I have translated your papers into Chinese for you to better understand. These documents are now more readable to you, which is my way of compensating you for wetting your file.

— — Lin Xinyan

Still holding the note in his hand, Zong Jinghao took another look at the ten translated documents. Each document was meticulously handwritten. Under the cover of night, she had entered his study without him realizing it and his anger subsided knowing she did this to make it up to him.

Staring at the delicate handwriting, a twinge of curiosity about this woman was sparked in his heart.

She actually was so knowledgeable.

Zong Jinghao placed the note on the table and headed out to the company with the documents in tow.

It was noon by the time Lin Xinyan had woken up. Nanny Yu had already prepared food for her downstairs while she was still asleep. Lin Xinyan could not help but feel a little embarrassed for sleeping in so late.

On Nanny Yu's face was a pleasant smile as she said, "Usually, it's so quiet around here. Young Master always gets up early. It seems quite lively now that you're here."

Lin Xinyan smiled back. "That Miss Bai, didn't she show her face regularly in the past?"

Nanny Yu's facial expression noticeably shifted. Was she being jealous?

Lin Xinyan didn't have any ulterior motives. It was just a casual question that she asked, and after the words left her mouth, she immediately regretted it.

"It's not often that she comes around. Young Master used to treat her coldly as well..." Nanny Yu was perplexed. Why the sudden change in attitude after he got back from his trip?

All these years and he had never fallen in love with her. In a matter of days, what made him change his mind?

No matter how hard she thought about it, Nanny Yu could not wrap her mind around it.

Lin Xinyan gave it some thought. There's a saying that women's thoughts are unfathomable, and men's thoughts are the same.

**This was especially true for a man like Zong Jinghao.**

**She had no success with the previous job, and Lin Xinyan didn't want to be lazing around in the house. She needed a stable job now that for the time being, she didn't have access to her mother's dowry.**

**She had little money at her expense. Although she didn't need any money to live here, her mother needed the cash.**

**After breakfast, she left the house to go out.**

**Finding a job was difficult for someone like her who had no education or work experience.**

**After failing several times, Lin Xinyan had to settle on a few low-end jobs.**

**Then she found out that a high-end restaurant was hiring attendants.**

**This job did not require a degree. But as long as she was smart and quick, she would be qualified for the work. To ensure that she makes enough money, she went to the establishment to apply.**

**Upon first glance, Lin Xinyan was quickly able to prove that she was educated. She had gone to college and this showed in her speech and manners.**

**The hotel manager told her she could get started the very next day.**

**Getting the job put Lin Xinyan in a good mood, so she walked out of the restaurant and strolled by herself along the roadside.**

As the setting sun was sinking in the west, the fading light left a trail of red across the horizon. The red colors lit up the street and dragging behind Lin Xinyan was her long and loyal shadow.

She was alone with only her loneliness to accompany her.

“Xinyan.”

Hearing her name being called out, Lin Xinyan turned around toward the source and could see Hee Ruize rushing towards her from the other side of the road.

“I thought my eyes were fooling me.” On his face was a smile.

“Doctor Hee.” Lin Xinyan was, too, shocked by his presence. “What are you doing still in the country?”

He looked at Lin Xinyan and seemed to hesitate before answering. “I’m currently back at work.”

Lin Xinyan thought back to the day at the hospital when the dean had personally extended an invitation for him to work there. She could understand why he was still here.

“They must be treating you very well at the hospital, aren’t they?” Lin Xinyan could not suppress the envy in her voice.

Because she had to take care of her mother for all those years, she couldn’t get her graduation certificate. Because of this, it was hard for her to find a job right now.

Hee Ruize gave her a gentle smile. “Indeed.”

**Don't want to watch ads?**

**Get premium to remove ads**

**But no matter how nice the treatment was, the only reason he was staying was because she wasn't going back.**

**There were too many people and things in this country that he wanted to avoid.**

**Lin Xinyan took the chance to peer up at the sky and saw that it was getting dark. It had been nearly two months since she had gotten back.**

**Now, she couldn't help but feel an inescapable helplessness and confusion overwhelm her.**

**It wasn't so easy to take back what belonged to them.**

**Sensitive to her mood just then, Hee Ruize pushed back her messy hair behind her ear. "If there's something weighing you down, feel free to tell me."**

**He had done a lot for her already. Lin Xinyan smiled at him and shook her head.**

**He had been around for a long time. So he knew this little girl's heart and mind. But she would rather suffer alone than be in debt of others.**

**"You've always been too stubborn."**



It was heartbreaking to see her so stubborn.

With pursed lips, Lin Xinyan tried thinking about it. It's just not that she didn't want to owe him. But if she owed him anything, with what little she had, she wouldn't be able to pay him back for his troubles.

At this time, she was poor.

"It's getting dark. Doctor Hee, shouldn't you be getting home?" Lin Xinyan asked.

Lin Xinyan was used to calling him Doctor Hee.

"Xinyan." Hee Ruize was looking at her and said, "From here on forward, please don't call me DoctorHee, okay?"

He gave Lin Xinyan a serious look. "Instead, call me Hee Ruize, or you can call me brother. We've known each other for so long, yet you always call me Doctor Hee. We look like strangers, don't you think?"

Lin Xinyan gave this some thought. He was older than her and he used to take care of her much like a big brother would. After careful consideration, she said, "I'll call you brother then?"

Seeing her so vulnerable, Hee Ruize took advantage of that moment to get closer to her. He hugged her and said, "Call me brother from now on."

"Hao, am I seeing things, or is that really Miss Lin?"

Zong Jinghao, who was behind the wheel, didn't pay attention to the people on the roadside. As soon as Bai Zhuwei pointed this out, he looked over...

### **C13 She Understands How To Speak A Nation**

**Lin Xinyan's body stiffened under his embrace. Never would she have expected Hee Ruize to suddenly hug her.**

**Once she regained her senses, she started struggling.**

**From where Zong Jinghao was sitting, there seemed to be quite a lot of flirting going on.**

**He was unable to contain the frown on his face.**

**Bai Zhuwei said casually, "I never knew that she already had a boyfriend."**

**Zong Jinghao suddenly felt down for some reason.**

**He put his foot on the accelerator and the car sped away.**

**Concerned, Bai Zhuwei pursed her lips. "Don't tell me you're angry."**

**Zong Jinghao made an ugly sneer. "Why would I be angry?"**

**She was pregnant, so, of course, there must be a man around!**

**But it was different once he actually saw her with a man. The displeasure he was feeling was really rather inexplicable!**

**Soon, they arrived at Bai Zhuwei's residence. She didn't get out of the car right away, but instead looked at Zong Jinghao and said, "Aren't you coming inside?"**

Afraid that he would come up with some excuse, Bai Zhuwei quickly added, "Ah Hao, come inside. I've prepared your favorite foods..."

"Zhuwei." Zong Jinghao took the chance to interrupt her. He couldn't quite put a finger on it, but the churning emotions within him were leaving him confused. With an outstretched hand, he reached out to smooth her hair. "I won't be going inside today. You should take care to rest early."

"But..." Bai Zhuwei decided to not say anything and obediently got out of the car. "Make sure you drive slower."

Zong Jinghao acquiesced to her request and drove away.

He sped the entire car ride home and once he arrived back, Lin Xinyan was still not there.

He unbuttoned his shirt. "When did she head out?"

"Around noon." Nanny Yu took the coat from him. "Are you ready to eat now?"

"Just a moment." He had no appetite right then.

He continued with undoing the two buttons on his shirt. It wasn't like he was going to strangle anyone, but he was still feeling bored.

Such a strange feeling made him very uncomfortable!

Still feeling preoccupied, he pushed open the door to the study room. He could see that Lin Xinyan's note was still sitting there on his desk. He picked it up and coldly laughed. "You're so two-faced you

can act in front of me and at the same time, hang out with other guys.”

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Without looking at it, he crumpled the note in his hand.

Lin Xinyan called a taxi to get back. Hee Ruize wanted to send her off, but she didn't want Hee Ruize to discover her relationship with Zong Jinghao, so she declined his offer.

Once she arrived back, only Nanny Yu was home. Lin Xinyan relaxed a lot thinking that Zong Jinghao had yet to return.

Seeing Lin Xinyan in such a good mood, Nanny Yu could not help but ask, “What are you so happy about?”

Lin Xinyan gave her a smile and said, “It's just that when he's not here, I feel a bit freer.”

She couldn't believe that she finally had the courage to say that. This had been weighing on her for a long time and now that she said it, the burden seemed to be lifted.

“Do you mean I'm unnecessary?” His slender figure was perched against the door of the study room. Though his posture was lazy and casual, there was a hint of ridicule in it.

This sound coming from...

Lin Xinyan stiffly turned around to see the man leaning against the door with a gloomy expression on his face.

He... when did he get home?

Since he was nowhere to be seen when she returned, Lin Xinyan had thought that he wasn't there by default, so she didn't think to put a filter over her mouth when she spoke.

"I..." Lin Xinyan was trying to explain, but Zong Jinghao instead just walked past her in the direction of the dining room and told Nanny Yu to start dinner.

Lin Xinyan sat down at the dining table and after many attempts to explain, she just gave up after awhile.

Zong Jinghao paid her no mind. Without looking at her, he said after he finished the meal, "Come to the study with me."

Lin Xinyan put down her chopsticks and walked behind him into the study.

Zong Jinghao sat down at his desk, placed the documents she had translated on the table, and gave her an indifferent look. "You know the A Nation language?"

Lin Xinyan nodded her head calmly.

This made Zong Jinghao more curious. "Where did you learn this language? It's unavailable internationally."

Lin Xinyan wanted to speak, but there was just too much pain in her heart whenever the place that she had lived in for eight years came up.

No one else could comprehend the pain she had suffered. She had endured a miserable and terrible past during that period of time.

It was not something she wanted to show in front of outsiders.

She forced a relaxed smile on her face. "If it's something I'm interested in, I'll learn it."

Zong Jinghao's face scrunched up in a frown. She seemed to be covering up with her good mood. The grief that had popped up while they talked did not come away unnoticed by him.

What could it be that she was hiding?

"Come here." His voice was lowered so that it was barely audible.

Lin Xinyan was feeling torn. She was unable to gauge his thoughts just then, but right then, she had no choice but to deal with this difficult man.

She went over with light footsteps.

Zong Jinghao took out and placed a document in front of her. "Since you know the language, translate this document for me."

Lin Xinyan lowered her eyes and read the words "Wanyue Group" printed on the top right corner of the folder.

The previous night she had been so preoccupied with her work to notice the mark in the upper right-hand corner.

**Don't want to watch ads?**

**Get premium to remove ads**

**Noticing the words for the first time, she quickly raised her head. "Have you managed to recruit a translator yet?"**

**Zong Jinghao's eyebrows were slightly raised.**

**Lin Xinyan took the documents in her hand and whispered, "I applied for a job at your company as a translator. In the beginning, I was satisfied with the job, but for some reason, I was dismissed. They said I was unsuitable for the position."**

**"Is that really true?" Hearing her say all this was altogether deeply thought-provoking to him.**

**Lin Xinyan went on to reply. She had no desire to lie to him.**

**"It would be my pleasure to translate this document, but..." Lin Xinyan wasn't a greedy person, but she wanted to get something out of this. Currently, she had very little, so overestimating herself shouldn't be a problem.**

**Zong Jinghao gazed at her with a calm expression on his face. Without waiting for her to continue, he cautioned her, "If you're talking about Shallow Bay's land, I will have to disagree. The Lin company doesn't have the means to take it."**

**Lin Xinyan was about to say this, but she definitely would not give it to Lin Guoan. She wanted to negotiate a deal so that he would give it to her so that she could make an exchange with Lin Guoan.**

But that was all dashed now that he refused.

A single translation was obviously not an adequate exchange.

“You can pay me with cash.” Since her mother’s dowry was unavailable for the time being, it was imperative that she first earn some money to ensure her mother has a good life. In the future, she also had to take into account the baby. She needed to earn a lot of money so that they could live well.

Lin Xinyan flipped through the documents and discovered that it held more than 20 pages. “One hundred yuan each. That’s all I’m asking.”

Zong Jinghao: “...”

~ Are the Lin family really that short of money?

Why was it getting so hard to gauge this woman’s actions?

Zong Jinghao did not say a word. Lin Xinyan thought that the price didn’t agree with him. “I’m really not asking for too much. If you think it’s too expensive, how about we talk it over for a bit more?”

“No need. The price is fine.”

“Sure.” Lin Xinyan took the documents in her hands and stood up from the table. “I might not get to all this right now. But I’ll take this back to my room and translate it so that you can have something to work with.”

“Hold on for a minute.”



**“Is there anything wrong?”**

**Lin Xinyan peered at him with a puzzled expression on her face.**

**“It is my hope that you understand something.”**

**C14 He Just Realized He Doesn't Know Her Anymore**

**“Tell me what it is.” Lin Xinyan could not hide the confusion in her tone.**

**Zong Jinghao hefted himself up from the chair and walked with deliberate steps toward Lin Xinyan under the brightness of the lights. His footsteps were measured and slow. Finally, he was in front of Lin Xinyan. With his figure towering over Lin Xinyan, he said in a condescending voice, “We are still husband and wife, so don't try to be intimate with other men.”**

**Even though this marriage might not have been her idea in the first place, she would never have the audacity to bring him a green hat during their marriage!**

**Since this was all about his bottom line and his dignity as a man, she would never dare to cross the line!**

**It took a while for Lin Xinyan to form a proper reaction since she was still mulling it over in her head. Who could she be having intimate relations with?**

**Upon reflex, she retorted instinctively, “And here you are sleeping with other women? Would it be too forward of me, as your wife, to forbid you from doing such a thing?”**

**The frown on Zong Jinghao's face grew even more. “I've never slept with her.”**

**Hearing this made Lin Xinyan pause for just a moment. It was obvious that Bai Zhuwei had stayed over for the night.**

**Who in their right minds would believe that they weren't sleeping together?**

**Wait, so what if they slept together? What did it have anything to do with her?**

**It was hard to grasp the changing emotions that were being displayed on Zong Jinghao's face. What did he mean?**

**Lin Xinyan didn't want to fight with him anymore, so she softened her tone and said, "I will do my best to heed your request. Then I..."**

**She shook the pile of paper in her hand to imply what she meant.**

**Zong Jinghao responded with a touch of anger in his tone. But the anger wasn't directed towards Lin Xinyan - he was angry at himself!**

**Why did he have to explain to her?! Couldn't he hold back, if just a little?**

**This is too crazy!**

**He was not used to this type of behavior!**

**He even felt disgusted with himself!**

**Lin Xinyan wanted to finish the translation of the documents as soon as possible so that she could clear more time to spend at her new job at the restaurant.**

By midnight, she had made some leeway; half of the documents were now done. Already she was feeling sleepy. She could barely keep herself awake as her eyelids drooped and many times during the course of the night, she would find herself nodding off to sleep.

In order to renew her spirit, she took her work into the living room, hoping the change of scenery would give her more energy. At that hour, the entire mansion was silent. Zong Jinghao and Nanny Yu should already be in bed and fast asleep.

Placing the papers on the coffee table, she went into the kitchen and poured herself a warm cup of water. With the cup of water in her hands, she went back into the living room and settled on the carpet. With her body leaning over the coffee table, she continued on with her translation.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Feeling thirsty, Zong Jinghao got up in the middle of the night to pour himself a glass of water. Once he got down the stairs, he could see Lin Xinyan was still busy translating the documents. He could not help but frown slightly.

However, he watched her quietly but did not say a word. Lin Xinyan noticed him on the peripheral of her vision but didn't take any action in greeting him.

Zong Jinghao was used to having the house to himself. Seeing the cup of water on the table he saw nothing wrong with picking it up and drinking from it.

“That...”

Lin Xinyan wanted to say something but after seeing that he had drunk from the cup that she had originally drunk out of, she didn't know how to put her exasperation into words so she just tossed it

aside.

Seeing her hesitate, Zong Jinghao finally understood what she was hinting at. He stared at her face for a good few seconds and then lowered his head to peer at the cup. Under the glare of the white light, he could see a half-overlapping, shallow lip print that wasn't his on the mouth of the cup.

He stared at the overlapped lip print, which was the exact same spot where he had been drinking water earlier.

It was obvious that he was using a used cup just now. Together with Lin Xinyan's reaction, he was sure that the cup was hers.

Lin Xinyan lowered her eyes, pretending she did not see anything. And nothing out of the ordinary had occurred.

But for some reason, the temperature on her face rose.

They were still relative strangers to each other. For them to share the same cup appeared to be a too intimate gesture.

Although this happened by accident, Lin Xinyan could still not hide her embarrassment.

Zong Jinghao's lips moved and the tip of his tongue grazed his lower lip. Seeming without thinking, he gulped down the leftover water in the cup.

He set down the empty cup, walked over to the clock, and looked at the time. It was already one o'clock in the morning. "Isn't it about time you head to bed?"

Lin Xinyan dropped her gaze, not daring to return his look. "I'm not feeling sleepy yet."

Zong Jinghao gave her a silent look that lasted for two seconds, then abruptly turned around and went up the stairs.

As he was walking up the stairs, he suddenly recalled that she said she had applied for a translator job at the company, but she was not accepted. He found this very surprising. Wanting to get to the bottom of this, he headed back to his room, picked up the phone, and called Guan Jin.

Guan Jin always slept soundly at night. When he was jolted awake by the phone call, this placed him in a bad mood. Annoyed that his sleep was interrupted, he grabbed the phone off the bedside table. About to let loose a barrage of curses to the person on the other line, when he looked to see the name displayed on the phone, he immediately straightened up his act. Rubbing his eyes sleepily, he picked up the phone. "Director Zong."

"I need you to go and check the HR Department to see why they are rejecting the recruitment of translators."

"What? Could you repeat that?" Before Guan Jin could fully grasp what was going on, the person on the other line had already hung up the phone.

He stared dumbfoundedly at his phone. Why was it necessary to wake him up in the middle of the night for such a small matter?

Guan Jin's face was twisting out of annoyance.

Why did they have to disturb his sweet dreams for this?

Although he complained, he dared not to neglect this matter.

The next day, Nanny Yu walked into the living room to find Lin Xinyan fast asleep at the table. Though she didn't understand the pile of papers in front of her, she knew it was work-related. She could not help but sigh in her heart. "You need to sleep. Work should come second now that you're pregnant."

Since this was beyond her comprehension, Nanny Yu went back upstairs to get a blanket to put over her.

At this time, Zong Jinghao was coming down the stairs and witnessed the scene of Nanny Yu covering Lin Xinyan with a blanket. He could see the fine lines at the corner of her eyes and they were drawn deeply to give her the look of someone who had seen and been through a lot during their lifetime.

He came over and bent down to pick up the document Lin Xinyan had translated to give it closer inspection. All twenty-two documents were completely translated. She had finished them all by hand.

By the time she had finished these, the sun had probably already risen. Did this mean this woman had stayed up for the entire night?

Zong Jinghao couldn't help but give her a closer look.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Nanny Yu sighed helplessly, at a loss at what to say.

Instead, she walked to the kitchen to start preparing breakfast.

By the time Lin Xinyan woke up, she could hear Zong Jinghao in the kitchen eating breakfast. Rubbing her eyes sleepily, she tried lifting herself up but found both her legs had fallen asleep. Needles

prickled them and she found she could not get up.

She had to give them a good rub before she could finally get up to walk.

Looking down at her crumpled clothes, she thought a shower would do her good. She headed towards the bathroom to wash up and refresh herself with a hot shower.

After Lin Xinyan dressed and walked out of the bathroom, she placed the translated documents in front of Zong Jinghao so that he would have a good look. "All finished."

She joined him at the kitchen table and sat down to eat. After thinking for a moment, she said, "If it's not too much to ask, I'd like the money now."

Afraid that he had forgotten, Lin Xinyan took the initiative to remind him.

After taking a sip of coffee, Zong Jinghao put his coffee cup down and stared at her for two seconds. "I am not in the habit of carrying cash around. Go to the company later to find me."

Having said that, he stood up and left.

Lin Xinyan drank her milk and tried not to think about it. It was alright as long as he kept his word.

The reason why Lin Xinyan was working so hard to get all the documents translated was that she wanted to get them out of the way so that she could focus on her work at the restaurant today.

Not long after Zong Jinghao departed, Lin Xinyan also left the house.

Lin Xinyan had to change into a uniform that consisted of a white shirt, a black vest, a bow neckline, and a skirt that covered her bottom, yet exposed her straight, slender legs.

Bai Zhuwei, who was seated near the window, was in a particularly good mood that day. Just now, Zong Jinghao had asked her out for a meal.

Even though Zong Jinghao admitted they were in a relationship and promised that he would marry her, he never asked her out. It was always her who always took the initiative.

“Ah Hao!”

“It came to my attention that when Lin Xinyan applied to be a translator, it was you who prevented her from joining?” Guan Jin had greeted him with the news when he had arrived at the company early in the morning.

It was Bai Zhuwei who had interfered with the recruitment process.

Bai Zhuwei’s fists clenched tightly in her lap. How did he learn about this?

Facing Bai Zhuwei head-on, Zong Jinghao was unfazed as he leaned back against his chair. The warm sunlight coming through the window illuminated his entire body.

At this time, he couldn’t wrap his mind around the reason why this person would save his life when he was young. She wasn’t the sort of woman who would go out of her way to do anything that she couldn’t benefit off of.

C15 Is That Child Yours?

Trying to suppress the panic in her heart, Bai Zhuwei demurely lowered her eyes, and said with a faint glow, “She is around you day and night. If she becomes a translator at your company, the two of you will only grow closer. I’m afraid that with such close proximity, you two will start to develop feelings for each other.”



This matter was about to get out of hand, and in order to stop it from growing into a bigger problem, she told him the truth. The only thing she was afraid of was losing him.

She widened her big watery eyes at him. “We’ve known each other for a long time, so you know exactly how I feel about you...”

Bai Zhuwei could barely hold back her tears as she said, “When I saw her apply for your company, it was my fears of losing you that pushed me to reject her application.”

The frown on Zong Jinghao’s face grew noticeably. “I’ve already told you before, the divorce will happen in a month’s time.”

It was because Bai Zhuwei knew Lin Xinyan was the girl from that night, she couldn’t prolong things for any longer. After so many years of waiting, she found herself growing impatient. Asking her to wait a little longer was just asking for too much.

She would do everything in her power to prevent Lin Xinyan from getting closer to Zong Jinghao!

This will definitely not happen!

“Lin Xinyan, take this dish over to table number two.”

Lin Xinyan answered, but she didn’t know if it was because she had stayed up most of the night, but when she had arrived at work today, whenever she was on her feet, she felt a faint feeling of pain coming from her lower abdomen.

Deciding to just bear the pain, she carried the tray as she walked over to table number two. As she closed the distance between her and the table, Lin Xinyan could see that one of the diners was Bai

**Zhuwei.**

**She did not need to give too much thought to who the other person was.**

**After walking a couple of steps, her footsteps stopped. But this was her job, and even if she wanted to, she couldn't hide from him.**

**Maintaining a polite smile on her face, she said, "Here's your order."**

**Lin Xinyan bent down and one by one brought over the dishes from the tray.**

**When she was placing the plate in front of Zong Jinghao, she suddenly felt the sensation of her wrist being grabbed. "What is it that you think you're doing?"**

**There was no doubt the cold questioning tone in his voice.**

**His eyes lingered over her body. She was dressed in a white blouse, a black vest, a short shirt that only covered her hips, exposing a pair of thin, straight, white legs.**

**He stared at her legs for a few seconds, his grim expression showing his displeasure.**

**Don't want to watch ads?**

**Get premium to remove ads**

**Why was she dressed that way? Who was she showing off to?**

It made no difference. She was a married woman. She had no business here.

Lin Xinyan maintained her smile. "I'm working right now."

Zong Jinghao's frown had a hint of anger to it. After finishing with the translations yesterday, she had asked him for money, and now she was here waitressing. Has the Lin family fallen into rough times?

"Can you please let me go?" Lin Xinyan didn't put much thought into it. She knew she needed to rely on herself to make money.

Bai Zhuwei shook Zong Jinghao's hand to get his attention. "Hao, a lot of people are watching us. If there's anything, let's go out and work this out."

People had yet to know about Zong Jinghao and Lin Xinyan's marriage. Bai Zhuwei didn't want to give Zong Jinghao the chance to announce this to the world.

Zong Jinghao gave Lin Xinyan a long look before he was able to contain his anger. He let go of her hand and said, "I forbid you from working here."

Suddenly the pain in her lower abdomen became more intense. Sweat began to gather on her forehead. She wanted to explain herself, but she couldn't bear the pain anymore and just grabbed the tray and left.

She put down the tray and went straight into the bathroom. The stabbing pain scared her. Fortunately, there was no bleeding.

After her inspection, she walked out of the stall and stood over the sink, washing her hands. With her head lowered, she touched her belly and said, "Baby, you be good now."

**Your mommy needs to make money so that she can take care of her mother and you.**

**It was at that moment that Bai Zhuwei walked in just in time to hear her say those words. Her gaze was trained on her abdomen, and her face paled noticeably having witnessed this intimate moment between mother and child.**

**Seeing her pale face, Lin Xinyan explained, "The child is not Zong Jinghao's, so you don't have to be nervous."**

**Lin Xinyan got a hold of herself and walked past her toward the bathroom door.**

**"Are you two months along?" Bai Zhuwei turned around to stare at her.**

**Hearing this, Lin Xinyan stopped in her tracks and turned around. "How did you know?"**

**"It was my guess just from looking at your stomach." Bai Zhuwei's words were slow and deliberate.**

**This woman was actually pregnant?**

**Zong Jinghao's baby?!**

**More than ever, it was obvious this woman's time on this planet was getting numbered!**

**At this very moment, Bai Zhuwei was thinking of drastic measures to get rid of this woman and make her disappear out of Zong Jinghao's world!**

**Once Lin Xinyan walked out of the bathroom, she was immediately dragged out of the restaurant by**

Zong Jinghao.

The discomfort she was feeling increased as she was being dragged away by Zong Jinghao.

“Let go of me!” She wanted to tell him off, but with what little strength or momentum she had left was not enough to fend him off.

Zong Jinghao hauled her all the way to the roadside before he was satisfied. He said in a stern voice, “If you’re lacking any money, all you need to do is tell me. There’s no need for the pitiful act you had staged for today.”

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

He did not believe that the Lin family had fallen into such hard times. It was just two days ago that Lin Guoan had taken his wife and daughter to a luxury store to spend some money. But here she was actually working at a restaurant as a waitress?

Lin Xinyan leaned against the billboard on the side of the road to get her bearings. Otherwise, the pain would prove to be too much. She tried her best to pull herself together. “Even though you and I are husband and wife, we both know that is only on paper. What I do is none of Mr. Zong’s business.”

“Because you are my wife, working at such a job would put me at a risk of losing face!” He couldn't believe this woman. Nobody could understand why she did the things she did.

With pursed lips, Lin Xinyan tried to silently endure the pain.

Just when she thought she couldn't take it anymore, Hee Ruize quickly rushed over. “Xinyan, I was

looking for you. I never expected to find you here. How are you feeling? Is there something wrong?"

As a psychologist, it was his specialty to know the face very well. Even though Lin Xinyan was trying to put on a brave front, he still noticed that she looked uncomfortable.

Ever since they parted ways that day, he went to her residence to find Zhuang Zijin. From his talk with Zhuang Zijin, he learned everything there was to know about Lin Xinyan, including the unborn child in her womb and how it came about.

He had yet to name the churning emotions in his heart. Altogether, it was not a pleasant feeling.

If she was facing troubled times, why didn't she come to him for help?!

He set out to look for her, but he didn't know where she lived, so he revisited the place they met yesterday to try his luck. Little did he expect he would actually walk into her today.

Lin Xinyan could care less about this right now. The pain in her lower abdomen was growing unbearable. She grabbed ahold of Hee Ruize's arm and said, "I need to go to the hospital right now."

Hee Ruize glanced over at her lower abdomen. While he was bending over to hug her in his arms, a sudden force fell on his shoulder.

He turned his head to inspect the source.

Zong Jinghao's face had noticeably turned dark. "That's my wife."

His tone of voice was neither light nor heavy, but it was persuasive enough to intimidate.

It seemed to be a word of warning to him: That's my wife, and no one is allowed to lay a finger on her!

Hee Ruize could not contain it any longer. He laughed and ridiculed. "You are actually husband and wife?"

Before Zong Jinghao had time to react, he continued, "This is just a partnership. No one in their right minds would marry a woman with a child already in her womb."

Zong Jinghao's aura grew dangerous as he narrowed his eyes and said, "Is that child yours?"

C16 Get It Right

That day he had witnessed Lin Xinyan in his arms.

If this wasn't his baby, then whose was it?

Hee Ruize's heart ached for her. Things would not have escalated if she had found him that day of the car accident.

But according to Zong Jinghao, Hee Ruize was actually admitting it. He sneered hatefully, "She's only 18 years old..."

"You don't know anything!" His eyes were a little red from his emotional outburst. He knew what Zong Jinghao was hinting at: none of this would have happened if Lin Xinyan had loved herself more.

Only eighteen and she was pregnant. She was very casual with her body!

But did he know exactly what she had to go through?

Hee Ruize gave Zong Jinghao a once-over. From just a glance, he could see that the expensive suit was probably the yearly salary of a regular person.

“Such a noble young master like yourself will never have to experience the hardships of an ordinary person. You never have to deal with hunger, with the knowledge that there is no food to eat. Nor the helplessness of being driven into a corner. This is exactly it! You don’t know! And you continue to be ignorant about how she managed to survive until this very day...”

Lin Xinyan grabbed Hee Ruize and tried to stop him. She didn’t need any more sympathy, nor anyone to pity her. She just needed to continue living so that she could take care of her mother and the baby in her womb.

“I need you to take me to the hospital right now.” The pain was so intense, she thought that she would collapse in the next second.

“Alright.” Hee Ruize bent over and took her in his arms.

Lin Xinyan looked back to see Zong Jinghao’s stunned face, who appeared surprised by Hee Ruize’s words. “Sorry, but I can’t put a halt to my waitressing job. You don’t need to worry though. I’ll keep my relationship with you under wraps, so no one would find out. You don’t have to feel ashamed.”

Zong Jinghao had a frown on his face and his eyes flickered with an unnamed emotion. Then, his gaze surveyed her face, taking in every detail. This woman...

From just a glance, passersby wouldn’t be able to glean Lin Xinyan’s current condition, but Hee Ruize, who was holding her, could see that she was shaking. Hee Ruize carried her into the car and gave her several words of comfort. “You don’t need to be afraid. If you don’t see red, everything will be alright.”

After that, Hee Ruize rushed into the car as fast as he could and sped to the hospital.



Zong Jinghao's eyes did not leave the car that was getting smaller and smaller in the distance. He was still mulling over the words that Hee Ruize had spoken to him. What secrets could Lin Xinyan possibly be hiding?

Could it be that she was compromised? This made sense why so many of her actions seemed so strange.

To get a better grip on things, he got out his phone and made a call to Guan Jin.

"I need you to investigate Lin Xinyan."

"What do I want to know about her?"

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

"Leave nothing out."

Having said that, Zong Jinghao hung up the phone.

"Hao." Bai Zhuwei rushed out of the restaurant and grabbed his arm. "Do you still blame me for not letting Lin Xinyan into the company? I know. It's my fault. But I just love you too much."

"No, let's head back." His voice and expression were unmoved and did not fluctuate at all.

His veiled expression allowed no one to see through his hidden emotions.

Bai Zhuwei began to feel uneasy.

Who was he interacting with just now?

Hospital.

Lin Xinyan's condition was so urgent that upon arrival at the hospital she was sent to the operating room.

Hee Ruize impatiently waited outside. All kinds of things were running through his mind as he waited. The waiting had become so torturous, he often peered into the operation room from time to time, hoping to learn something from the sterile setting of the hospital doorway.

After about an hour of waiting, the door to the operation room was finally opened and Lin Xinyan was pushed out on a stretcher. Hee Ruize immediately rushed to her side and asked the doctor, "How is she doing?"

The doctor took off his mask and said, "She appears overworked and there were signs of a miscarriage. But with some rest, she will be fine now. If she doesn't take care of herself right away, next time she might not be so lucky."

"Yes, I know." Hee Ruize took action to push her into the ward.

Lin Xinyan peered up at Hee Ruize and said in a sincere voice, "Thank you for always being there for me."

Always by her side when she needed him most.

**“I’m glad that you’re fine now.” Hee Ruize opened his mouth to reveal his usual kind smile.**

**“You’re the one who helped me with the payment, right? I owe you for that too.” Lin Xinyan worriedly bit down on her dry lips.**

**“We can put this aside for now. You need your rest.” Hee Ruize didn’t like her putting more distance between them. So he tried to put her mind at ease about the matter.**

**After arriving at the ward, Lin Xinyan looked over at him. “Can you please call my mother? And let her know I’m at the hospital?”**

**She didn’t want to trouble Hee Ruize too much.**

**Her request was nothing out of the ordinary. When people are not feeling their best, they naturally want their loved ones to be close.**

**He took out his cell phone and gave Zhuang Zijin a call. He gave her the gist about what happened - that Lin Xinyan was currently at the hospital and to come over.**

**Zhuang Zijin panicked when she heard the news. “Is there anything wrong? Did something happen to Xinyan?”**

**“Everything should be fine now. She just needs her rest. She asked to see you.”**

**Zhuang Zijin heaved a huge sigh of relief when she heard that Lin Xinyan will be okay.**

**She got to the hospital as fast as she could.**

When Zhuang Zijin arrived by Lin Xinyan's bedside, Lin Xinyan turned to Hee Ruize and told him he could go.

"Yes, we don't want to trouble you anymore," Zhuang Zijin was the first to apologize.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

"It's alright. I'll head out right now and see you tomorrow." Hee Ruize looked over at her. "Be sure to rest well."

"I'll be sure to."

After Hee Ruize left the room, Zhuang Zijin moved closer to her daughter and placed a blanket over her. "Do you want to eat anything?"

Lin Xinyan shook her head. The surgery had worn her out.

Seeing Lin Xinyan like this did not alleviate the worries in Zhuang Zijin's heart.

"You could've had everything, but you lost all that when you had to take care of me. Your education had to take the backseat and now..."

Thinking about the unborn child in her stomach, Zhuang Zijin felt a stab of pain shoot through her heart. "You said you got pregnant at A Nation. What if the child turns out to be yellow-haired and blue-eyed?"

It was obvious Zhuang Zijin was currently concerned that he would be a local.

“No matter how he turns out, he’s still my child and your grandson.” Lin Xinyan didn’t want to talk about it anymore. It wasn’t a good memory for her.

“A Nation?” Zong Jinghao came to the hospital to see how Lin Xinyan was doing. He decided against knocking on the door when he found Zhuang Zijin already inside chatting with her. He didn’t want to disturb their mother and daughter quality time.

“Okay, no matter what he looks like, whether he is born with white or yellow skin, I will accept him as my grandson all the same.” Zhuang Zijin already had the chance to think things through. As long as her daughter was happy, whatever life throws at them, she would be willing to just deal with it and take care of her.

Perhaps all their fates were intertwined.

After all, she was no stranger to children.

Zhuang Zijin touched her forehead and feelings of sorrow immediately surged up in her heart. “My daughter, all this suffering because of me.”

“She is still with child?” Left in the dark about this matter, more and more Zong Jinghao felt like this woman was a mystery.

She had obviously entered the operating room that day.

Since it was obvious they were sharing an intimate and private moment, he didn’t want to disturb them. He turned and walked out of the door.

When he was about to reach the entrance to the hospital, his phone alerted him to a call. He took it out, and on the display, it read Guan Jin's name.

He answered the call.

"The matter has been investigated."

C17 She's the Kind of Person Who Gets Pregnant at the Age of 18

Zong Jinghao nodded his head slightly. Noticeably his jawline became tighter. He spat out one word, "Speak."

"Eight years ago, Lin Guoan and Zhuang Zijin divorced each other at A Nation where they lived for a while. In those eight years, they never returned. It was only recently that Lin Guoan brought them back."

Zong Jinghao could not help but frown. This was how she became so knowledgeable in the language of A Nation.

"That's all you uncovered?" It was obvious, this tidbit of information was not enough to satisfy him.

Guan Jin took that moment to pause for a bit before opening his mouth again to say more. "After Zhuang Zijin arrived at A Nation, she gave birth to an autistic boy. They were living in poverty and to make matters worse, this boy happened to be in a car accident before they were able to get back."

Zong Jinghao's face scrunched up into a frown and his expression became more grave due to the seriousness of the situation. Was the sadness he always perceived in her eyes because of her brother?

About the child in her belly... "Her brother is gone? And she's close to no one else?"

"Only a doctor of the mind is close to her." Guan Jin carefully looked over the information the

investigators had collected. “But no, she was never in a relationship while going to school, and no other men ever got close to her.”

Guan Jin didn’t have to say it outright. But it looks like the child in her belly might have belonged to the psychiatrist.

Did she return because of her engagement with him? Was that the reason for her presence in the country, so that she could come back and marry him?

Because of her life in A Nation, was that why she loved money so much? That’s why she wanted to earn money for translating the documents and wanted to make a living working at the restaurant.

Giving this some thought, it finally made sense why Lin Xinyan was behaving so strangely.

It was at this time that he also understood what Hee Ruize’s words meant.

Thinking things over, he moodily walked down the stairs and left the hospital in his car.

In the hospital.

Lin Xinyan had skipped lunch, so her rumbling stomach was reminding her that she was hungry now.

“Mom, I feel like some Eight Treasures Rice right now.” Lin Xinyan was suddenly craving somethingsweet.

Zhuang Zijin had a very traditional mindset. It was to her understanding that a woman who was pregnant and was picky would only prefer certain types of foods.

As an old saying went: sour son hot girl, I don't know if she is pregnant with a boy or a girl.

"I'll head back and cook this for you." Zhuang Zijin stood up, but she was afraid there would be no one to take care of her daughter if she left now.

Lin Xinyan seemed to see through her mother's distress, so she smiled and said, "I'm fine, really. The doctor said that after a proper rest I'll be okay."

If it wasn't because she was still worried about the child in her womb, she would have been discharged long ago.

Zhuang Zijin nodded her head and told her to rest easy before leaving the ward.

Just as Zhuang Zijin was getting out of the car and heading inside to the residential complex, a couple of women blocked her path.

They were all residents of the district.

During her time living here, never had a conflict of interest arose over any matter. Zhuang Zijin could do little to keep the frown off her face as she asked, "What do you need?"

"Is your daughter pregnant before marriage? She's currently pregnant with a bastard, right?" The first to speak up was a chubby middle-aged woman who looked like she didn't mind getting up in someone else's business.

Next was someone living right next door to Zhuang Zijin.



Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

“I come across you guys regularly but never would I have thought that your daughter would be the kind of person to get pregnant outside of marriage. Correct me if I’m wrong, but didn’t you say last time that your daughter was only 18 years old?”

The unease on Zhuang Zijin’s face was noticeable as her features shifted from green to white. Her voice trembled as she addressed the women, “You, where are you getting this nonsense from?”

“Did we get this wrong? Is your daughter not pregnant at all?”

Zhuang Zijin’s hand resting on her purse trembled slightly. Yes, it was true. Her daughter was pregnant.

“Utter shamelessness!”

“That’s right, she got together with a man even at such a young age. Even though her looks are pure and innocent, she’s really a total bitch!”

“You speak words of truth. Outside she appears pure and innocent, but this was only for show. She would go behind her mother’s back and do dirty things...”

“Shut up! Who said you could say such things?” Enraged, Zhuang Zijin’s face twisted grotesquely in anger.

Seeing her outburst, the others turned to give each other knowing looks.

Zhuang Zijin tried to get ahold of herself as she clutched her rapidly rising and falling chest. Taking deep breaths, once more she tried to defend her daughter with a steady and stern voice. "You've made a mistake. My daughter isn't who you think she is!"

She felt her heart being torn in two. These people got it wrong. Her daughter was not this kind of person.

What were they doing causing them so much pain?

"Do you deny it? Then why does she have a bastard child in her stomach at the age of 18?"

Zhuang Zijin was struck dumb. It was a fact that Lin Xinyan was pregnant.

She knew that people would blame her for becoming pregnant. But she never expected their outcry of her daughter to be so blatant and harsh.

"Get out of my way!" Zhuang Zijin pushed them roughly away and quickly made her way into the district.

Even though their words had left her furious, she had to think of her daughter in the hospital. She suppressed her raging emotions and settled down to prepare the dish for her daughter.

She thought she had everything under control, but when she arrived at the hospital to bring food over to her daughter, Lin Xinyan was able to see right through her.

"Mom, what's wrong? Your face..."

"It's nothing. I'm fine." Zhuang Zijin did not want to put her daughter through what she had experienced today.

Lin Xinyan stared at Zhuang Zijin trying to avoid her look. She knew better than to look into people's eyes when she lied. She didn't want Lin Xinyan to catch her in a lie.

It was obvious she had lied.

Lin Xinyan decided to just let things be and took the Eight Treasures Rice from her mother.

The dish was clearly very sweet, but she couldn't feel any pleasure from it. The only thing she felt was pain.

She lowered her gaze. "Mom, if you need me, I can be discharged from the hospital tomorrow. I'll be able to stay home with you for a few days."

Zhuang Zijin's pale face must be because she missed her brother.

This was her mother's burden.

Zhuang Zijin was shocked, but she was determined not to trouble Lin Xinyan. "No."

She could not possibly let her hear those hurtful words?

Lin Xinyan's face held a frown on it. "Mom..."

"Now you listen to me. "Zhuang Zijin tried to put on a serious face. "No matter what kind of arrangement we have, you are already married into the Zong family, so you should stay where you are."

Zhuang Zijin's reaction was so out of character, Lin Xinyan had to think things over a little more.

She was quiet. She only swallowed the food so that the baby would have something to eat.

She slept very little, tossing and turning the entire night.

Only once the sky would brighten outside would she finally be able to fall asleep. However, it would only be a short while later that it would be time for her to get up.

In the morning, Hee Ruize came to take over while Zhuang Zijin went to cook more food for Lin Xinyan.

Once Zhuang Zijin left the room, Lin Xinyan tried getting out of bed and Hee Ruize hurried over to help her.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

She peered over at Hee Ruize and said, "It looks like my mom is not telling me something."

"What could it be?" Hee Ruize asked.

"I don't know, but I want to find out." She paused at that moment. "I need to ask you a favor."

"No problem. Go ahead."

**“I want to follow her around for a day.”**

**And see what she had to hide.**

**Zhuang Zijin made it clear that it was her wish that she stay at home, where her husband needed her most.**

**However, her reaction yesterday was too extreme.**

**It was not like her at all.**

**Her mother was her last remaining relative, and she couldn't let her mother silently endure things without her knowing about it.**

**Hee Ruize only agreed to her request after he was sure that it was okay with the doctors.**

**Her ride home was very quiet. Without meeting any trouble along the way, Zhuang Zijin got out of the car and walked into the house.**

**Lin Xinyan followed closely behind.**

**Once she got off the elevator, Lin Xinyan saw the graffiti on their residence. The words “shameless,” “unmarried,” and “insulted” were painted in big offensive letters on the walls and doors.**

**On shaky feet, Zhuang Zijin stood in front of the doorway, her entire body trembling in anger. She swayed a little unsteadily before crumpling to the ground.**

**“Mom!”**

**Hee Ruize rushed over and took the slumped form of Zhuang Zijin into his arms. “We need to take her to the hospital now.”**

**The writing on the wall had obviously aggravated her.**

**Lin Xinyan choked back her sobs.**

**Mother’s health declined after her brother’s death, plus she had to deal with the aftereffects of the car accident, so her well-being was very fragile.**

**Such harassment would make her very angry.**

**Her mother’s condition made her very worried.**

**Upon receiving her at the hospital, Zhuang Zijin was immediately sent to the emergency room.**

**Lin Xinyan stood in the doorway, completely clueless. Hee Ruize headed over and put his arm around her shoulders as a gesture of comfort. “You don’t need to worry.”**

**When Zong Jinghao returned back home, he found out that Lin Xinyan was still not there. Thinking that her stay at the hospital had been prolonged, he drove over to pay her a visit.**

**Possibly because the new information he had learned from Guan Jin had shined a new light on Lin Xinyan’s situation, or maybe because she was his wife, but all of a sudden, he had more room in his heart for Lin Xinyan.**

He came to the hospital, but she was nowhere in sight. Right when he was about to leave, he caught a glimpse of her and Hee Ruize embracing each other in the corridor.

The fire in his heart ignited...

C18 Show Me Some Love

A fire was burning in his heart. The sensation was so strange that he at first didn't know how to deal with it.

His voice was cold and devoid of emotions as he shouted, "What are you doing showing your love here?!"

Where was this sound coming from...

Though they had been together for a relatively short time, Lin Xinyan could right away tell who the voice belonged to the moment it entered her ears. She felt her entire body stiffen as she turned around.

Standing not too far away from them, he faced her with a cold expression on his features. "What are you doing ignoring what I told you last time?"

Lin Xinyan subconsciously extracted herself out of Hee Ruize's arms. She had been too preoccupied about Zhuang Zijin's well-being to keep contact between her and Hee Ruize minimal.

"I..."

Lin Xinyan was getting ready to explain, but Hee Ruize stopped her. He looked over at Zong Jinghao and said, "Your marriage is only supposed to last a month, so there's no need for you to interfere in her private affairs."

Knowing this person very well, Hee Ruize could only feel heartache and regret for Lin Xinyan. Therefore, he wanted to do everything in his power to cherish and protect her.

Zong Jinghao's eyes were trained on Hee Ruize, who had a tight grip on Lin Xinyan's wrist. After a slight pause, he let out an extremely mocking sneer. "You allowed this woman, who got pregnant with your child, to get married and now you want to take everything back by snatching her?"

The ugly sneer could not be wiped from his lips. With a piercing gaze, which was as sharp as a sword, he went straight for the kill. "Are you a man?"

Lin Xinyan's heart was racing in her chest. She felt ashamed, angry, and helpless all at the same time.

He actually believed that the father of the child in her belly was Hee Ruize. She would always be grateful for Hee Ruize and give him the respect he deserved. How could she dare involve him in this way?

She pulled herself out of Hee Ruize's hold and looked over at Zong Jinghao. "You don't need to beat around the bush. If you're making a point to talk about me, then be more forthright about it. Please don't go around insulting others."

Zong Jinghao never expected Lin Xinyan to be so brazen!

It was obvious they really loved each other!

Only in his eyes, it was really laughable and infuriating.

This was his wife, and here she was not hiding her love for another man in front of him!



**An inexplicable rage was boiling inside him!**

**However, he could not refute what Hee Ruize had just said. Their marriage was a mere agreement between the two parties and he had no right to criticize their relationship. However, seeing them together was a thorn in his eye.**

**"Come to me if you still want to acquire more land from Shallow Bay." Having said his piece, he turned around left without looking back.**

**Hearing this, Lin Xinyan was lost in her thoughts for a few seconds. She had already given up on him relinquishing the land to her. But here he was dangling this in front of her again.**

**She found this extremely tempting.**

**If she could control the ownership rights on this piece of land, she would have more bargaining power instead of constantly being under Lin Guoan's thumb.**

**Mulling this over, Lin Xinyan pursed her lips thoughtfully.**

**"Xinyan." Seeing Lin Xinyan so affected by Zong Jinghao's words was making Hee Ruize worried.**

**Lin Xinyan looked at Hee Ruize and shook her head. "I'm okay."**

**After waiting for 20 minutes, Zhuang Zijin was pushed outside of the operation room. The doctor said that Zhuang Zijin's fainting spell was due to a bout of anxiety.**

As a mother, Zhuang Zijin couldn't hold it together when she heard others blacking her daughter's name like that.

"The patient's vital signs and energy levels are off the charts. It's best to not overstimulate her, so please try to keep your voices down." After arriving at the ward, the doctor took his time to give them his instructions.

Lin Xinyan nodded her head. "Thank you, Doctor."

Lin Xinyan knew that her brother's death was a huge blow to her mother. If it wasn't for her sake, she probably would not have held on for this long.

Thinking that it would best benefit her to distract her mother from this sad place, Lin Xinyan decided to stir her clear from this subject matter altogether.

Unexpectedly, her matter had come up, nearly upending everything.

However, not many people knew that she was pregnant. Who spread the rumors?

And why would he go out of his way to make her life harder?

What was his purpose for doing so?

Hee Ruize could see that she was thinking things over and walked right over to say, "You and your mother can't live there anymore. Let me find some place new for you."

Lin Xinyan nodded her head. Thinking back to how traumatized her mother was by the graffiti, she couldn't stay in such a place any longer.

**"I want to know exactly who the culprit is." Lin Xinyan knew this wasn't a coincidence, but someone intending to send a message.**

**"Just leave it to me." Hee Ruize smiled at her. "I'm your brother, so it's my responsibility to find the guilty party."**

**Lin Xinyan turned her gaze to Hee Ruize and suddenly felt a pang in her heart. He was really too good to her and she did not know how she would ever be able to repay him.**

**She silently lowered her head at a loss for words. She had made up her mind. Once she was back on her feet, she would definitely do everything in her power to repay him for his troubles.**

**Now what she needed was for someone to help her figure out all this mess.**

**Otherwise, she would always feel uneasy over the matter. Even if they moved, who knew if someone would go out of their way to make trouble for them, purposely making their lives harder.**

**Lin Xinyan was feeling distressed as she thought back to what Zong Jinghao had said before leaving.**

**Hee Ruize thought she was looking a little worn down, so he said, "You should go back and rest first. I'll take over from here."**

**"But..."**

**"I've been working here at the hospital since the beginning. So they've situated me with my own office and restroom. It would be no trouble at all for me to take care of your mother."**

Lin Xinyan looked at Zhuang Zijin's unconscious form. After a pause, she said, "If anything arises, please call me."

Only after she made sure Hee Ruize had her phone number down did Lin Xinyan leave the hospital.

Once she got back to the villa, only Nanny Yu was at the house. She could not help but frown and ask, "Is he home?"

Nanny Yu's eyes turned toward the study room. "He's waiting inside."

Lin Xinyan changed out of her shoes and walked in the direction of the study. She hesitated a bit before knocking on the door.

After knocking a few times, but with no one answering, she gently pushed open the door.

Zong Jinghao was leaning his head back against on the chair with his eyes closed. It was left in the air if he had just dozed off or if he had really fallen asleep.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

In a leisurely pace, Lin Xinyan walked in slowly until she stood in front of the desk. She whispered in a soft voice, afraid she was disturbing him. "Mr. Zong?"

Slowly Zong Jinghao opened his eyes and stared at the woman standing right in front of him. No one called him Mister. Everyone called him Director Zong or Young Master Zong but never Mister.

With her hands clasped together and cold sweat dripping from her palms, Lin Xinyan said, "I just want to reiterate this: you said you can hand over Shallow Bay to me?"

Although Zong Jinghao had half-dozed off, a trace of cunning appeared at the corner of his mouth. "I'm known as a businessman. I can't do any business that loses money. That would make me look bad."

Lin Xinyan's spirits immediately sank.

Yes, it was only she who had been imagining things.

How could this man go out of his way to help her?

She possessed very little, so what could she exchange for this piece of land?

"I sense that acquiring this land will be very beneficial to you." Zong Jinghao could sense that she was giving up.

Lin Guoan sent her and her mother to a distant country. Her life was hard, and add on the death of her brother, she must despise Lin Guoan even more.

Previously, he thought that Lin Xinyan wanted to offer that piece of land to Lin Guoan, but now upon seeing the facts, this seemed like less and less the case.

"But I have nothing to give to you in return." More than anything, Lin Xinyan wanted to possess that piece of land.

Zong Jinghao raised his eyebrows. There was a hint of maturity behind the light in his eyes. "But you most certainly do."

“What is it?”

“It’s you.”

It took Lin Xinyan a few seconds to react. “Me?”

Zong Jinghao stood up and headed in her direction. He was inching himself closer and closer to Lin Xinyan, so out of reflex, she backed off. Zong Jinghao grabbed ahold of her shoulder and said, “Why are you pulling back? I won’t eat you alive.”

Lin Xinyan didn’t know what she had to be afraid of, but she had a feeling something was amiss.

All of a sudden, a faint smile crossed his lips. “What? Are you feeling guilty because you acted shamefully and didn’t want to face me?”

What could have she done?

Lin Xinyan took that moment to look up. “I have nothing to be guilty about.”

Her chin was lifted so that her eyes directly aligned with Zong Jinghao’s. Slowly her scent was filling Zong Jinghao’s nostrils. This sort of smell was not altogether unfamiliar.

He froze for a moment, but in the next second, he moved forward to pinch her cheek, giving the gesture a dangerous aura. “You’re a married woman who is involved with another man. It’s you who isn’t following the rules of womanhood.”

**C19 That’s Ridiculous**

Lin Xinyan felt like he was acting very strange.

If that was the case, then what about his relationship with Bai Zhuwei?

Besides, she and Hee Ruize weren't together like he made them out to be. What was he doing interfering in her affairs?

"That is none of your business. Please stop interfering with my privacy..."

Her lips were sealed with a kiss before she could finish what she said.

Her words lingered over the air, but the kiss had surprised her so much, she could no longer speak.

"Ugh..."

Lin Xinyan's only reaction was to push him.

Zong Jinghao, who had just regained his senses, stumbled on his feet.

He could not believe this woman!

And as for him - what could he be thinking just now?

Even though he had taken the initiative just then, he had no intention of getting closer to her.

Just as he was watching this woman's pink lips moving to speak, his mind had entered a roadblock. Momentarily, he lost control of himself and did something that shocked even him!

Besides that night, Lin Xinyan had never done anything intimate with any other man.

“On what basis did you do that?” Lin Xinyan subconsciously wiped her lips, feeling violated.

She had never done anything that would point out that she was a casual woman.

How could he?

Zong Jinghao turned around so that his back was facing towards her. “What do you expect? You are my wife.”

Therefore, he would not go overboard with his words!

Lin Xinyan’s eyes widened in shock. What was he saying?

“We are not husband and wife. We just made a deal!” Lin Xinyan’s voice shook as she said this.

After her previous experience, she was afraid of being in such close contact with men.

That night was her worst nightmare!

From then on, she was appalled by intimate relations between men and women.

Too angry to notice Zong Jinghao’s out-of-character behavior, Lin Xinyan was missing several tall tale signs that the kiss had meant something to Zong Jinghao. If her anger hadn’t stood in the way, maybe she would have seen through his calmness that was more like an act than anything.



If Lin Xinyan had been able to calm herself down enough, she would have noticed Zong Jinghao's reddened ears.

"Even if it's a deal, you never said intimate relations were out of the equation." He slowly turned his body around to face Lin Xinyan, who looked like she was on the verge of collapse.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

He could not help but frown.

There was no venom in his kiss, so why did she look so pale?

Or was she defending her relationship with that man?

He slowly made his way towards her. "What sort of man is he that can't even protect the woman who has his affections? There's no way he deserves your love. Is he even worthy of your chastity?"

Lin Xinyan did not understand the meaning behind his words.

Was he talking about Hee Ruize?

Just when Lin Xinyan was about to interrupt him, Zong Jinghao, who appeared to have his emotions all under control, sat himself down in front of the desk. With a lazy and wanton expression, he leaned against the table, resting one palm on the tabletop. The expression on his face was unfazed. It was like the kiss had never happened.

**“I can hand over the location of the Shallow Bay, but...” He paused dramatically for effect. “It will not come free.”**

**Lin Xinyan’s hands became two tight fists as her trembling became out of hand. Her mind became jumbled with all sorts of thoughts. In the end, she just took in Zong Jinghao’s frivolous actions and kept the expression on her face neutral.**

**“Tell me what is it that you want.”**

**Seeming affected, Zong Jinghao lowered his gaze, his voice a little emotional. “I haven’t thought it through yet. I’ll tell you when I come up with something.”**

**Never had he been so impulsive in his life.**

**This was so unexpected!**

**He really wasn't in control of himself today out of all days.**

**Lin Xinyan pursed her lips as she considered her options. It would not be easy for her to take something from Lin Guoan. Getting the valuable trading chips would turn things in her favor when she makes the exchange with Lin Guoan.**

**But...**

**“Don’t worry, I won’t make you commit murder or set fire to something. I won’t request anything that will be on your conscience in the end,” Zong Jinghao saw through her worry and said this in a seductive manner.**

She took that moment to hesitate for a bit. "...Yes, then it's agreed."

She had little to lose, so she had nothing to be afraid of.

If she could restore order, she could take her mother and leave this place and together they could find a quiet place to live without anything holding them back.

"I repeat, in the relationship you have with me, there must be no other man!" Whenever he thought back to the scene of her and Hee Ruize hugging, he could not help the surge of indescribable anger that would rise up in his chest.

"You mean me and..."

"Leave now!" Before she could spit out her sentence, Lin Xinyan was interrupted by Zong Jinghao's outburst.

He wanted to put a stop to her talking about her relationship with that man.

Such things made him very upset!

Lin Xinyan's lips twitched on her face but no words came out. In the end, she just left it at that and turned to leave the room.

The moment the door to the study closed behind her, all the calmness left Zong Jinghao's face.

Perplexed, he rubbed his hands on his forehead. Just then, he had been too impulsive.

Thinking back to that kiss that was short but impressionable, his fingers slipped over his lips where her scent still lingered. Without really knowing it, a faint smile made its way to his lips.

He did not notice he had a smile on his face.

This was too absurd. But more and more, it appeared he was reluctant to leave this relationship.

He could still feel the sensation of her soft lips.

The feeling was very similar to Bai Zhuwei's.

However, after their previous episode, he had not heard back from Bai Zhuwei.

Was it because of something he said?

This was altogether very strange.

After leaving the study, Lin Xinyan decided to not stay at home. Her mother was still in the hospital and she needed to take care of her. Just as she was leaving the house, she bumped into Bai Zhuwei.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Every time she saw her, her appearance would be impeccable: delicate makeup, well-fitted clothes that were beautiful yet dignified, and not a hair on her head would be out of place.

**“Are you heading out?” Bai Zhuwei asked with a smile on her face.**

**“Yes.” Lin Xinyan nodded her head. She wanted to keep their interactions minimal. Though on the outside she looked simple, appearances can be deceiving and that might not be so.**

**“Miss Lin, you married Hao while pregnant with another man’s child. He only married you because his mother had arranged it. I hope you haven’t given it too much thought. It’s me who is his lover.”**

**Lin Xinyan knew what Bai Zhuwei meant.**

**It was she that Zong Jinghao loved and Lin Xinyan could see that. Why did she need to establish this all over again in front of her?**

**Why did it feel like she was bragging?**

**Lin Xinyan gave her a polite smile. “I know my place, so Miss Bai can stop reminding me.”**

**Bai Zhuwei was momentarily stunned. She could not help frowning. Though this girl was young, she had a mature mind.**

**At this time, she noticed that the door to the study room was open. Even though it was only a figure in the doorway, Bai Zhuwei could immediately tell it was Zong Jinghao. With eyes rolled, she reached out to push Lin Xinyan out of the way.**

**Lin Xinyan was with child, so as a mother, her instincts were to protect the baby. As Bai Zhuwei was about to touch her, out of reflex, she pushed back her hand.**

**“Ah!”**

Immediately, upon contact, Bai Zhuwei, who had on a pair of high-heeled shoes, rushed to the ground with nothing to break her fall.

But before she made contact with the ground, Zong Jinghao who saw this scene as he was walking out of the study, hurried over to catch Bai Zhuwei before she could hit the cold surface of the floor.

Bai Zhuwei's heart was thumping wildly in her chest when she suddenly felt the sensation of Zong Jinghao's arms around her. Taking the opportunity to wrap her arms around his neck, she held him close. Her voice came out all hoarse from her fright earlier. "Hao..."

She stopped right there, the frightened look on her face saying it all.

After having recovered from her shock, Lin Xinyan raised her eyes to meet the gaze of Zong Jinghao. He stared unwaveringly back at her. "Who told you to do that?"

Opening her mouth to explain, Lin Xinyan was interrupted by Bai Zhuwei who rushed forward and shook her head back and forth at Zong Jinghao. "It's nothing, really. It had nothing to do with Miss Lin."

If Lin Xinyan had been ignorant of Bai Zhuwei's schemes before, she would be considered a fool if she couldn't see through them now.

She knew their marriage was only on paper, so why did she need to frame her?

What was she trying to prevent?

Lin Xinyan blatantly ignored Zong Jinghao's question and said in a calm voice, "I didn't push her. You can choose to believe me or not. It's up to you."

After having said her piece, she turned around and walked out of the door.

She was responsible for her actions, but if she hadn't done it, why should she admit it?

Besides that, the safety of her child came first.

Even if she was responsible, she would not hesitate to do it again.

“Wait right there!”

C20 There Is No Such Thing As Love In This World

Lin Xinyan stopped in her tracks and reluctantly turned around. Zong Jinghao released his grip on Bai Zhuwei and steadily walked towards her.

The coldness at the corner of his mouth solidified into an arc as he aggressively walked towards her.  
“Apologize to Zhuwei at once!”

Lin Xinyan did not flinch as she returned Zong Jinghao's gaze.

“I will not apologize to her!” Even now, she was not afraid of him.

She was not in the wrong. It was Bai Zhuwei who had pushed her first.

As a mother, it was imperative that she protect herself and her baby. Her instincts were not wrong!

He had no right to force her to make an apology!

Zong Jinghao stared at Lin Xinyan's stubborn face long and hard. Many wrinkles appeared on his forehead from his scrutiny. Never had he looked at this woman so closely. Even when he was crazy enough to kiss her, he had never thought to look at her carefully until now.

Her body was thin and her small face peering up at him was the size of a palm. Her features were delicate, yet pure. At the moment, her starry eyes were staring straight at him, stubborn and unyielding.

They looked at each other, both of them unwilling to back down.

"You pushed her! So now you need to apologize!" His tone was still frosty, but it lacked the conviction of before.

He appeared shaken by her facial expression.

"Hao, I'm okay, really. I was being careless. This really has nothing to do with Miss Lin." Bai Zhuwei quickly got between the two of them, trying to put a halt to their confrontation.

She grabbed Zong Jinghao's arm and said, "Hao."

She shook her head at Zong Jinghao, and her big eyes were holding back tears. Though she was wronged, she would just bear with it. "Hao, it was my fault for losing my balance just now. Maybe the heels I'm wearing are too high. But Miss Lin has nothing to do with it."

She put up a front, making Lin Xinyan look bad all the while.

Zong Jinghao looked at her shoes. Her heels were indeed a bit high, but he clearly saw with his own eyes Lin Xinyan pushing her.



**What was going on?**

**“Hao, I might have twisted my ankle just now. It hurts a lot.” Bai Zhuwei’s pretty face grimaced painfully.**

**This was different from her usual demure self. She was being a bit cute.**

**Seeing her this way, Zong Jinghao pushed back her messy hair strands behind her ear. This woman had been by his side all this time without asking for anything in return. When he was hurting and needed someone, she was there without question.**

**Even though he had married someone else, she didn’t ask for more status. She was there quietly by his side all along.**

**Suddenly, more than anything Zong Jinghao wanted to shine more light on her identity for all the pain he had put her through.**

**But it was all the same. He did not love her, nor did he love any woman. Love was not something he believed in.**

**Don't want to watch ads?**

**Get premium to remove ads**

**Just a month ago, his mother had passed away, and right afterwards, his father had married someone else.**

How could such a thing like love exist in this world?

It was all too ridiculous!

“Tell me, are you stupid?”

Bai Zhuwei snuggled in his arms. “As long as I can be with you, I’m willing to go through anything. At least I don’t think I’m stupid. It just makes me very happy.”

Lin Xinyan wasn’t in the mood to watch this scene unfold. She turned around and once more, walked in the direction of the door.

Out of the corner of her eyes, Bai Zhuwei watched Lin Xinyan’s receding form, and as a reaction, her lips curled into a faint smile.

She probably was no longer in the mood to stay in the mansion with Zong Jinghao, right?

She thought she would be able to hide her emotions from Zong Jinghao, but Zong Jinghao didn’t miss it.

However, he just let things be, not saying anything, nor asking any more questions. Instead, he turned around and headed inside the house.

Seeing that she was being left behind, Bai Zhuwei quickly followed. “Hao...”

Zong Jinghao turned around and gave her a bland look. His eyes fell to her high heels and he said pointedly, “In the future, don’t wear such high heels. That’s in case you find yourself falling down again.”

After he said this, he headed in the direction of his study. Upon arrival at the door, he stopped and turned to say to her, "I have something going on today. You don't have to wait for me."

Before Bai Zhuwei could think of a response, the door to the study had slammed shut.

She could only stand there, glaring down at her high heels. What did he mean by cautioning her?

He appeared to have something else on his mind.

Bai Zhuwei walked up to the study door wanting to get to the bottom of things, but Nanny Yu stopped her. "Young Master got the impression that you were going back."

She always knew that Nanny Yu never liked her.

She tried her best to get on her good side, but the results had never been favorable.

But having taken care of Zong Jinghao since he was young, Nanny Yu was no ordinary help.

She would always have a special place in Zong Jinghao's heart.

"Nanny Yu, he wasn't in a good mood when I left him. I want to accompany him some more to cheer him up..."

"You don't need to accompany him since he already has a wife to do it. In the future, I'd advise that Miss Bai shows her face here less often to avoid being called a mistress or something along those lines. This would be bad for Miss Bai's reputation." Previously, before Zong Jinghao had married Lin Xinyan, Nanny Yu never hid her dislike for Bai Zhuwei, but now that Zong Jinghao married Lin Xinyan her

dislike for her had become more blatant.

Whenever Bai Zhuwei would come around, she always took the initiative to get closer to Zong Jinghao much like a mistress would.

No one liked such a creature!

In addition, Nanny Yu's years as an elderly person made it hard for her to stomach such inappropriate displays.

"Hao likes me for who I am. Marrying someone from the Lin family is not what he wants. You are someone who has taken care of him since was young so you know his heart best. Don't you want him to live a happy life too?" Bai Zhuwei tried to restrain her voice so that she would not be shouting this out loud.

She was just a servant, and it was really not her place to say all those annoying things!

"Madam had her reasons for arranging this marriage. You cannot change the fact that Young Master is already married. Could it be that Miss Bai doesn't not mind her role of being the homewrecker in this relationship and wedging herself in-between the precious marriage between two good people?"

Though Nanny Yu's words were harsh, they did not lack any politeness. She turned in Bai Zhuwei's direction and gestured with her hands. "Miss Bai, if you don't mind, please leave."

Bai Zhuwei's hands, which hung at her sides, clenched tightly into fists. Out of anger, she was unable to contain her trembling, but at the same time, she was considerate enough to not blow things out of proportion.

Helpless to the situation, she was forced to leave first.

**Don't want to watch ads?**

**Get premium to remove ads**

**Once Bai Zhuwei walked out of the room, she immediately closed the door behind her.**

**Her body turned rigid as she faced the tightly shut door. Her face slowly shifted into a malevolent expression.**

**Zong Jinghao stood by the window and looked at the strange expression on Bai Zhuwei's face he had never seen there before.**

**His eyes narrowed out of consternation.**

**"Young Master, where did Miss Lin go? Will she be coming back for lunch?" She was out all night last night and she just came back today and then left without saying a word. It appeared that Nanny Yu didn't like her very much either.**

**Though she had married into the Zong family and was now Zong Jinghao's wife, she didn't act like his wife.**

**Besides, they were married. What would people say knowing that she had not come home last night?**

**Zong Jinghao thought about how she was just discharged from the hospital and turned to face Nanny Yu. "She's not feeling well. In regards to lunch..."**

**"It's okay."**

It was still left in the air if she would come back at noon or not.

It was at this time that he realized that he had no way of contacting her.

Nanny Yu sighed. What was up with everyone?

Husband and wife and yet not husband and wife.

They were obviously married, yet they didn't sleep in the same bed and didn't know the other's whereabouts. Was this really being husband and wife?

"I have no idea why Madam made this arrangement in the first place." Nanny Yu could not help but sigh heavily.

Ever since his mother had passed away, Zong Jinghao had moved out of the house and rarely showed his face at home.

Believing that the Madam had her reasons for the marriage, now that things were all in order, this was no longer a problem.

But never would she have expected...

Zong Jinghao's expression turned dark. "I'll head out and find her."

Having said that, Zong Jinghao did not waste any time in getting started on his search.

Seeing him like this, Nanny Yu grew even more despondent. How was this being husband and wife? It was like they were complete strangers.

Picking up the coat off the back of the sofa and putting it on, he left the house with the car keys in his hands.

While directing the car toward the hospital, Zong Jinghao suddenly thought of something and called Guan Jin about the matter.

"I need you to prepare the contract for the piece of land in Shallow Bay. After you're done, bring it over to me."

#### C21 Intentional Seduction

When Lin Xinyan arrived at the hospital, Hee Ruize was sitting in the corridor outside the ward, his hands on his knees. His back was slightly hunched, as if he was ruminating on something.

Even when she came to stand beside him, he didn't notice her.

"What are you thinking about so deeply?"

Hee Ruize raised his head suddenly, seemingly restraining his emotions. He looked into the ward and said, "Your mom isn't in the greatest mood."

Lin Xinyan was mentally prepared for it. "Yes, I know. Go home and rest. I'll watch over her."

Hee Ruize's gaze swept past her abdomen. "You need to take rest yourself."

"Don't worry, I can take care of myself." Lin Xinyan gave him a relaxed smile.

Hee Ruize was silent for a moment and then nodded. "Just call me if there's anything."

"Okay," Lin Xinyan answered. Hee Ruize stood up and walked out. Watching his retreating back, Lin Xinyan pursed her lips. Although she had known him for a long time, she did not actually know anything about him. She knew almost nothing about his family background, or his relatives.

It was obvious that he had something on his mind. He had looked too engrossed in his thoughts.

Suddenly, he stopped walking and turned around to face Lin Xinyan. "I heard from some women that they were given money to talk. They even threw paint at your house because they were paid to do it."

Lin Xinyan nodded.

"It seems so, brother. By the way, if you're worrying about something, you can speak to me about it."  
Lin Xinyan looked at him.

Hee Ruize chuckled. "I'm fine."

Lin Xinyan didn't pursue the matter any further. Everyone had something they didn't want to reveal to others.

After Hee Ruize left, she didn't immediately enter the ward. She wondered who had bought the neighbors over.

Lin Yuhan? Shen Xiuqing?

But they did not know about the pregnancy.



**Then...**

**Crash!**

**Suddenly, the sound of something breaking could be heard from the ward. Lin Xinyan's heart skipped a beat. She abruptly pushed open the door and saw broken glass under Zhuang Zijin's feet. She walked over to her mother and bent down to pick up the glass. "Mom, you want to drink water, don't you? Sit down. I'll clean up this place and pour some out for you—"**

**Before she could finish speaking, Zhuang Zijin grabbed her wrist and said in a daze, "Xinyan."**

**Lin Xinyan raised her head and looked at her mother. "What's the matter?"**

**Zhuang Zijin seemed to be at a loss as well. She simply grabbed onto Lin Xinyan's hand and exerted more pressure on her wrist while looking at her blankly. "Please drop the child in your stomach, okay?"**

**Don't want to watch ads?**

**Get premium to remove ads**

**These are just the initial days. He will be born without a father. What would others think of him if he is born a yellow-haired, blue-eyed child?"**

**Lin Xinyan knew that Zhuang Zijin was triggered, but she did not expect her to repeat the same words again.**

**"Mom!"**

Zhuang Zijin released her, repeating the same words as if she had just awoken from a trance. "But you don't want to, I know you don't want to."

Sitting on the bed, she curled up on her knees. As if possessed by a ghost, she repeated, "Xinqi is gone, he's gone..."

Lin Xinyan was shocked and in disbelief. What... what was happening to her?

She quickly called for a doctor. Zhuang Zijin refused to cooperate, acting like she was hurt. The doctor gave her a tranquilizer quickly.

"My preliminary observation is that the patient may be mentally ill," the doctor, after his examination, made this judgment.

Lin Xinyan's body swayed, her hands holding the cabinet behind her back tightly. "How can this be?"

"Has your mother been traumatized before? The stimulation she displays is not the result of a single occurrence. Rather, it seems that she has been suppressing what's in her heart for too long. Now her emotions have erupted, at their peak."

Lin Xinyan's mouth trembled. After her mother was sent abroad by Lin Guoan, she never smiled. She had obviously been traumatized. Later, her brother was born with autism and he died. Lin Xinyan also became pregnant. Her mother had suffered huge blows.

This was the last straw and it broke her.

Her tolerance had already reached its limits. If she so much as lightly touched the fragile string holding her heart together, she would lose all control.

"How?" Lin Xinyan asked incoherently, trying her best to keep her emotions under check.

The doctor sighed. "Mental illness is not easy to treat. Are you familiar with Doctor Hee? He is a psychiatrist, and I think he can help you."

Lin Xinyan thought about Hee Ruize, who had been deep in thought. Did he detect something?

Only he didn't know how to tell her?

"I suggest your mother be transferred to the psychiatric department."

Lin Xinyan nodded in response.

After the doctor pushed off, Lin Xinyan slid down to the floor. She stared at Zhuang Zijin's face, her heart aching so much that she could barely breathe.

In her mind, she kept recalling how unhinged her mother had been, how she had even tried to hurt herself physically.

Zhuang Zijin was transferred to the psychiatric department on the same day. Because mental patients with their unstable emotions were likely to hurt themselves, they could also unwittingly hurt others. Even if Lin Xinyan was family, she would only be able to see her for an assigned period of time.

Her mother was isolated from the outside world.

After leaving the hospital, Lin Xinyan packed Zhuang Zijin's things at the house.

Because of the mess on the door, the landlord did not return the deposit.

Hee Ruize was the one who paid for Zhuang Zijin's medical expenses.

She felt that she owed Hee Ruize more and more with each passing day. How would she ever repay him?

While she was lost in thought, the cab stopped at the villa. She took her bag and paid the driver before getting off.

Standing at the villa's entrance, she was dazed for a moment. She hadn't thought that she would temporarily be settled in this place.

Just as she was about to enter the house, a car entered the pavement. She had lived here for a short while, but she recognized Zong Jinghao's car. She watched him, standing still.

Zong Jinghao got out of the car and looked at Lin Xinyan, who stood unmoving. He said in a slightly cold voice, "Where did you go?"

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

He went to the hospital, only to be told that she had left some time ago. What had she been doing all this time?

Lin Xinyan didn't explain anything to him. She was already exhausted with Zhuang Zijin's matter.

She said lightly, "I have other things to do."

Zong Jinghao frowned. What did that mean?

He took a step forward.

Lin Xinyan looked at him in a daze. He seemed to have a furious expression on his face. His figure multiplied in front of her hazy vision. Lin Xinyan's consciousness gradually faded as her eyes closed on their own accord.

Zong Jinghao was quick to react. The moment she was about to fall to the ground, he caught her by the waist.

Her waist was slender. It was impossible to tell that she was pregnant. Her body was soft, and in such close contact, a strange sense of familiarity washed over him.

Zong Jinghao frowned. The feeling was subtle. He failed to place where it had come from.

It was hard for him to understand...

They had obviously not known each other for long, so why did he have such a strange feeling about holding her?

Before he could make head or tail of it, two people walked in. Guan Jin and Bai Zhuwei witnessed them together.

Both of them were shocked to see Zong Jinghao carrying Lin Xinyan.

If Bai Zhuwei had not been afraid of Zong Jinghao's reaction, she would have probably jumped at them in anger.

Her heart was on the verge of collapse.

"Hao— she—"

Zong Jinghao carried Lin Xinyan and turned to enter the bedroom. Guan Jin glanced at Bai Zhuwei, who stood rooted to the same spot. "Mr. Zong has married Miss Lin. Even if he doesn't love her, they are still husband and wife right now. He can't just watch her faint and collapse on the ground and ignore it, can he?"

Bai Zhuwei sneered. "And why did she faint? Is she trying to seduce him on purpose?"

Before Guan Jin could react to that, Bai Zhuwei added, "She's not sick, so isn't it strange how she suddenly fainted?"

That question had merit. Why did Lin Xinyan faint?

Between the two women, Guan Jin trusted Bai Zhuwei more. After all, they had known each other for a long time, and they were colleagues at work.

Although Lin Xinyan had met misfortune in her life, she still had her relatives. Unlike Bai Zhuwei, she wasn't alone. She had been with Zong Jinghao for so many years. Naturally, Guan Jin was biased toward her.

Zong Jinghao carried Lin Xinyan to the bedroom and put her on the bed. Just as he was about to get up, Lin Xinyan's hand suddenly grabbed his collar...

C22 He Is Unwilling to Pursue the Matter Further

"Mom, I'm sorry, don't give up on me—"

Zong Jinghao was surprised for a moment. He looked down at her hands that were grabbing his collar, his gaze slowly falling on her face. She looked in pain, as if she was sick.

Zong Jinghao frowned. "Lin Xinyan?"

Lin Xinyan couldn't hear him. It was as if she had fallen into panic mode. She looked uneasy, but very soon, she regained her composure. She released Zong Jinghao and suddenly fell into deep slumber.

Zong Jinghao slowly straightened his body and looked at her for a few seconds. He turned around and walked out of the room.

Bai Zhuwei sat on the sofa with both of her hands tightly clutching the glass of water. Zong Jinghao had stayed in the bedroom for longer than she would have liked, making her feel nervous.

Shouldn't that woman be taking care of her mother in the hospital right now?

Why had she come back?

She knew that Guan Jin had been about to look for information on Lin Xinyan. But before he could send his people to A Nation, Bai Zhuwei's men had arrived first and killed the woman who had introduced her to Lin Xinyan. They made her death seem like an "accident". As if she fell down the stairs and died.

That was how Guan Jin didn't find out what happened that night.

She spent a lot of time afraid that Zong Jinghao and Lin Xinyan would spend too much time together. She bribed Lin Xinyan's neighbors to talk trash about her, causing Zhuang Zijin to eventually get

admitted to the hospital. This way Lin Xinyan would not have any time to spend with Zong Jinghao.

She never expected the woman to come back from the hospital, that too so soon.

She was still being held by Zong Jinghao...

The more she thought about it, the more Bai Zhuwei's heart crumbled.

So much so that she could not restrain her emotions from appearing on her face.

Zong Jinghao came out of the room and took a look at Bai Zhuwei's perturbed face. He walked over without saying a word.

Bai Zhuwei stood up and almost blurted out what she wanted to ask. Luckily, she was still rational enough not to do it. "Is Miss Lin sick?"

Zong Jinghao didn't answer her immediately. Instead, he sat down on the sofa with his slender legs crossed. He slowly raised his eyes and looked at Bai Zhuwei.

Bai Zhuwei's heart suddenly leaped into her throat. Zong Jinghao scared her, so she carefully said, "Hao—"

His lips curled up into a faint smile. "What's wrong?"

When she saw him looking unconcerned, Bai Zhuwei calmed her nerves and tried to sit beside him. He did not stop her.



Her worried heart eased a little.

"This is the contract for the piece of land in Shallow Bay." Guan Jin handed the folder to Zong Jinghao.

The reason Bai Zhuwei had come over with Guan Jin was because he told her that Zong Jinghao wanted the documents for the land.

This piece of land was located in Shallow Bay, which was close to the mountains and the water. It was a good place for vacations and in high demand for tourism purposes, so there were many people who wanted their hands on it.

After the previous two years of bidding, Wanyue held the right to develop the land. But eventually, they did not develop it. So they decided to auction it.

However, Zong Jinghao had out of the blue asked for a contract for the plot of land, which made her a little worried.

After all, Lin Guoan had said he wanted the land when he had come to the company that day. Zong Jinghao hadn't even shown up to see him.

Lin Xinyan was Lin Guoan's daughter. Bai Zhuwei was afraid that because of Lin Xinyan, Zong Jinghao would give this land to Lin's company.

She didn't care a damn about this piece of land, but she cared about Zong Jinghao's attitude toward Lin Xinyan!

"Isn't this land supposed to be auctioned?" Bai Zhuwei asked him casually.

Although her demeanor was casual, Zong Jinghao saw through the mild probing tone.

However, he did not call her out immediately. Instead, he put his arm around her shoulders and asked him, "Zhuwei, when did you change?"

Bai Zhuwei's expression froze. What did he mean?

"I... when did I change?" Bai Zhuwei did not understand.

Zong Jinghao pinched her chin lightly, forcing her to look at him. "You wouldn't have asked me that before."

Bai Zhuwei was stunned as she met his eyes. The coldness in his eyes was something she had never witnessed before.

She could not help but become nervous. "I —"

Suddenly, she transformed from her well-behaved, sensible, and dignified self to an incoherent mess. "I'm afraid... because I'm afraid!"

She struggled out of Zong Jinghao's embrace, covered her face with her hands, and choked out in pain, "I'm afraid that you will give this land to Miss Lin, and I'm afraid that you will fall in love with her because she is your wife! I'm afraid... I'm afraid that you won't want me anymore..."

Bai Zhuwei burst into tears. She looked distressed.

This was a side of her that Zong Jinghao had never seen before.

He closed his eyes, his forehead furrowing. The expression on his face was complicated. One could not make it out at a glance.

After a long while, Bai Zhuwei's crying turned into quiet sobbing.

She knew that she had to endure what she had to, but sometimes she needed to use her tears and express her grievances to keep a man's heart.

Zong Jinghao opened his eyes, calming down.

He reached out and pulled her back into his arms. "Are you so upset?"

Bai Zhuwei sobbed in his arms. "I am just afraid I'll lose you."

Zong Jinghao sighed. "No."

She was a little scheming and calculative in her nature. Bai Zhuwei was not as pure as it seemed on the surface.

But she had been with him for years.

He didn't want to go into the details.

Inside The Room

Lin Xinyan was woken up by the ringing of her cell phone.

Hee Ruize who had sent her a message. It was a photo of the neighborhood she lived in. From the photo, it seemed like someone was talking to a woman.

Her back view...

It looked a little familiar to Lin Xinyan but she couldn't recall who it was. Just as she wondered about her identity, she felt her stomach churning.

She immediately got up and ran out of the bedroom and into the bathroom.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

She threw herself against the sink and retched her guts out.

From the living room, Guan Jin was stunned to see this. Lin Xinyan had rushed out all of a sudden.

Moreover, her bathroom door was not closed. It was uncomfortable to see her lying on the floor, vomiting.

"Miss Lin is pregnant." Bai Zhuwei looked at the vomiting figure of Lin Xinyan.

She thought Zong Jinghao didn't know of this and purposely said it out loud.

"It must be the man who hugged her that day..." Bai Zhuwei suggested, deliberately speculating on

the 'father' of the child in Lin Xinyan's womb.

Zong Jinghao would only hate her now.

Guan Jin, on the other hand, was so shocked that his jaw dropped. The woman Zong Jinghao married was carrying another man's child in her womb?

Would this not ruin his reputation?

He quietly raised his head and observed Zong Jinghao's face.

He had expected Zong Jinghao to be angry and annoyed, but to his surprise, he was not. He looked surprisingly calm.

Even Bai Zhuwei found his composure hard to believe.

He wasn't angry. Didn't he hate her?

"Hao..."

Zong Jinghao leaned back on the sofa. It was obvious that he didn't want to hear what she had to say.

Bai Zhuwei shut her open mouth.

Although she wanted to blurt out what she really thought, she could not say anything at all.

Feeling disgusted after all the vomiting, Lin Xinyan rinsed her mouth and walked out of the bathroom. She saw the three of them sitting in the living room. She didn't want to disturb Bai Zhuwei who was in Zong Jinghao's arms, so she turned around and entered the room.

Suddenly, like a flashbulb, something clicked in her mind. Bai Zhuwei.

She turned and looked at Bai Zhuwei at once, then back at the picture on her cell phone.

Her pupils contracted. The woman who bribed her neighbors was her?

Thinking about how she had framed her, Lin Xinyan instantly understood what was going on.

Bai Zhuwei must have felt resentful because she married Zong Jinghao and stole what was supposed to be her position.

That was why she bribed her neighbors and intentionally hurt her, causing her mother's mental health to deteriorate.

The more she thought about it, the more Lin Xinyan's chest burned.

C23 | Underestimated You

Lin Xinyan stood at the doorway, staring at Bai Zhuwei.

Bai Zhuwei was scared out of her wits by her intense gaze. She glanced at the screen of the phone in her hand, but Lin Xinyan was too far away to see what was on the phone. Not to forget that Zong Jinghao was right here. So she just asked the woman plainly, "Miss Lin, why are you looking at me like that?"

Lin Xinyan's thoughts were interrupted by Bai Zhuwei's voice. She had an impulse to interrogate her right in front of Zong Jinghao.

However, she calmed down after a moment and did not do so.

Bai Zhuwei was Zong Jinghao's girlfriend. Even if she did do something sinister, how could Zong Jinghao punish the woman he loved, for Lin Xinyan?

She clutched the phone tightly in her hand and took a long time to recover her composure.

She gave Bai Zhuwei a small smile and said, "I was just thinking that you are so pretty, Miss Bai, so I was momentarily stunned. You don't mind, do you?"

Lin Xinyan walked over to them, her gaze going to the documents on the tea table. She stretched her hand and picked up the letter. It was a contract for the transfer of the land at Shallow Bay.

She raised her eyes, looked at Zong Jinghao, and asked him with a smile, "Is this for me?"

Zong Jinghao, who didn't betray any emotion at all, replied with a faint "hmm".

Bai Zhuwei couldn't help but stare at him with wide eyes. These papers were really for Lin Xinyan?

Why?

Bai Zhuwei could not comprehend it!

Lin Xinyan raised her head and glanced at Bai Zhuwei. Although she was obviously angry, she was tolerating the pain. She sneered, "Miss Bai, I'm Mr. Zong's wife. It's no big deal if he gives me things, is it?"

Bai Zhuwei trembled in anger. The damned woman was shameless.

She claimed to be Zong Jinghao's wife, but was she even worthy of the title?

If Zong Jinghao had not been here, Bai Zhuwei would have slapped her!

"Of course." Bai Zhuwei lowered her head as tears quietly flowed down her cheeks. She gave voice to her hurt. "Miss Lin is Zong Jinghao's wife. Who the hell am I?"

"You're the woman Mr. Zong likes. You've been with him for so many years, so why do you have to degrade yourself like this now?" Guan Jin raised his eyes and glanced at Lin Xinyan. Not only was this woman unchaste, she was also thick-skinned.

Even though their marriage was only temporary, she actually thought that she was the real deal?

However, she was indeed Zong Jinghao's wife right now. Even if Guan Jin was dissatisfied with her, he did not dare openly disrespect her. So, he purposely sided with Bai Zhuwei to target her.

Lin Xinyan remained as unperturbed as ever, as if she hadn't heard the mockery and ostracism in their words earlier. She smiled and said, "Miss Bai, since you've acknowledged my identity, please step aside now."

In an instant, the air froze around them.

Everyone looked at Zong Jinghao, who remained silent.

Did he accept her status as his wife?



**Don't want to watch ads?**

**Get premium to remove ads**

**If he admitted to it, Bai Zhuwei would be left embarrassed.**

**Zong Jinghao's face, under the alternating light and shadows, flickered. The bright lights couldn't cover up the sinister look on his face. "And what's your identity?"**

**She sensed danger approaching. Lin Xinyan held on to her composure and looked him in the eye. "We are husband and wife. Even if we decide to get divorced in an hour, we are still husband and wife right now. So is it wrong of me to ask to sit next to you, during the course of our marriage?"**

**Lin Xinyan's words gave him pause.**

**She had been bullied for a long time. It didn't matter if she suffered from the inside.**

**Bai Zhuwei had used Zhuang Zijin and made her fall mentally ill. It was an unpardonable offence.**

**Bai Zhuwei was afraid that Lin Xinyan would get close to Zong Jinghao, so Lin Xinyan should make sure that she did exactly that.**

**She had to get close to Zong Jinghao, right in front of her!**

**Zhuang Zijin was her only family member, and the one person nobody was allowed to touch. "Miss Bai, even though you share a deep relationship with my husband, I haven't divorced him yet. Please take note of your actions while we're married."**

Bai Zhuwei looked at Zong Jinghao. Right at this moment, his gaze was fixated on the sharp-tongued woman!

The woman was unpredictable.

She had clearly been injured and was looking helpless a few moments ago. Suddenly, she was showing her overbearing attitude.

What was with her?

Zong Jinghao's look was unfathomable. Even Guan Jin, who generally knew how to read him, was confused. However, he knew that he couldn't let the two women occupy the same room at the same time.

Although Guan Jin didn't know the whole story, he was indeed smart.

He stood up and patted Bai Zhuwei's shoulder. "Let's go."

Bai Zhuwei was unwilling to accept this result.

She wanted to know what she meant to Zong Jinghao.

If Zong Jinghao chose Lin Xinyan, she would be done for. All her previous efforts would go in vain. She knew very well that Zong Jinghao didn't love her.

Zong Jinghao was only good to her because of that night, and the many years she had spent with him.

He didn't actually like her.

She couldn't gamble.

She couldn't afford to lose him!

"I won't make it hard for you, Hao. You won," Bai Zhuwei finally decided to leave, feigning kindness with this comment.

It wasn't that she was admitting to defeat, but that she didn't want Zong Jinghao to be in a dilemma.

She was kind-hearted and could see the big picture. That was what she wanted to show him.

Soon, the room fell silent.

It was so quiet that even the sound of breathing could be heard clearly.

This atmosphere lasted for a couple of minutes, and a layer of cold sweat broke out on Lin Xinyan's back. After a long while, she finally found her voice, "I'll go back to my room."

It was only because of Bai Zhuwei that she had acted like this.

Now that she was gone, she didn't need to stay any longer.

She had just raised her foot when Zong Jinghao grabbed her wrist. With a tug of his arm, Lin Xinyan's body arched through the air before she fell into an embrace.

She instinctively resisted it, but Zong Jinghao grabbed her wrist and she couldn't move.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

"What are you doing?" Lin Xinyan panicked.

"What do you want? Uh..."

"What do I want? Whatever happened to the eloquence you showed just now?" Zong Jinghao held her lower jaw. "I underestimated you."

If it wasn't for Bai Zhuwei, would she have said all that?

She was someone who had suffered. From the age of ten to eighteen, she had grown not only in age, but also in mental strength.

If she wasn't tough, people would think that she was easy to bully, so she couldn't hint at her weaknesses to people who wanted to hurt her.

She had a mother to protect and a baby coming.

She had to be strong and brave.

Lin Xinyan didn't move. She closed her eyes and didn't listen to him.

Zong Jinghao had never been treated like this before. This woman—

"Xinyan."

Lin Xinyan was wearing a white t-shirt with a round collar. As she leaned into his arms, her chest was faintly discernible, right in front of his eyes.

Although she was slim, her breasts were well-developed. In such close contact, Zong Jinghao could see the outline of her breasts. Her breasts were round and perky.

Her chest heaved up and down as she breathed, captivating him.

A nameless wicked flame rampaged through his blood, finally gathering in his lower abdomen.

Lin Xinyan didn't hear Zong Jinghao say anything for a long time. Her curled eyelashes fluttered slightly as she slowly opened her eyes. She saw Zong Jinghao's face that seemed conflicted, yet at the same time, he seemed to be forcing himself to be calm.

His gaze—

Lin Xinyan followed his gaze and looked down...

The anger of being looked at spurred on the strength deep within her bones, and Lin Xinyan pushed him away immediately.

Zong Jinghao was pushed so hard that he was caught off guard. His body half-sprawled across the sofa in an unseemly way.

Lin Xinyan clutched her chest. "Scoundrel!"

She stood up from the sofa in a panic and wanted to leave the room as soon as possible. She was too flustered to notice that her foot had hit Zong Jinghao's leg, causing her to fall toward him.

"Ah!"

Zong Jinghao didn't have time to dodge her...

C24 I Love the Father of My Child

Zong Jinghao didn't have enough time to dodge her and could only watch as Lin Xinyan threw herself onto him.

Her forehead hit his chin, hurting it. Her lips, on the other hand, were stuck to the convex shape of a hard object. The feeling was both familiar and unfamiliar at the same time.

Lin Xinyan was stunned for a moment. When she came back to her senses, she immediately stood up, realizing that her lips had pressed his adam's apple by accident.

She held her head in embarrassment, her face burning fiercely.

How mortifying.

Zong Jinghao was also in a state of confusion for a moment. He slowly raised his eyes and looked at her. "If I'm a scoundrel, then what are you?"

Without waiting for Lin Xinyan to speak, he slowly sat up and deliberately adjusted his collar. His fingertips moved along the place where Lin Xinyan had kissed him, giving her an enigmatic smile. "We

are husband and wife. If you want to kiss me, you can just say so. I'm not such a petty person as to deny you."

Lin Xinyan was speechless for a long time.

Why would she want to kiss him?

It was just an accident!

"I don't want to kiss you!" Lin Xinyan turned around and left, wanting to leave the living room quickly.

Zong Jinghao sat on the sofa and did not move. Somehow, her words "I don't want to kiss you" made him angry, so he said mockingly, "Then whom do you want to kiss?"

He sneered, "The man who got you pregnant?"

Her fear and humiliation were instantly exposed, like fresh blood dripping out.

She didn't want to talk about how her baby had come to be.

Being outed like this out of the blue by Zong Jinghao, she felt an intense pain in her heart.

She was clearly on the verge of breaking down, but she still wanted to assert herself. "Of course I love my child's father."

God, this woman was really good!

"Miss Lin don't forget. You owe me something." Zong Jinghao stood up. He flicked the dust from the hem of his clothes, raised his head leisurely and looked at Lin Xinyan, who stood stiffly at the door of the bedroom. "I need an interpreter. From tomorrow onwards, you will work at the company."

She got the land contract, now he would have his end of the bargain.

This way, she wouldn't owe him anything after repaying the favor.

"All right. Yes," she said, and pushed the door open.

Thinking of what just happened, the warmth on her face multiplied by several degrees.

To avoid meeting Zong Jinghao, she didn't go out of the room again until Nanny Yu called her for dinner. Only then did she open the door and come out.

Zong Jinghao was already in the dining room. Nanny Yu carried the dishes to the table.

Lin Xinyan came over and sat down to eat without looking at them.

The atmosphere at the table was fragile.

Nanny Yu didn't like it. They were clearly husband and wife, but they acted like strangers. She brought out a plate of lush green West Blue Flowers and placed it in front of Lin Xinyan. "This is Young Master's favorite food."



Zong Jinghao had a delicate taste and liked to eat vegetarian. Nanny Yu, who had always taken care of him, knew him best.

Lin Xinyan was stunned for a moment. She could not figure out what Nanny Yu meant by this.

Why didn't she put the plate in front of him if this was what he liked to eat?

Nanny Yu signaled with her eyes, for her to give Zong Jinghao the food. Lin Xinyan looked at her for a long while before finally understanding what Nanny Yu meant.

Nanny Yu's eyes were twinkling.

Lin Xinyan helplessly put a piece of West Blue Flower into Zong Jinghao's bowl.

Zong Jinghao raised his eyes. Lin Xinyan smiled, but she couldn't bear to see Nanny Yu be so warm-hearted toward her.

She was clearly playing matchmaker.

Zong Jinghao slowly picked up a piece of blue flower, which was tender and green like scallion oil. It reflected the appreciation in his eyes as he said, "Nanny Yu, you know my palate best."

Nanny Yu smiled and said, "Young Mistress will understand it in the future. She had just settled in. She isn't familiar with it yet."

Nanny Yu had changed how she addressed Lin Xinyan. Previously, she used to call her Miss Lin. Although she was dissatisfied with her for not returning the previous night, she was the one personally chosen by Madam to be Young Master's wife.

Naturally, she hoped that they would live well together and fulfill the deceased woman's expectations.

Lin Xinyan was rendered speechless by Nanny Yu's remark about her being the Young Mistress. She lowered her head even further and finished the bowl of rice quickly. She didn't even have time to wipe her mouth as she said, "I'm done eating. You guys eat slowly."

She ran back into the bedroom.

"What happened to her?" Nanny Yu didn't know how to react.

Staring at the flustered figure of the woman running, a smile appeared in the corner of Zong Jinghao's eyes. With his lips slightly curled, a trace of unruliness was revealed in his words. "She probably isn't used to your words, Nanny Yu."

Nanny Yu sighed. "I'm doing this for your own good, remember that."

She turned and walked away.

Zong Jinghao was the only one left in the spacious dining room. The crystal lamp on the roof emitted a circle of light, enveloping him. He took a piece of Blue Flower in his mouth and chewed on it slowly.

**The Next Day**

After Zong Jinghao left for his office, Lin Xinyan followed him out. Since she had agreed to work at the company, she would have to quit her job at the restaurant first.

As she was changing her shoes in the hall, Nanny Yu walked over and asked her, "You are going out?"

Lin Xinyan nodded.

"Come back early and don't spend the night outside. You're a married woman." Nanny Yu reminded her.

"Yes." Lin Xinyan put on her shoes and went out.

She walked to the intersection and took a cab to the restaurant.

There were no buses in this place.

Lin Xinyan had taken a leave of absence the moment she started working, and now that she had resigned again, the manager was a bit unhappy. "If you don't want to come to work, why did you apply? Aren't you wasting our time?"

Lin Xinyan felt very apologetic. "I'm sorry. I'm really sorry."

The manager's face darkened, but just as he was about to cut her some slack, the head waiter came over to tell him that the shop was seeing rush.

The manager looked at Lin Xinyan and said, "Help out first. When the shop is no longer busy, you can leave."

"All right." For the sake of professional ethics, Lin Xinyan would have to work.

Lin Xinyan went to change into her work clothes. It seemed like she had a busy day ahead of her.

"These are to be delivered to room 88," Lin Xinyan was ordered as the dishes came to her.

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Lin Xinyan responded in kind and placed the delicate dishes into a tray, taking them to the private room.

She held the tray in one hand and pushed the door away with the other. The room revealed was bright, wide, and private. There were only two people sitting in front of a round table made out of mahogany. She knew one of them clearly. It was Zong Jinghao.

When the two of them saw each other, they were both stunned.

Tang Che, the president of HSBC, seemed to be talking to Zong Jinghao when she came in. He immediately stopped talking.

Lin Xinyan walked in with her head down and put the dishes on the tray on to the table.

"The waiters of Langui Garden are getting more and more beautiful." Tang Che smiled as he looked Lin Xinyan up and down.

Inwardly disgusted, Lin Xinyan was about to leave with the tray when Tang Che grabbed her wrist and smiled at Zong Jinghao. "Let her stay. She can pour us out some wine."

The smile on Zong Jinghao's face slowly froze. Hidden beneath was the grave expression on his face. He said, "President Tang, we're in the middle of something."

He raised his eyes and swept them across Lin Xinyan's face. "I don't need you here."

Lin Xinyan took the tray and left quickly.

Guan Jin, who was standing behind Zong Jinghao, frowned. He was not happy with Lin Xinyan's appearance. Why would she appear here?

If others knew of her relationship with Zong Jinghao, wouldn't it ruin his reputation?

Zong Jinghao wouldn't want to lose face.

His displeasure with Lin Xinyan increased even more.

"Langui Garden is becoming better at doing business. Their food is exquisite and they choose their attendants well. That one just now, her skin was as white as white jade. I wish I could hold onto her small waist..."

"President Tang, let me pour out some wine for you," Guan Jin came up and interrupted him.

Tang Che noticed Zong Jinghao's sullen expression and quickly smiled. "Let's change the topic."

Lin Xinyan walked out of the room and heaved a long sigh. She had never thought that they would meet so soon after separating this morning.

After the busiest wave passed, the manager allowed her to leave. She changed her clothes, but just as she walked out, she saw Guan Jin standing at the door.

And he didn't look too happy.

He looked at her coolly, "Mr. Zong is waiting for you. Let's go."

Lin Xinyan followed him out.

"Mom, I want one of Chanel's dresses. Can you take me to buy it after we are done eating?" Lin Yuhan held Shen Xiu Qing's hand and walked toward them.

"All right, my daughter naturally has to wear the best clothes." The mother and daughter duo walked over while talking and laughing.

From the looks of it, they were here to eat at Langui Garden.

When Lin Xinyan saw the pair, she stopped dead in her tracks...

C25 Zong Jinghao Is Lame

When Lin Xinyan saw the pair, she stopped dead in her tracks. Shen Xiuqing spotted her frowning.

"Mom, isn't that Lin Xinyan? Why is she here?" Lin Yuhan couldn't hold back her anger. "She came here to eat?"

The food and the taste were of the highest quality, so the place wasn't something that ordinary people could afford normally.

Lin Xinyan came to this kind of place to eat?

Shen Xiuqing sneered. "She married into the Zong family. He might be a cripple, but his social status and wealth are not fake. It's not surprising that she can go in and out of this place."

Lin Xinyan didn't want to get entangled with them. Just as she was about to leave, she was stopped by Lin Yuhan.

"You're only married to a cripple. Entering such a high-class restaurant, you're still a bumpkin who can't get to the top." As she spoke, she sized up Lin Xinyan's clothes and couldn't help but wrinkle her nose.

"Out of the way!" Lin Xinyan said coldly.

Lin Yuhan didn't move away. "Why are you in such a hurry? If I say that you're married to a lame man, you get angry out of embarrassment?"

Guan Jin frowned. Just as he was about to stop Lin Yuhan from talking, he saw Zong Jinghao walking toward them.

He took back his hand that was about to reach out.

"Lin Xinyan, you married into a wealthy family from the Wealthy Class, the Zong family. Why are you still so poor? Is it because even that cripple doesn't like you?" As she spoke, Lin Yuhan covered her lips and giggled. "You're just imitating your mother now. You can't even control a man."

At this moment, Lin Xinyan too noticed Zong Jinghao walking toward them. She couldn't help but widen her eyes.

Seeing the strange expression on Lin Xinyan's face, Lin Yuhan thought that Lin Xinyan was angry and became even more impudent. "Lin Xinyan, that's all you have in your life. Earlier, you were abandoned by Father and sent to a foreign land, leaving you to fend for yourself. In future, you are destined to serve a cripple and live your entire life like you're a widow..."

"I'm afraid she's going to let you down," a deep and vigorous male voice filled the air.

It was silent but impressive, not to be underestimated.

"Who are you?" the question was on Lin Yuhan's lips, but as she turned around, she saw a man standing not too far away from her. The words died on her lips. He wore a straight suit, his tall and well-built figure exceptionally straight. His long and slender legs were wrapped in a pair of western pants.

His nose was high and straight, his lips sensual, his facial features clear and striking, and his pair of deep-set eyes exuded coldness.

His walk was calm and steady. With every step he took, he caused others to shrink back.

His indifference and his silent profundity only served to accentuate his noble temperament. He looked positively untouchable.

He made everyone's gazes tremble.

Lin Yuhan's jaw almost dropped from shock.

Wasn't he supposed to be a cripple?

Shock. Disbelief.



How could this be?

Under the gazes of Lin Yuhan and Shen Xiuqing, he put his arm around Lin Xinyan's shoulders and said, "We should leave now."

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

Lin Xinyan was stunned for a couple of moments. She raised her head. "You—"

His gaze turned deep, then was followed by a faint but pampering smile. "What, you can't speak properly now?"

Lin Yuhan stared at his legs, her eyes almost popping out. "Aren't you supposed to be a cripple?" she voiced her thought out loud.

She quickly covered her mouth, realizing that she had said the wrong thing.

Shen Xiuqing was dazed for a long time.

This was unbelievable.

Zong Jinghao felt disgusted and left right away with Lin Xinyan.

Guan Jin sneered at them. "Shallow."

He turned away from their shocked, twisted, and ugly faces.

Guan Jin walked over quickly to the car.

Shen Xiuqing's eyes were blank as she muttered to herself. She was scared and frightened. Her legs trembled uncontrollably. "How is this possible? Zong Jinghao doesn't have a limp?"

"How could this be?" Lin Yuhan grabbed onto Shen Xiuqing's arm, almost losing control of herself. "Why isn't Zong Jinghao's a cripple?"

Only after some time did Shen Xiuqing come back to her senses.

"Didn't you say that he can't be cured?"

Mom!"

"All right!" Shen Xiuqing felt her head buzz in annoyance. "I don't know if your father knows about this either."

She found it hard to believe that Zong Jinghao did not actually have a limp. She was no longer in the mood to eat and dragged her daughter to Lin's company.

Lin Guoan was angry.

The building that Lin's company had invested in collapsed, and now the company was currently facing a lawsuit.

Lin Guoan frowned.

Somebody knocked on his door.

Lin Guoan was about to get angry on whoever had decided to come and annoy him. He was about to start cursing when the office door was pushed open. Shen Xiuqing saw the hard expression on Lin Guoan's face and wondered what was wrong with him.

Lin Guoan was in a bad mood and sunk deeper into his chair. "What are you two doing here?"

Shen Xiuqing didn't have time to care about Lin Guoan's surly mood. She walked over to him. "Did you know that Zong Jinghao can walk?"

Lin Guoan was stunned for a moment. He frowned and looked at Shen Xiuqing. "He was poisoned by the snake poison. Didn't you say that he can't be cured? How can he even stand up then?"

Sure enough, Lin Guoan hadn't known about it either. Lin Xiuqing's expression turned more serious. "He can stand up—"

"Who told you that?" Before Shen Xiuqing could finish her words, she was cut off by Lin Guoan.

"We saw it with our very own eyes." Lin Yuhan answered ahead of her mother.

With the buffer of time, she had calmed down a little. She walked to the desk and looked at her father. "Dad, we must have been tricked."

Others clearly said that they couldn't cure him, but now he was able to walk!

Lin Guoan frowned. This had indeed shocked him. At the same time, he was confused. "But then why did Zong Jinghao tell everyone that he can't stand up?"

Shen Xiuqing was also unable to determine why Zong Jinghao would do that, so she made a guess. "Could it be that he wasn't satisfied with the marriage agreement with the Lin family, but he didn't want to break it. outright So he released such a piece of news, hoping he could dissuade us?"

Silence. The entire office fell silent.

It was quiet enough to hear a needle drop.

"That must be it. What other reason would there be?" Lin Yuhan was sure of Shen Xiuqing's conjecture. She sat down on the sofa, upset. "If we had thought it through earlier, we wouldn't have needed to get Lin Xinyan and the others back."

Don't want to watch ads?

Get premium to remove ads

She could have married Zong Jinghao herself.

Lin Guoan felt a headache come on. He could not have imagined that this would happen.

He had wanted to use his daughter to establish a relationship with the Zong family. If the truth was really like Shen Xiuqing said, then marrying his daughter to Zong Jinghao not only displeased him, but it also angered him.

Now that the company was in trouble, he wanted to visit Zong Jinghao to help, but it seemed like that was not an option.

Lin Guoan's face was sullen. No wonder when he went to Wanyue last time, Zong Jinghao didn't even bother to see him.

"Mom." Lin Yuhan tightly held onto Shen Xiuqing's arm. "Mom, why didn't I marry Zong Jinghao?"

She liked that man. It was the first time in her life that she liked a man.

She was the one who had a chance to marry him, but she missed it.

Regret made her intestines churn. If she had not cared that Zong Jinghao was a cripple and married into the family, perhaps he would have fallen in love with her. More so when she showed him that she didn't even mind that he was a cripple.

Now, all of this had happened to Lin Xinyan.

Her heart couldn't take it!

"Now that things have come to this, we must replan." Shen Xiuqing was not willing to give up yet. She could have established a relationship with the Zong family, and she missed out for no reason.

Lin Guoan felt his headache worsen. The situation had developed to the point where he was at a loss as to what to do.

How could Zong Jinghao pretend to be a cripple?

Elsewhere, Lin Xinyan followed Zong Jinghao into the car and slid into her seat obediently.

Zong Jinghao seemed to be very busy. He had papers in his lap. With his eyes lowered, he tugged at his collar, which was not too tight anyway.

Lin Xinyan remained silent and did not disturb him.

Guan Jin was about to turn the car toward the Wanyue Building, but Lin Xinyan told him to stop.

"What's the matter?"

"I can't go in with you guys. It won't do to be seen by others." After all, her marriage with Zong Jinghao couldn't be made public.

She wanted to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings as much as possible.

Guan Jin was utterly unable to understand her actions.

She had obviously been trying to ruin Zong Jinghao's reputation earlier, but now—

Lin Xinyan got out of the car quickly. Guan Jin drove to the company's underground parking lot, shaking his head.

Zong Jinghao got off the car and went into the elevator. Guan Jin followed him, suddenly very curious about Zong Jinghao's thoughts about Lin Xinyan. He tentatively asked the director, "Mr. Zong, do you think you like Miss Lin a little more, or Miss Bai?"

C26 Woman with Contradictions

Zong Jinghao glanced at him and said, "Don't ask too much about me."

Guan Jin smiled and said, "I'm just curious. Miss Bai has been with you for a long time, so I think she's more suitable for you."

"Guan Jin," Zong Jinghao's tone was relaxed but a tense atmosphere pervaded the elevator. Guan Jin shuddered. Just as he was about to explain himself, he met Zong Jinghao's unfriendly eyes

Unlock this chapter

Cost: 5 Bricks

-35%

Batch Unlock chapters

C27 Baby You Need to Be Strong

Lin Xinyan steadied her fast-pacing heart and said, "Driver, please go back. I have something I need to take back to the company."

The driver pretended not to hear her.

Lin Xinyan raised her voice. "Please stop for a moment!"

The driver sped up instead, his voice switching from his previously mild one to a cold tone, "We're not there yet

Next Chapter