

## Elite Doting 401

### [Elite Doting Marriage: Crafty Husband, Aloof Cute Wife](#)

#### Chapter 401: First Uncle's Sudden Visit

Yan Rusheng didn't return the entire night. Early next morning, Xuxu saw an extensive article on the front page of the newspaper describing how Charles had clarified their relationship via a press conference yesterday.

And he had sternly declared to the media outlets that if they don't stop spreading rumors, he would be taking legal action against them.

The press conference lasted for only five minutes and every sentence he made was in her defense.

In the photo, Charles was wearing a jewel-blue suit and he appeared poised and composed in front of the cameras. His innate elegance and grace radiated from head to toe.

But his usual gentle eyes had turned cold and intense.

Xuxu could tell from his expression that he was enraged. He had really flared up this time.

She finished reading the article and the corners of her mouth curled up. She was incredibly touched and grateful.

Judging from this, Charles was indeed a true friend.

Xuxu drove to work and when she reached the building, all the employees she met in the hall greeted her continuously.

She nodded at them with a smile.

Today, her footsteps seemed more hurried than usual as she wanted to get to her office as soon as possible.

She walked together with a knot of employees towards the elevator and a middle-aged man called her loudly from behind her.

"Xuxu!"

Wen Xuxu halted her footsteps and turned around. She saw the man and after a moment of shock, she beamed brightly at him. "First Uncle!"

It was Yan Rusheng's eldest uncle, Yan Weiye.

He wore a dull gray blazer and matching trousers. He was nearing 60 years of age but he still stood tall and energetic.

She hurried towards him and asked, "Why are you here so early?"

When she was a child, she didn't get to spend much time with Yan Weiye. The last time she saw him even was at her grandmother's funeral.

When she had just entered the Yan family, he was busy managing Flourish & Prosper and he always needed to travel for work. So he was hardly at home.

But she remembered fondly that he would always get her a gift when he came back from his work trips. Sometimes, it was something delicious or simply a small ornament.

He didn't even get anything for his two sons.

In a nutshell, the Yan family had been incredibly kind to her. She could never forget their kindness and how indebted she was to the whole family.

Other than devoting herself to the Yan family, she had nothing else to repay them with.

She surveyed Yan Weiye from head to toe and she said with concern, "First Uncle, you seem to have lost a lot of weight."

Yan Weiye grinned and stroked his face. "I've been very busy lately and didn't have much time to rest."

Xuxu peered at the door and asked, "First Uncle, did you reach the capital city this morning?"

If not he would have certainly gone home.

"I'm here to settle some stuff in the capital city." Yan Weiye continued, "I was too early so I decided to drop by and look for you."

"Sure." Xuxu nodded and said, "Let's go upstairs then."

However, Yan Weiye didn't budge and said in a hushed tone instead, "Let's go to a cafe nearby."

His smile and expression turned awkward and Xuxu guessed that he had something to say to her. She agreed, "Okay, let's go."

The cafe was quite empty at that time of day.

Wen Xuxu found a table at the corner. They both settled in with Yan Weiye sitting in front of Xuxu.

They requested for two glasses of water.

After settling down, Xuxu decided to start the ball rolling as she was afraid that Yan Weiye might not be able to broach the topic. "First Uncle, do you have something to tell me?"

Yan Weiye was startled when he heard her and shook his head. He mocked himself, "Xuxu, I'm getting old indeed. I can't seem to hide my thoughts from you."

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**Chapter 402: The First Time She Didn't Control It**

Xuxu smiled. "It's alright. First Uncle, please say everything that's on your mind."

If he was feeling hesitant, most likely it was bad news.

She tried to prepare herself mentally for whatever he had to say as her thoughts whirled rapidly.

Since she had been so straightforward, Yan Weiye chose not to beat around the bush as well. “The rumors concerning Third Yan and you are spreading like wildfire. It’s affecting the company’s image and reputation.”

He pulled a heavy sigh and helplessly continued, “It doesn’t just concern our company. Today Princess Lu Fei from Country Y had called and said that it’s affecting the royal family’s reputation as well. This might affect the collaboration between us and them. They hope that you can clarify the rumors and apologize at a press conference.”

Xuxu was stumped for words. She tried to open her mouth to respond but her throat seemed to be choked.

She felt particularly upset and wronged in front of the man who was almost like a father to her—someone who was always so kind and warm to her.

“But everything is just a rumor, it’s not true.”

She didn’t understand why she had to pay attention to such ridiculous rumors and even had to apologize for it.

So many celebrities had scandals before and she didn’t see them clarifying at press conferences, not to mention making an official apology.

*Why did she have to do that?*

Xuxu’s eyes began to sting and were turning slightly red.

Yan Weiye was quick to console her when he saw her expression. “Xuxu, don’t be upset. I’m not saying that I don’t believe you.”

Xuxu pressed her lips tightly as she tried to compose herself. She nodded lightly and said with a quivering voice, “Alright, let me take some time to consider this before I give you a proper reply very soon.”

She thought that for the sake of Grandmother, the Yan family and everyone who loved her. Those reasons were more than sufficient.

“Xuxu, I know how hard this is for you.” Yan Weiye stretched his hand to pat Xuxu’s shoulder. He couldn’t bear to look at her in the eye, especially that Xuxu’s own orbs were red in a grievance.

He intended to console and advise her by saying that since she had been elevated to such a high and prominent status, sometimes she would have to do things that were not of her own volition. But he forced his words back.

Xuxu managed a slight smile. “I’m part of Flourish & Prosper now, so I should do my part.”

Yan Weiye nodded in appreciation. “I know you’re an understanding child.”

After chatting for a short while, they left the cafe. Though the sun was shining, the cold winds were brutal and piercing.

Xuxu walked towards Flourish & Prosper’s building with a heavy heart.

Her good mood was destroyed.

“Sister Xuxu, this document needs your signature.”

“Sister Xuxu, the PR department just called saying that they need to make a trip to the event venue in the afternoon.”

The moment she stepped in, her colleagues took turns to report to her.

“Sister Xuxu...”

“I got it!”

She lashed out and everyone was baffled on their feet. The office became hushed in a split second and the silence was ear piercing.

Pairs of eyes were staring at her apprehensively.

After a moment of blinding realization, she instantly regretted how she had allowed her emotions to affect her at her workplace. She felt terrible and frustrated.

This was the first time ever... that she wasn’t able to control her emotions.

She slumped into her seat and used her hand to wipe her face. She raised her head to look at her colleagues who stood around her. She massaged her temples as she apologized, “Sorry, please carry on.”

She lowered her head and proceeded to switch on her computer. She began to pore through a document on her desk.

She needed to find something to do, to distract her and to give herself time to calm down.

Xuxu didn’t let herself have a moment of rest the entire day.

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#### **Chapter 403: It Should Be Due To Love**

Xuxu came out of the office pantry with a cup of water. She settled in her seat and glanced at the time. It was almost 5 p.m., almost time to clock off.

She leaned against the back of her chair as she tilted her head and shut her eyes. Her eyelashes and eyelids were slightly quivering.

*Sigh. She couldn’t stop whatever that was coming, and she would have to do whatever that needed to be done.*

She sighed heavily in her heart and Xuxu’s eyelids fluttered open. She placed the cup down and took her cell phone. She stood up, grabbed her bag and left the office while making a call.

“I’m Wen Xuxu. I’m on my way.”

She walked with heavy but determined footsteps.

...

*Jincheng City.*

“President Yan, the young madam had called for a press conference. She had apologized to Country Y for the scandal between her and Charles.” Qiao Jian had entered Yan Rusheng’s room with a laptop in his hand after knocking on the door. He was quick on his footing towards Yan Rusheng who was buried in work.

After Yan Rusheng heard him, the pen he was holding jerked and stopped violently in mid-air. His gorgeous face seemed to be instantly clouded by a layer of gloom.

Qiao Jian placed the laptop in front of him and it was playing a video of Wen Xuxu at the press conference in the capital city.

She stood in front of the camera as beams of lights mercilessly flashed at her.

Nevertheless, she stood tall and straight and displayed neither inferiority nor superiority. She fluently answered all the questions asked by the reporters and appeared unruffled and composed.

But Yan Rusheng’s heart seemed to be clenched tightly.

She was the prideful and aloof Wen Xuxu. She was Wen Xuxu, a person who was always able to stay levelheaded and indifferent.

Why would she care about such rumors? And she had chosen to apologize and clarify at a press conference.

His face was screwed up in concentration as he tried to guess what had happened. After a while, he had the answer in his heart. A chill air emanated from him and his eyes seemed to resemble a condensed layer of ice.

“Get prepared, we’re returning to the capital city.”

His tone was decisive.

He got up and walked towards his wardrobe.

Qiao Jian peered out of the windows and he hesitated for a second before saying carefully. “President Yan, it’s already getting dark... Are we really going back right now?”

Yan Rusheng turned his head and lifted his brow coldly. “Is there a problem?”

He stretched his hand, removed a coat from the wardrobe and put it over him.

Qiao Jian didn’t dare to dawdle any longer and went to prepare.

...

In the dining room, Xuxu was drinking the ginger soup that Aunt Zhang had cooked for her. She had added coke to the soup and the heat made it no longer fizzy, leaving only sweetness.

For best results, Aunt Zhang had added more ginger to the soup to cure Xuxu’s flu. But as a result, it became spicier and it irritated the latter’s throat when she tried to drink it.

"I can't drink this, my throat hurts."

She placed the bowl down and touched her throat, pretending to whine in front of Aunt Zhang.

Actually, she didn't intend to drink the soup at all. But because Aunt Zhang brewed the soup personally for her, she couldn't bear to waste her efforts.

Aunt Zhang didn't force her after Xuxu complained about the soup. She then said, "Then forget the soup, drink more water then."

"Okay." Xuxu smiled and nodded. "I'll go upstairs first."

She stood up and was about to leave the dining room.

"Third Young Master is back."

A servant announced his arrival.

*Was he back?* Xuxu lifted her head in surprise and Yan Rusheng, who was dressed impeccably, had already appeared at the entrance of the dining room.

When she saw his gorgeous face, a streak of happiness flashed past her eyes fleetingly, but it was too swift for anyone to notice.

That happiness stemmed from her heart and she couldn't control it.

Yan Rusheng gazed at her and stared at her aloof-looking face. It was only then that he did questioned himself. It was so late and he was travel-worn and weary from the journey, why exactly did he rush back?

If there needs to be a reason, he thought that... it should be due to love.

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#### **Chapter 404: I Really Feel Like Strangling You**

Yan Rusheng won't be able to remain calm regarding anything that involved Wen Xuxu. He had been like this for as long as he could remember.

He hated himself for being like that and hated her for being the cause. But there was nothing he could do.

"Third Young Master, I guess you haven't eaten dinner. Miss has just finished and the dishes are still warm," Aunt Zhang said with a tinge of excitement when she saw Yan Rusheng.

Yan Rusheng retracted his gaze from Xuxu's face and nodded at Aunt Zhang promptly. "Mm."

Then he entered the dining room.

Xuxu stared at the ground with her lips curled as she ridiculed herself. Why did she feel that she had become the type of wife who had waited grudgingly for her husband to come home only to dote and shower her with love after being away for a long time?

Even if she felt that way, she reckoned that he couldn't be bothered.

He had merely taken care of her for an entire night while she was unconscious.

If everything he did was because he had truly loved and cared for her, he wouldn't have defended and protected Fang Jiayin in public. And he had even insisted on changing the VIP for the Christmas event. And needless to say, he wouldn't have agreed to her making an apology at the press conference.

Just months ago, Yan Rusheng had torn the billion-dollar contract for her sake.

But months later, he had made her bow to pressure, to appease others and for the sake of the billion-dollar contract.

Hence, she shouldn't be harboring hope anymore. She simply cannot withstand the agony and pain from falling from paradise to hell once more.

She continued to walk out of the dining room.

Yan Rusheng watched her as she walked past, fury blazed in his eyes instantly.

He leaped to his feet and caught up with her swiftly with a few steps. He grabbed her violently and pinned her against the wall.

Both Wen Xuxu and Aunt Zhang were both shocked and terrified by his sudden rage. The bowl Aunt Zhang was holding dropped to the floor with a clang. "Third Young Master, what are you doing?"

Yan Rusheng's eyes swept across her coldly. "Get out."

He said it with an absolute authoritative tone.

"Third Young Master..." Aunt Zhang moved forward as she was afraid that Yan Rusheng might hurt Xuxu judging from the terrible and incensed expression on his face.

Xuxu gave her a meaningful glance. "Aunt Zhang, just leave first."

If Yan Rusheng really wanted to hurt her, how could an old lady like her be able to stop him?

She might get hurt as well.

Aunt Zhang wasn't entirely at ease but she could only oblige and leave.

After Aunt Zhang left, Yan Rusheng gritted his teeth and menacingly inched nearer to Xuxu's face. His angry and heavy breaths landed directly on her exquisite-looking face.

She raised her chin slightly with her lips pressed tightly together. She looked undaunted as she stared back at him. She looked as though she was taunting him.

But she was actually shivering with fear deep inside.

She had no idea what Yan Rusheng wanted and why he abruptly lost his temper. All she knew was that he was raging and was exceedingly mad right now.

Usually, the aftermath of such intense rage and wrath brought serious repercussions. Just like that fateful night, he had pinned her down while calling Fang Jiayin's name. As if a beast inside of him was being unleashed.

“Wen Xuxu, aren’t you usually aloof and proud?” Yan Rusheng sneered at her as he inched threateningly closer until they were nose to nose with each other. “I really feel like strangling you.”

As long she was willing to yield to him, he could shelter and protect her from any storms.

But she would rather shoulder the burden all by herself and was even willing to bow her head to others. She would rather do all of these than to yield to him.

She had always shown him the coldest and cruelest side of her.

Xuxu kept her head tilted without a word. She didn’t want to ask, neither did she want to know what she had done to infuriate him to this extent.

Both of them stared at each other with intent and strong gazes as they remained deadlocked for a while. Finally, Yan Rusheng relinquished his grip.

He turned around and stormed off.

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#### **Chapter 405: I've Loved The Wrong Person**

The next morning, both of them sat opposite each other at the dining table as usual. The room was silent except for the occasional sounds produced by the cutlery brushing against the plates.

Xuxu finished her breakfast first and after dabbing her mouth with a napkin, she got up to leave.

Yan Rusheng suddenly quipped, “Wen Xuxu, you should be glad that you called my name when you were unconscious. And not...”

He deliberately paused and lifted his head to look at Xuxu. He sneered coldly with contempt. “Jiang Zhuoheng!”

*“What? She had called his name when she was unconscious? What else did she say?”*

Xuxu was struck with a pang of uneasiness. Hence she kept her head lowered so that Yan Rusheng wouldn’t notice and said nonchalantly, “That’s what you’ve always assumed.”

He was the one who had spun stories about how Ah Heng and she were deeply in love, and that he assumed that she had never forgotten Ah Heng.

It was because she wasn’t in the least important to him, that’s why he could be so indifferent as he tormented and taunted her about her relationship with Ah Heng.

“Hmph. Really?” Yan Rusheng smirked coldly as he wiped his mouth with a napkin. “It doesn’t matter how deep your love for Jiang Zhuoheng is. Since we are husband and wife now and after all, and we have grown up together, I feel that I’m obliged to enlighten you.”

He placed the napkin back on the table and stood up. His malicious-looking eyes stared at Xuxu intently. “What is so good about Jiang Zhuoheng and why is he worthy of your love? Was he really worth it to make you give up the opportunity of studying abroad and used it as a stake to see if he truly loved you? Now that you’ve been attacked by rumors and berated by everyone, where is he?”



His angry accusations echoed in the dining room.

“Yan Rusheng!” Xuxu bellowed at him and her tears gushed out instantly.

He knew... he had found out that she had given up the chance to study abroad.

But... he does not know who the person she had given it up for. But it was clear that this was her Achilles heel and he had callously ripped her wound open.

“What happened? Did I touch a raw nerve?” Yan Rusheng saw her tears and realized that he didn’t feel the sense of achievement and triumph he had expected to have when he had riled her up on purpose. He seemed to become more frustrated instead.

His smile was full of sarcasm and scorn. “Years ago, didn’t you choose to give up the opportunity? You’ve always dreamt of going overseas to study. To think that your dream was worth so little that you could forgo it just for someone whose heart wasn’t entirely with you.”

*“Damn Jiang Zhuoheng, how could he not cherish her.”*

How he wished that she had given up the opportunity for him.

Xuxu bawled and yelled. “Yes! I have loved the wrong person for years. So it serves me right and I deserve to bear all the consequences.”

She turned around and bolted out of the room.

He saw her vanishing from his sight and it was the first time Yan Rusheng had regretted his words so much. He wanted to chase after her but his feet seemed rooted to the ground.

This was not what he wanted.

...

She was in despair and so she cried.

But Xuxu still needed to get back to work. She tuned out her emotions while drinking a cup of coffee and dived back to work with a smile.

...

In the studio, a pretty lady stood in front of the cameras. She wore a bright red dress with a sharp V shape that revealed her beautiful back and accentuated her wonderful figure.

She was able to display different poses for the camera, be it seductive, sultry or aloof.

The photographer kept snapping away and he wore a satisfied smile throughout the shoot.

“Okay, done!”

After the last shot, he gave a thumbs up to the pretty lady.

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**Chapter 406: Being Willful Is Selective Based on the Person**

All the staff in the studio began to get busy once more as they went about with their respective tasks.

One of the staff, who was in charge of editing the photos, was browsing through the photographs. She sighed with admiration and envy as she praised the model. "Miss Zhou Tong is indeed classy and she looks perfect from any angle."

The photographer took a sip of water and interjected, "Yes and she doesn't accept advertisements from small companies. If she didn't have the capability and looks, how would she dare to be so willful and selective?"

He turned his head to look at Wen Xuxu. "Secretary Wen, why don't you take a seat and browse through the photos to see if it's satisfactory?"

No matter how they raved about the photos, the boss still had the final say.

Xuxu smiled and shook her head. "It's alright. I'm not really an expert with these."

She had casually browsed through the photos earlier on with the staff, and from an outsider's perspective, every single photo seemed perfect. It seemed like the editing was quite unnecessary.

Furthermore, she wasn't here to check on the photo shoot as she doesn't have time to go through such tiny details. She had merely wanted to check on the overall progress.

"Secretary Wen, you should still take a look. If there is any problem, please voice it out now as I won't be coming to re-shoot the photos again," someone said in a haughty and cold tone. It turned out to be Zhou Tong. She was stroking her hair lazily. She seemed to have changed out of her red dress and was wearing her own clothes.

She wore a loose black top and a pair of dark red leather boots. She sauntered slowly towards them.

Xuxu glanced askew at her and smiled lightly. "Miss Zhou is really a woman of character."

She spoke ambiguously.

The corners of Zhou Tong's mouth curled widely. "I wouldn't dare to, in front of Third Madam Yan."

She had reached the computer and stood next to Xuxu. She crossed her arms in front of her chest and appeared indolent and sultry.

The smell of strong perfume on her body assailed Xuxu's nostrils and it smelled pleasant.

This was the first time that she had smelled such a strong scent of perfume and she wasn't disgusted by it.

She ignored Zhou Tong's words and turned around to the person-in-charge from the PR department. She instructed her, "The publicity photos must be ready as soon as possible and the PR department must confirm the billboard design by the end of this week."

She nodded. "Yes."

"Thanks for your hard work." Xuxu patted her on her shoulder and spun around to leave the studio.

She wore a pair of black short boots with heels about 3 inches tall. Her footsteps sounded calm and stable as she stepped across the room.

It had reflected her current emotions.

Zhou Tong turned her head to glance at Xuxu as she curled her lips in disdain. "Other than being so condescending, I can't see any other strengths."

She said it in a normal tone of voice and without a care if anyone else was listening.

Her manager was rather edgy and anxious when he heard her. He frowned and whispered in her ear. "My dear lady, please don't be so willful. You need to be careful when treading around certain people."

That woman was Third Young Master's wife and even though how strained their relationship might be, she was still his official spouse. The female head of the Yan family and Flourish & Prosper.

Zhou Tong sneered, " *Hmph* , I simply can't stand people who are pretending to be pure and lofty."

Xuxu overheard her. She smiled to herself bitterly.

*"Pretending to be pure and lofty? Shouldn't she be talking about herself?"*

She had seen so many celebrities this past year at Flourish & Prosper's various events and Zhou Tong was the most stubborn one she had met.

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#### **Chapter 407: Why Should I Be Angry?**

Just like what others have said, Zhou Tong had the right to be willful. Furthermore, she was chosen by Yan Rusheng.

She walked out of the studio and instantly felt much better since the lobby wasn't as cold as it was inside.

She put on her jacket, as she still felt chilly, while walking towards the elevator.

"Xuxu."

A familiar voice echoed in front of her.

Xuxu halted on her footsteps and looked up. A familiar person with her usual gentle smiling face came into view. She said lightly, "What a coincidence."

This was the first time Xuxu had crossed paths with her after the entire ruckus with Yan Rusheng.

Then she recalled that when she had just came back, they bumped into each other on several occasions.

If not, she would have been very surprised to hear her voice.

Fang Jiayin was wearing a white woolen jacket with a pair of wine-red leggings. On her feet was a pair of black knee-high boots.

Her long hair, which resembled a premium black silk tumbled loosely around her shoulders and her back. She exuded a mature and intelligent womanly charm.

She strode towards Xuxu and pointed at the studio, which Xuxu had just come out from. She smiled and said, "I'm meeting Zhou Tong for lunch."

"Oh." Xuxu stretched her hand and pointed inside. "The shoot is over."

What she truly meant with what she said was that she can look for her friend now.

And if she delved deeper, it also meant that Xuxu didn't really feel like talking to her at the moment.

Fang Jiayin nodded. "Mm, okay."

But she didn't seem to have any intentions to end the conversation.

So, Xuxu spoke again, "I've something on so I'll leave first."

She was about to leave when Fang Jiayin interjected. "Xuxu, are you angry with me?"

Xuxu heard her and turned her head. She feigned ignorance and asked, "Why should I be angry with you?"

In reality, she really couldn't find any reason to be angry with her.

She didn't do anything.

"That time..." Fang Jiayin wore an apologetic expression as she expounded, "I'm talking about that time when Ah Sheng helped me regarding the collision outside Capital City Musical Theater. It was really a coincidence that we met each other. He did mention that he was on the way to look for you. But..."

She wasn't able to finish her sentence when Xuxu cut her. "It's already over."

She didn't want to listen to any explanation regarding both of them.

But, Fang Jiayin rattled on, "Xuxu, I know that both of you aren't talking because of that incident. I wanted to call you to explain but, I was afraid that you might feel that I'm being pretentious.

"Chen Yuxi was really unreasonable and went overboard that time. Ah Sheng helped me because we are old friends. It's the media who had twisted the facts and exaggerated everything. Please don't believe them," she implored.

*"Old friend?"*

Xuxu heard her and she almost burst out laughing. It seemed like she didn't understand Yan Rusheng well enough.

She had left without a word years ago and they had ended on such an unhappy note. So how could they possibly remain as friends after reuniting?

In such situations and with Yan Rusheng's personality, anyone who had abandoned or humiliated him, it would be considered kind and benevolent of him not to destroy or add insult to her injury.

But he had declared his support for her openly in public and offered his help.

There were only two possibilities; firstly, he hadn't gotten over her and his feelings for her were rekindled. That's why it had invoked his protectiveness towards her.

The second possibility was that he felt that he had owed her.

He was a person who always clearly distinguished the good from the bad and love from hate.

Obviously, it wasn't the latter so the only reason could only be the first possibility.

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#### **Chapter 408: It Was Just Wishful Thinking**

"So it's really not worth it, if your misunderstanding with him continues because of this incident. You're really important to him. When he was drunk at that time... that time when I met him outside the bar. He was drunk but he had called your name while looking at me."

Fang Jiayin kept explaining in such an earnest tone, that it sounded very moving and enticing. But Xuxu simply didn't want to listen to her anymore. She cut across once more. "Jiayin, thank you for being so concerned about us but, I'm really fine."

Her patience was evidently running out.

Fang Jiayin bowed her head and looked reproachful. "I shouldn't have come back, right?"

Xuxu couldn't help herself to smile. "That's *too* serious. Everything is destined and love can't be forced. I admit that I'm a logical person especially in the matters that concern love."

If there was a third party right now, she would have thought that Fang Jiayin was putting on a show to garner pity and sympathy from others.

She would have labeled her as a white lotus who seemed pure on the surface but was twisted and dark underwater.

But they were the only people around and she can't fathom what was on her mind.

She paused before continuing, "True love can weather any storms, and it will definitely not be swayed or affected by a third party. So this has nothing to do with your return."

She spoke sharply and firmly and her message was concise.

She gave no chance for Fang Jiayin to explain further.

Fang Jiayin forced a smile and said, "Xuxu, you are always so wise. I've always admired how composed and rational you are."

Xuxu curled her lips. "Actually, your courage three years ago was more admirable."

Admiring her was one matter, regretting her decision was entirely another matter.

So, she admired her courage but didn't regret her own decision.

She turned her head and strode towards the elevator without any word.

As she left, Zhou Tong bounced out from the studio and smiled brightly at Fang Jiayin. "You're here! I was about to call you."

Fang Jiayin nodded at her briefly before catching a glimpse of Xuxu as she vanished out of sight. She stared afar with a mixture of deep and complex emotions.

Then she spun her head around and said to Zhou Tong, "Let's go."

Zhou Tong put her arm around hers and proclaimed happily, "Earlier on I managed to ask Yan Rusheng out for lunch. He will meet us directly at the restaurant."

Fang Jiayin furrowed her eyebrows and chided her. "Why did you call him?"

"Of course it's to eat!" Zhou Tong quipped as though it was the only expected answer. "What else can we do at a restaurant beside eating?"

Fang Jiayin knocked the back of Zhou Tong's head. "You're really looking for trouble."

In reality, excitement and joy were surging in her eyes.

Zhou Tong shook her head mischievously. "I do admit that I love to seek trouble. It's a treat for both my eyes and stomach to have a handsome guy eating with us."

"You're really—"

The two girls were walking only a few steps behind her. Xuxu immediately stepped into the elevator when it arrived. The doors closed before Fang Jiayin and Zhou Tong appeared.

Movie and lunch.

Sounds like they were about to relieve their sweet memories from their university days.

Xuxu ate lunch outside and she drove at a leisurely speed on the way back to the office.

She switched on the radio and it was playing some trendy songs.

How she wished she could drive aimlessly without facing her troubles.

But, this was reality and it was just wishful thinking on her part.

She found a parking lot in the car park. She unfastened her seatbelt and got off the car.

The sun was still shining brightly with blasts of frosty winds.

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#### **Chapter 409: How Can It Be?**

After returning to the office, she immersed herself with work that she had even forgotten to rehydrate herself with water.

She had yet to recover from her flu and was frequently interrupted by her cough. At times, she would be hacking continuously, too.

She clutched her chest and went into a coughing fit. Her throat was dry and tight. She reached for her cup and shouted for her assistant who was seated opposite to her. "Mi Ling..."

She had barely finished speaking when Yan Rusheng's cold voice sounded behind her.

“Qiao Jian, work has been hard on everyone lately. Please arrange for an afternoon tea and let everyone take a break.”

Xuxu was baffled when she heard his voice and turned to look at him.

He didn’t step out of the office all these while? Wasn’t he was supposed to meet them for lunch?

While she was still in her state of shock, the previously tensed atmosphere in the office had already turned relaxed and lively.

“Thank you, President Yan.”

“All hail to President Yan.”

Everyone chimed in and praised Yan Rusheng, while Xuxu retracted her gaze slowly.

Perhaps she was stirred by the sudden change in the office atmosphere that her mood had also become considerably lighter and cheerful.

“Let’s get back to work first,” Yan Rusheng instructed them and as he walked back to his office. His eyes deliberately swept past Xuxu.

He closed his office door.

Qiao Jian arranged for afternoon tea from First Love, the same place which Xuxu bought them their treats before.

A well-known brand name amongst the Western-styled pastry shop.

Everyone in the President’s office, including Xuxu, had a share of the afternoon tea.

“Miss Xuxu, this is yours.” Qiao Jian personally brought Xuxu’s share over to her and left the rest of the afternoon tea at a common area for the rest to help themselves. “Rock sugar fritillary bulb with pear.”

“First Love doesn’t sell such dessert,” Xuxu muttered suspiciously while she attempted to open the plastic bag that was holding the dessert.

She was a regular customer of the First Love outlet near her office. Hence, she was familiar with their array of food and beverages.

Qiao Jian smiled without hesitation all of a sudden and bent over to whisper into Xuxu’s ears, “President had specially instructed me to buy this for you.”

Xuxu raised her head in surprise and looked at Qiao Jian who was beaming.

“How can it be?” Xuxu didn’t want to believe.

Yesterday night, he was so fierce and mean to her. How could he change so drastically overnight?

The plastic bag was torn open and indeed, it revealed a container that didn’t belong to First Love but another dessert brand instead.

As her throat was uncomfortably dry, she inserted the straw and started drinking without hesitation.

Qiao Jian stood beside her and looked around sneakily and then glanced at Yan Rusheng's office door.

He bent over and inched closer to Xuxu and whispered, "Sister Xuxu, pretend that I didn't tell you this. President Yan and I were at Jincheng City yesterday and we were supposed to be back on this afternoon. But, after he found out about your apology at a press conference, he was overcome with rage and changed his itinerary. We rushed back last night instead."

*"He was overcome with rage after finding out about her apology at the press conference? Why?"*

A perplexed Xuxu looked at Qiao Jian. "What do you mean?"

Wasn't the apology at the press conference his idea? Even if it wasn't, he must have consented to it.

So what was he mad about? Was he unhappy because her apology wasn't earnest enough or her words of apology were inappropriate?

Qiao Jian knitted his eyebrows anxiously. "My dear lady boss, can't you see?"

*Such an intelligent man, yet why was he reacting so strongly on this?*

He was about to lower his voice to explain to Xuxu about Yan Rusheng's rage when a voice behind him spoke and sent shivers down his spine.

**Elite Doting Marriage: Crafty Husband, Aloof Cute Wife**

**Chapter 410: Could Only Blame Himself for Not Taking a Firm Stand**

"Qiao Jian, why haven't you brought in the document that I requested?"

Qiao Jian stood up swiftly. "Yes, I'll bring it over now."

After his swift reply, he didn't dare waste any more time and went back to his work station to retrieve the document. After which, he walked over to Yan Rusheng and handed it over to him.

He smiled at him obsequiously.

Yan Rusheng shot him a cold glance. "You seemed to be very idle. This afternoon, go over to Jincheng City to deliver the documents."

"Huh?" Qiao Jian was shocked. "Oh, alright."

No one liked to go on a work trip as it's always on a rush and exhausting.

Yan Rusheng ignored Qiao Jian's reaction and looked at Xuxu who was holding the dessert in one hand and casually sipping on her drink. Then, he averted his gaze to the documents in front of her.

He had the urge to call out to her but, he restrained himself in the end and went back to his office and shut the door.

Xuxu put down her dessert and was about to sign on the documents when the telephone on her desk rang.

"Please come in."



A familiar voice sounded on the phone. Instinctively, she turned her head and looked at the President's office and answered, "Ok."

After ending the call, she walked over to Yan Rusheng's office and strongly pushed the door open.

She closed the door lightly after she entered and walked towards Yan Rusheng. "President Yan."

Yan Rusheng halted his work and picked up his glass of water, drinking and talking to Xuxu at the same time. "Today is Lu Yinan's grandfather's ninetieth birthday. Go and get ready."

"You are bringing me along?" Xuxu asked in astonishment.

After hearing Xuxu's query, Yan Rusheng stopped drinking and stared coldly at Xuxu. "We are *still* husband and wife."

*Did she think that he would bring someone else instead?*

She sounded so calm and collected and not in the least concerned.

"Alright." Xuxu nodded her head. "What about the birthday gift?"

She wanted to ask if she needed to prepare the birthday gift when Yan Rusheng interrupted her.

"Already arranged. You just need to get yourself ready."

"I got it!"

After answering him, Xuxu didn't ask further and left his office.

When her figure disappeared, silence and emptiness resumed in his office. Yan Rusheng put down his glass and rummaged through his drawer for his exquisite metal cigarette case. He drew out a cigarette from it and stuck it in his mouth.

He lighted it and started smoking.

Cigarette smoke pervaded the air and his body was gradually enveloped by the smoke. The entire office was shrouded with gloom.

Bought dessert for her, she *didn't* believe.

Going to bring her out for social engagement, she *was* astonished.

There was nothing else he could do anymore. He could only blame himself for not being able to take a firm stand.

...

Since she didn't have to prepare for a birthday gift, Xuxu waited until it was clock-off time, after which, she went to the bathroom to put on some light makeup and redo her hair.

She assumed that since Lu Yinan's grandfather was from the military force and had fought in wars before, he must be a rigorous, simple person. Hence, her overall appearance must be in good taste and appropriate for the occasion.

That's why she didn't bother to change into a fancy attire. She took a look at herself in the mirror and was pleased. With a smile, she took a deep breath and turned around.

She raised her head and was caught off-guard by a pair of abstruse eyes. A look of astonishment flashed across her face.

Opening her mouth in shock, she caught sight of a man leaning on the marble wall of the bathroom entrance staring at her.

His sudden intrusion evoked a thousand layers of emotions in her.

Yan Rusheng was smartly dressed in his suit. One hand was stuffed into his pocket while the other hand was holding on to a cigarette. There were wisps of white smoke in the air and a long piece of cigarette ash had already accumulated on the cigarette. It seemed that he didn't smoke much.