

Destined To Be His wife by L.T. Marshall Chapter 15

“Scheming? Cold? Calculative and spoiled?” YuZhi finished, reciting all the things he had gained from meeting with the Lei father these past months. He had figured that a man like Lei with his list of unpleasant traits would surely have passed them down to a daughter who sweet talked her father into arranging a wedding. He had no stomach for women like this and had seen way too many who had tried to seduce him over the years, to get a chance at being the next Young Miss of the Leng family.

“I can see that you already decided she wasn’t worth giving a chance to.” ZhengLi sighed and perched his butt on the edge of the desk, pulling his tie loose, then completely off before shrugging his jacket from his broad shoulders and tossing it on a nearby chair. As specimen of masculinity, these two shared many good traits and people often thought them cousins. As teens both had equal female followers although YuZhi became famous with his position in Leng Group while ZhengLi tried to stay out of the spotlight so his life could remain free.

“Why should I? I already chose my wife, and she’s just a stop gap to fulfil a role. I don’t need to do anything except endure her and ignore her.” YuZhi grimaced and then finished his drink in one gulp, savoring the burn as the alcohol made its way down his throat.

“Sometimes I miss the old YuZhi..... the guy who had a little warmth.” ZhengLi joked but his words were half true. The fact is that eight years back, YuZhi stopped being the boy who had been carefree and happy. The laid back and loving younger son of Leng. His father died so tragically and revealed such a heartbreaking secret that had affected YuZhi on so many levels. Then his mother’s death followed because she couldn’t bear to live the lie anymore, although the public only thought she had a severe sickness and not that she had taken her own life.

Leng family had so many skeletons in their closet in the past half decade and YuZhi was shouldering the responsibility of so much. It had worn him down, pushed the joy and care from his heart and created this cool and often heartless man. ZhengLi often wished things had turned out so differently, and maybe if one little incident back then had played out better, he might have had that glimmer of happiness to help him through. One night, a girl he was instantly smitten with, might have been the crossroads to a different outcome.

“Rhea seems to like her.” ZhengLi added as though that fact would sway YuZhi in some way and only met a frown, an unhappy look of ‘who cares.’ Infuriating as that was.

“Do you have something other than my new burden to talk about, or was that the whole point of coming in here to bother me?” YuZhi glared at him, his irritation rising. Normally ZhengLi’s hanging out with him was a mood lifter, but not today.

ZhengLi burst out laughing, heartily, at the pinched expression of his bro, and the sudden stiffness of his posture despite his loosened and slightly rumped clothes.

“I came to hang out with my bestie, and to drink. You’re so sulky tonight, my boy. Why don’t we get drunk and you finally go home and feel a woman the right way. You have a willing new toy that doesn’t need a clinic to intervene on your behalf.” ZhengLi knew he was pushing the boundary with his bold remark, but he didn’t care. YuZhi could go on acting like Rhea was his whole world, but ZhengLi knew he had never once told Rhea he loved her, and he could never understand why. If he did, why couldn’t he tell her he did? She had laid it all out there for him, heart and soul, and yet, YuZhi had never uttered those three little words.

“I’m sure I can hold off until I get my girlfriend back.” YuZhi ignored the obvious attempt at goading him and got up to fetch himself a second drink. He could tell ZhengLi was in one of those moods, where he pushed his buttons for the fun of it and he had no desire to bite. He was tired.

“Come on, at least admit to me of all people, that you find her sexy. Attractive? That a part of you isn’t glad that old man gave you such a beauty. I mean, I wouldn’t say no to her.... she’s certainly got that whole natural thing going on.” ZhengLi had always been more casual when it came to sex and women, much like YuZhi used to be. He wasn’t a womanizer, but he appreciated pretty girls and had dated, with sex, before. ZhengLi saw the marriage pictures and was pretty surprised that YuZhi’s new bride was extremely beautiful in her own way. Something soft yet familiar about her.

YuZhi stood stock still, his posture emanating a power of threat and warning without even trying as he poured himself a drink and ignored his friend completely. His sex life was his business, and he didn’t want to discuss it.

“You can’t lie to me, brother. I know you think she’s hot. I saw her, remember? She’s totally your type. She kind of reminds me of that girl back in ...” ZhengLi hinted at where his thoughts had already strayed but didn’t finish because YuZhi spun on him, his expression under a furrowed brow, an instant dark mask of sinister, warning, and even ZhengLi knew to stop midsentence.

“Don’t. We don’t ever talk about her in relation to this woman. That girl, she stays in the past, and there’s no similarity. Miles apart. I told you a long time ago, I was done looking for her, and I won’t talk about it again. I have Rhea. That’s the end of it.” The snarl, the venom of his tone, and the killing intent made ZhengLi sigh.

“And you say you forgot her, yet you act like this when I bring her up? It’s been eight years, so why do you get so mad? It was one night that didn’t go beyond cuddling up and making out!” ZhengLi was maybe bold enough to push him, but not stupid enough to be close enough to get beaten for it. He swiped his glass and moved to the other side of the room to lounge on the long leather sofa, pretending he needed to sit, while really, he was moving out of the firing zone.

“Why are we even talking about her? This has nothing to do with now... she’s gone. Everything that night was probably a lie, and she’s never been seen again. Maybe I imagined it, and her. Maybe I was drunk and hallucinated and she was really ugly and old. I looked and no girl named Alice was registered at any of the hotels there. So she even lied about her name.” YuZhi had this conversation so many times in the first year after the masked ball, and he didn’t want to rehash old wounds.

Truth be told, the thought of that girl gave him a stabbing pain of regret in his heart, even all this time later. He didn’t want to think about how she had made him feel that night, and how she had lingered in his thoughts all those years after when he failed to meet her on that bridge.

“Then I must be sharing your hallucinations, because I saw her too, and masked, she was still cute. I also saw the two of you running off into the sunset together. I must also be infected by your madness.” ZhengLi smirked, amused by this, and knowing that despite YuZhi’s roaring temper, there was a part of him that still pondered what ever happened to her. I mean he did spend a year looking, and then another year after, trying to let go. ZhengLi had never forgotten, and he found it interesting that his new wife held some similarities to the girl he remembered from the past, even if the stories didn’t match up.

And they didn’t, because it was the first thing he checked when he saw the photo two months ago of this TangShi Lei. He had felt hope, possibility, even though he liked Rhea, and then lost it when he saw she was a beloved daughter of Lei Enterprises. Not some poor unloved semi orphan whose father tossed her away, as that girl had told YuZhi. TangShi didn’t seem to have an alternate English name either which would have explained the ‘Alice’.

“Can you stop. I’ve things to do and I want to call Rhea and wish her goodnight before I have to go home. Everything is messy now that old man insists I share my bed with her...” He grumbled, finally stalking back to his seat and slumped down in such a disheartened way. His head was starting to ache, and his mood was only going to be sourer from this hour on.

“She has a name you know. Quite a nice one, it means sunshine or something....” ZhengLi teased, knowing that was a lie to vex him and got the cocked brow and glare sent right back.

“Funny, as I heard it was a boy’s name and probably doesn’t mean anything of the sort. Maybe her father expected a son and was too lazy to give her an appealing name.” YuZhi dismissed his friend with a hand gesture and went back to staring at his desk before lifting his expensive shoe clad foot and propping it on the shiny surface. He acted like he didn’t care but ZhengLi knew he was just being moody. Acting out like a prepubescent child.

“According to her file, her birthname isn’t TangShi anyway, but that her father uses the name he bestowed on and not what was registered at birth, so I guess that’s why. Did you not see when she signed the marriage license what name she used; I can get it for you if you don’t believe me. After all you made me take everything and file them for you in the safe!” ZhengLi shrugged, finding his friend’s combative attitude towards an innocent girl somewhat irritating and decided to no longer play. He figured YuZhi would cool down in the next weeks as he got used to this new role as husband and maybe his hostility to the poor woman would improve. ZhengLi wasn’t a bad guy, and he didn’t like seeing people treated badly, especially not by his best friend.

YuZhi really didn’t care either way, but it did pique his interest to wonder what other name this girl might have. Maybe it was even uglier and was the reason she didn’t use it. Imagine if her name was worse, and she hid it in shame for being graced with something unlovable. The thought amused him, as petty as it was, and on some sadistic level he smirked his friend’s way.

“What is it?” he inquired, only half interested. Hoping it was something he could tease her with if he ever felt like.

ZhengLi paused for a moment, a new tinge of light in his eyes as he laid himself out casually, stretching himself taller and getting comfy. A sense of smug moving over him that the name he read, actually was pretty ironic.

“It’s MingYun.” ZhengLi smiled wider, a little happy that he knew this would annoy YuZhi, the translation of the word not lost on him and YuZhi stared back in disbelief. He snorted at his friend’s stupid joke, shrugged like he was a total liar and turned away with a dismissive wave.

“Asshole. You’re not even close to funny.”

YuZhi didn’t believe for one second that his new burden, the un-joy of his life, the changer of all his plans, the thorn in his side, was actually called Destiny...