

GOSSIP EX-WIFE

Chapter 8 Blaming Sherry

Sherry was captivated by the stranger's eyes. It felt like it had been forever since anyone looked at her that way.

He had told her it wasn't a good idea to keep drinking, and she decided it was time to take his advice. She switched from cocktails to water and sodas.

Eventually, Linda said that she needed to leave because she had urgent matters to deal with. She asked Sherry if she wanted to leave, too. Sherry hesitated for a moment, then said she'd rather stay.

When Linda left, Sherry thanked the waiters for keeping them company and said they could get back to work now. But when the waiter who had told her to stop drinking stood to go, she blurted out, "Please stay and have a few more drinks with me." He flushed and sat down next to her. Now it was just the two of

them.

The handsome young waiter seemed rather shy, and he didn't say much. Sherry did most of the talking. She had no interest in talking about anything serious, so she chatted about inane things like the weather, sports, and celebrities. He just sat there, listening and occasionally responding to her comments. It made her smile. His name was Jeffrey Xia, and he had beautiful eyes.

She realized that those warm, intense eyes reminded her of a younger Jeremy.

Back then, Jeremy had also looked at her in that way, with warmth and concern and interest. Once, Jeremy's eyes had made her giddy—he had made her feel as though nothing in the world was more important than looking at her.

As Sherry and Jeffrey Xia chatted, they didn't realize that someone was watching them.

It was none other than Steve. Beside him sat Jeremy, who maintained an indifferent and dignified air.

"Jeremy, your woman seems to be in a good mood!" jibed Steve. He arched his eyebrows at Jeremy and grinned, deliberately trying to provoke him.

Jeremy held a glass of scotch, which he downed in one gulp. He glanced sternly over at where his wife was smiling and laughing with a young man he'd never seen before.

He scowled as he remembered how distant and stiff Sherry had been earlier today. But for this random waiter, she was all smiles.

That smile was familiar to Jeremy. The way she used

to smile at him—as though nothing in the world gave her more pleasure than being with him—was imprinted in his memory.

Jeremy turned away, his slender fingers toying with his empty glass. He gave Steve a cool look. "What are you trying to say?"

Steve was not intimidated. "I'm not trying to say anything. I'm directly telling you that Sherry looks like she's enjoying herself," he said with a grin.

Steve thought that Jeremy might be feeling suspicious about what Sherry was up to. Jeremy did care, but he maintained a calm and aloof expression. He was an expert at pretending not to care.

Anyway, there was no point in being so emotional about Sherry.

"About an hour ago Sherry was with a group of people, one of her girl friends and several waiters," said Steve. "I saw them when I went to the bathroom earlier. But now I think everyone's left and it's just Sherry and that guy." Steve spoke casually, lighting a cigarette, but he was keeping an eye on Jeremy's reaction. To his disappointment, Jeremy still looked bored.

Steve plunged on, "What's up with that waiter, anyway? He looks like a womanizer. Is he getting her drunk on purpose? If this goes too far they might end up kissing!"

Jeremy said nothing, so Steve let the matter drop for a few moments. He waited until he saw Sherry leaning very close to her companion, whispering something in his ear, and then he nudged Jeremy. "Look, why don't we just go over there and say hello? She is your woman! You are wasting what you have

with her!"

Jeremy felt a burst of annoyance at the sight of his wife's lips so close to that stranger's ear, but he kept his poker face on. He refused to answer Steve's comment.

With a sigh, Steve gave up and began looking around at the rest of the people in the bar. He stood up to search for anything that would catch his interest.

Suddenly, Sherry's companion stood up too. He went to the small stage on one side of the bar and whispered something to one of the musicians setting up their instruments for a performance later tonight. After a few minutes, the lights came on over the stage, and the strains of a romantic s

ong began playing. The man took the microphone and started to sing. He was singing for Sherry! He was

looking straight in her direction, and his eyes were clear and kind. He actually had a nice singing voice.

At first, Jeremy was genuinely nonchalant. But when he stole a glance at Sherry, he saw that she was watching with a rapt expression, looking entirely absorbed in the song. He felt a burst of irritation.

She was so focused on the singer onstage, and she still had that soft, affectionate smile on her face.

Concealing his anger, Jeremy lit a cigarette. Then he gave in to his impulse and took out his phone to call Sherry.

Sherry was seated at her cozy table, feeling the warmth of her earlier drinks and the pleasure of being with a kind person like Jeffrey Xia, when her phone began ringing. She casually took it out. When she saw who was calling, all the light disappeared from

her face. She felt like someone had thrown cold water over her. She debated just letting it ring, but with a sigh, she answered. She didn't bother saying hello. "What's the matter?"

Her abrupt answer made Jeremy even more annoyed. "Where are you? Why aren't you home?" Jeremy's voice was low and controlled.

She could feel his displeasure, and for an instant she almost hoped that he was worried about her.

However, she couldn't deceive herself. He was probably in a bad mood and blaming her for not being available at his beck and call. Jeffrey Xia was still singing, but she could no longer enjoy it.

She hated how uncomfortable it felt to have such mixed feelings about her husband.

"I'm out with friends," Sherry said vaguely. She

lowered her head, feeling self-conscious, but her tone was calm.

Jeremy scowled at her evasive answer. He almost snapped, "Do you happen to be friends with a bar waiter?" But he kept his thoughts to himself.

Rudely, he ended the call without saying anything further.

"Hey, Jeremy! Time to have some fun of our own, don't you think?" At that moment, Steve returned to the table, accompanied by several beautiful waitresses. They giggled and blushed as Steve urged them to sit down.

Jeremy had not expected this, and his mood darkened as two scantily-dressed women sat on either side of him, pressing their bodies up against him. He could smell their cheap perfume.

He kept his face blank, but he felt a twinge of disgust. He was about to tell them to leave when he realized that Sherry's attention had been drawn by the commotion at their table. She was staring straight at him! He quickly draped an arm around each of the girls, drawing them closer to him.

Sherry's face froze. She remembered his angry call and realized that Jeremy must have known she was in the bar with him. And now he was having the time of his life with those sexy waitresses.

Her initial reaction was despair. However, as he turned away from her to talk and laugh with the women at his table, she suddenly felt an unexpected sense of relief.

There was nothing she could do if that was the kind of woman that caught his interest.

She could only be herself. Anyway, it was clear that he didn't love her. It was honestly a relief that it was now all out in the open.

She raised her glass with its non-alcoholic contents and finished it off. She determinedly refused to give Jeremy the pleasure of seeing her watching him. Instead, she kept her eyes focused on Jeffrey Xia, who was now singing an upbeat song with a couple of other waiters onstage. She reminded herself to keep her attention on the kind young man who was making such an effort to entertain her.

Meanwhile, at Jeremy's table, Steve eventually realized that something was wrong. Jeremy nodded and smiled as the waitresses flirted with him, but his eyes were stone cold. Steve motioned for one of the waitresses to move away so he could talk to Jeremy.

Steve realized that something serious was going on between Jeremy and Sherry.

"Jeremy, I know Sherry can be a complicated woman. That keeps things interesting, doesn't it?" he said lightly, trying to get his friend to talk about Sherry.

Steve knew that while a lot of women were attracted to his friend, Jeremy had never felt any strong emotions for any of them. Except maybe Sherry.

Jeremy ignored his question. He was in a very bad mood.

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