

## Loving 1531

### Chapter 1531. Not A Simple Banquet (2)

After a while, Qi Lei finally retracted his gaze in silence.

“After knowing you for so long, this is the first time I feel that you’re actually different from the usual you that I know, and this surprises me,” Qi Lei said.

“Everything’s fine as long as you don’t feel trampled by the changes you see in me. It takes a long time for a person to truly know another person. Neither am I a saint nor am I the fabulous and perfect Dongfang Liuyun that I was known to be. Just like you, the only person who will truly know you is always yourself. The persona that you exhibit might not be the real you too, so many people are living beneath a mask these days and I’m just one of them, another ordinary human being.”

There was a hint of coldness in Dongfang Liuyun’s tone, and it was not difficult to sense the self-deprecation in her words. “However, no matter what, one must always be held accountable for their own life. That’s why I’ve already gotten used to it now.”

“I heard that you plan to return to the Dongfang Group.” Qi Lei was naturally able to obtain some information regarding this.

Dongfang Liuyun closed her eyes, then opened them after some time. “I’m the only daughter of my father, so it’s only natural that I pick up the responsibility.”

Having heard her explanation, Qi Lei was absorbed deep into his own thoughts while he stole a glimpse at her and did not say another word.

After that, the two stood silently in the breeze in a tacit understanding. They just waited until it was time for Qi Lei to leave late in the night, and Dongfang Liuyun sent him off.

Standing at the doorsteps, Dongfang Liuyun uttered politely, “Thank you.”

“Don’t say those words again if you still take me as a friend. I’m going now, so off you go. Remember to take your medicine, and also maintain a healthier eating habit and diet,” he reminded her while she nodded in silence.

The car quickly drove off into the twilight ahead and disappeared after a while. Dongfang Liuyun stood there for a while more before turning around and going back in...

After resting for several days, Dongfang Liuyun felt better.

In the blink of an eye, it was a weekend again, it was Dongfang Ren’s 60th birthday. Dongfang Rouer and the others planned to celebrate it on a large scale for him, so it would be very boisterous at the Dongfang mansion today.

Dongfang Ren and Dongfang Yi had been staying in the Dongfang mansion. Of course, Dongfang Xue returned there very often too. The mansion was huge, and the siblings of Old Master Dongfang were also living nearby, so the Dongfang mansion was always very lively. As for Dongfang Gan, because Song Siting was unwilling to stay with these complicated people, and the unpleasant incident that had happened to Dongfang Liuyun a while back, he had immediately moved out of the place. However, the people living in the mansion still retained their original residence.

As usual, Dongfang Liuyun woke up early today. She did some simple cleaning in the house and went through some files. After having a light lunch, she packed her gift for the party and went straight out.

Specifically speaking, the Dongfang mansion should be a large manor with many independent and beautiful villas in it. There were also a few traditional ancestral shrines and courtyards in the old manor. The members of the Dongfang family lived together in this place, and they were obviously just like a big family that had existed for hundreds of years ago.

Rumor had it that the relationship between Old Master Dongfang and his ex-wife had never been very good. His ex-wife was a very well-known person in the upper echelons that many people pursued before her marriage. Even so, she was still surrounded by titbits of scandals with other men even after her marriage with Old Master Dongfang. That was why Old Master Dongfang doubted whether Dongfang Ren and Dongfang Yi were his biological sons, and he could only rest assured after a DNA verification. However, he still preferred Dongfang Shuman anyway.

Dongfang Gan was Old Master Dongfang's favorite son to whom the latter handed the company directly over when he passed away because he admired his extraordinary capability and means. As a legend in the business community at that time, Dongfang Shuman was definitely a ruthless person. However, she had not been feeling too well in recent years, so she could only pass the company to Dongfang Gan while she recuperated abroad.

As the only daughter of Dongfang Gan, Dongfang Liuyun was theoretically the first heir to the family business. However, because she was a woman, and based on the family nature of the Dongfang family, many people in the family did not feel very optimistic about her. They did not think that she was capable of taking over such a huge family business.

With that thought in mind, some people in the family were already putting their best foot forward, ready to make a move. The whole situation seemed a lot like a battle for an ancient throne.

Dongfang Liuyun despised such feelings. However, she could not help but fight for it because of her identity, to say nothing of the promise that she made to Old Master Dongfang before he breathed his last.

With great power came great responsibility! That was how she felt deep down all this while.

For more than twenty years, Dongfang Liuyun had always been very aware of the various schemes and plots that were attracted by the vortex in the family, and because of that, she had gotten the chance to see all the dimensions of all sorts of people. That was why she could always keep things cool and under control during such times. She had always known very well that attending such occasions was like going into a battlefield. Furthermore, the battlefield that she was about to walk into might have been specially set up just for her.

When the car drove steadily into the compound of the Dongfang mansion, the guards in the front gate were in awe when they discovered that the driver was actually Dongfang Liuyun. As soon as the car stopped, a bodyguard in black came forward to help her with the door.

"Fourth Lady, you're back!" His tone sounded very respectful.

Dongfang Liuyun got out of her car slowly and handed her car keys to the bodyguard. She subconsciously looked at the small square to the side of the mansion where the plaza was already

densely packed with vehicles. Standing at the doorstep, she could already hear the faint sounds of congratulations and rejoice from the courtyard ahead.

“The fourth lady is here!” A shriek of surprise sounded. It was the housekeeper!

“Mr. Xavier,” Dongfang Liuyun greeted him indifferently, “Are my parents here already?”

“Madam Song called earlier, claiming that she has urgent matters to attend to in Singapore. President Gan said that he has a meeting with Yu Heng Corporation’s President Sun at four in the afternoon, and he won’t be back until around five, but I guess he should be here anytime soon,” Mr. Xavier replied.

“You’re finally back. The fifth lady told everybody that you’ve returned here, but we found it hard to believe. If I’m not mistaken, you haven’t been back for many years, have you?”

“What’s the situation inside?” Dongfang Liuyun asked while being greeted by a servant who handed her a wet towel. She then strode into the mansion while taking the towel to wipe her hands and giving it back casually.

“Almost all the guests are already here. Elder Madam also asked someone to bring back a gift for President Ren from abroad. We also heard that an important announcement will be made during this birthday banquet, so we were guessing that it might be about the marriage between the fifth lady and the young master of the Jin family.” The butler monitored Dongfang Liuyun’s expression and lowered his voice while reporting.

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Dongfang Liuyun’s eyes darkened, but her expression did not change. She replied indifferently, “You also said it was a good thing, didn’t you?”

“But, Fourth Lady...If you do that, you...”

In the entire Dongfang Residence, Mr. Xavier was well aware of what was happening under the table, like undercurrents. In comparison with the congenial Dongfang Rouer, he actually looked up to the humility and maturity of the Fourth Lady and admired her capability.

However, Dongfang Rouer was not that simple either. Dongfang Xin, her elder brother, along with Dongfang Yu, the son of the second brother, were both Dongfang Liuyun's strongest opponents and they had been fighting for the position. On the surface, they had been cordial all these years, but when the curtains were pulled back, it was like a battle to the death.

"Mr. Xavier, you're a smart person. In this family, you only need to mind your own business. You'd better not pay too much attention to other matters, or you're the one who will suffer. Do you understand?" Dongfang Liuyun said as she stopped and turned to look at Mr. Xavier.

Mr. Xavier was taken aback and he seemed to suddenly realize something. He quickly replied with a stiff expression, "Yes, Fourth Lady. I'll be more careful. Sorry."

"Just remember, protecting yourself is what you should do and there's no point worrying about whatever is happening at home. You've been with Grandpa for many years and I hope you can live a stable life," Dongfang Liuyun said with a hint of melancholy in her voice.

Mr. Xavier was an old man who had been with the old Master Dongfang for many years, and he had been extremely kind to him when he was still around. He was also very kind to Dongfang Liuyun, so he was one of the few people that she thought she could talk to in this house. In addition to that, she respected him.

Mr. Xavier could certainly understand what Dongfang Liuyun was implying, so he responded, "Fourth Lady, you're too kind. I know, but I'm still a little worried about you..."

"There's nothing to worry about. It's nothing. They should all be back by now, shouldn't they?" Dongfang Liuyun continued to walk forward as she asked.

"Yes, Master Xin and Master Yu are all back. President Ren and the rest are all in the lobby hosting the guests, but President Yi hasn't returned yet. The Second Lady has made several calls, but he didn't answer. There were noises coming from their home last night, and I think the couple got into an argument again. Third Lady wanted to stop them, but she accidentally cut her wrist on a broken vase, so they called a doctor over that night," Mr. Xavier said as he lowered his voice.

When Dongfang Liuyun heard this, she sneered and said, "It's about time they started arguing."

“Yes, President Yi is having an affair with a young woman. I heard that the woman just graduated from university a few years ago and was a Masters student. She was in the marketing department before and had just been assigned to the company’s public relations department...People were saying it’s because of President Yi, thus the Second Lady argued with him because of this. However, she doesn’t know much about that woman since all this information came from the detective agency...”

Mr. Xavier was close to Dongfang Gan, and Song Siting trusted him too, so it was normal for him to know all these.

“Really? She still likes doing things like that as always,” Dongfang Liuyun said coldly. He could not tell what she meant from her tone.

“Fourth Lady...”

...

On the stairs leading to the main hall of the old Dongfang house, the red carpet was rolled out all the way to the hall. The large front yard was filled with flower baskets and decorated with colored balloons. The large courtyard was lined with buffet tables on both sides, filled with all kinds of exquisite snacks and fine wines. A simple and elegant small stage was set up on the stairs in the front. On the small stage, a band was giving a live performance, and the place was packed with guests. These guests included those who often appeared in magazines or newspapers, as well as those that were popular in the entertainment and fashion industry.

Dongfang Liuyun had a general impression of these people. With the information she had obtained from Lan Xiu before, she also roughly knew who these people mingled with.

Although she did not like attending a banquet like this, she had no other choice this time.

Many of those who attended were young talents, trust fund babies, successful entrepreneurs, or pretentious wealthy girls from rich families. Dongfang Liuyun had been accustomed to it since she was a child. In fact, events like these were essential to provide these people with opportunities to get to know each other. Therefore, each banquet might be a life-changing event for some people.

Romantic Latin dance music echoed throughout the yard, and it was certainly fitting for the event. Many people went on the dance floor in front of the stage in pairs.

Dongfang Liuyun slowly stopped in her tracks and stood at the end of the red carpet as she watched the scene indifferently. She looked around with her sharp gaze but did not see Dongfang Ren and Dongfang Rouer. She pondered for a while and lowered her eyes indifferently. She had no intention to go back into the house. Instead, she turned around and took a cup of warm water from the dining table beside her and found a quiet place to sit down.

At this very moment, a black limousine was parked next to the New Era Plaza.

In the back seat of the car, Qi Lei was looking at the laptop screen on his lap attentively. The faint blue light from the screen made his handsome face seem lonely. Yang Sheng was looking at him from the front passenger seat, not wanting to disturb him, but he took a deep breath and finally interrupted as he thought about the schedule, "Master Qi, Dongfang Ren's birthday banquet should begin soon. He intends to work with us since they've always wanted to get South River Project No. 1. I think it's good to make connections even if we don't work with him. We don't normally talk to the Dongfang family, but it's not a bad thing for us to be cordial with such a big family. In the future, maybe Miss Dongfang can also..." As Yang Sheng went on, the softer he spoke and in the end, he went silent...

"Go on," Qi Lei said when he noticed that Yang Sheng had gone quiet.

Yang Sheng took a deep breath and had to bite the bullet as he continued, "Miss Dongfang may inherit the Dongfang Group in the future. However, all the deceit and deception in the Dongfang family may be hard on Miss Dongfang. I also feel that this birthday banquet's not that simple, or else someone like Miss Dongfang wouldn't have attended it. As far as I know, she rarely attends such occasions..."

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Yang Sheng then carefully looked at Qi Lei again. When he saw that his expression remained calm as usual, he breathed a sigh of relief.

He had been paying close attention to Dongfang Liuyun as of late, especially after she was hospitalized. The private detectives had yet to give him an accurate report, but Yang Sheng vaguely know about the complexities of the Dongfang family's internal matters, and it seemed the waters ran quite deep.

Thus, he could not quite explain clearly what the situation on Dongfang Liuyun's end was like.

However, even he said that it was quite the storm over there, so would Master Qi go?

After all, Master Qi never liked meddling in other people's business and was not willing to have dealings with complicated people. Yang Sheng did not know why he said it anyway...

Nevertheless, a long while after Yang Sheng finished, Qi Lei did not answer. However, his gaze had already moved away from his laptop screen and he turned to look out of the car window. The sun was already setting outside and the warm twilight covered the entire ground.

Qi Lei did not make a sound as he sat there quietly, and even when his laptop screen had dimmed, he did not realize it.

Yang Sheng did not dare make a sound to disturb him.

It felt as if a century had passed when his lowered and slightly raspy voice came through indistinctly, "Let's return to the office."

"Master Qi, aren't we going over?" Yang Sheng asked a little nervously.

Qi Lei did not answer. He just silently gathered his gaze and looked at the laptop screen on his lap again.

Yang Sheng dared not say anything else. He turned to hint at the chauffeur with his eyes before the latter quickly started the car and made their way to Tai Yu Corporation.

Even though everything was on track, Qi Lei's work was not easy. Tai Yu Corporation was still very young while Qi Kai was a well-known listed company and they had some inside information. Merging both of them together perfectly was not easy.

Therefore, sometimes, Qi Lei would still need to spend some time handling disagreements. In the past few days, he had practically been resting in the office. With only those few hours of rest, Yang Sheng felt sad.



The New Era Plaza was not too far away from Tai Yu Corporation. It was only a 10-minute journey when there was no traffic jam.

When they reached Tai Yu Corporation, Qi Lei suddenly said as he opened the car door to get down, "Choose a gift to send over."

Before Yang Sheng could react, he walked straight into the company building.

"Master Qi..."

Instead, Yang Sheng was the one who could not quite react immediately. Only a while after he snapped back did he do as he was ordered.

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The sky gradually turned dark. After a couple of drinks, the people who were intoxicated on the dance floor continued to linger around. Dongfang Liuyun found a pillar by the corner of the winding corridor to sit down and coldly watch all the happy faces chatting away. Her indifferent lips remained gently pursed though her gaze was filled with hostility.

Dongfang Ren had walked out of the residence with the company of his son, Dongfang Xin. He was standing out front and greeting the guests warmly while the table on the side was piled with gifts. Dongfang Ren seemed radiant, unable to hide his delight and happiness.

He was only slightly older than Dongfang Gan and was slightly chubby although he looked very high in spirits. You could not quite see any shadow of Old Master Dongfang within him whereas his brows looked very much like their mother's when she was younger. Majestic in appearance, when they were younger, Dongfang Ren and Dongfang Yi were famous young heirs in the circle. Besides coming from a good family background, their looks were, in fact, rather outstanding too. Above all, they were admired by many upper-class young ladies.

Right now, Dongfang Ren was introducing his son, Dongfang Xin, to the influential people in the circle, and of course, some upper class young ladies from decent family backgrounds.

The youngest generation of the Dongfang family's direct line of descent were all not married, thus today's banquet was meant to be quite a lively one. Many people put their focus here because as long as they could catch either one of them, they would benefit greatly.

The banquet seemed like it was about to begin. Upfront, Dongfang Ren was smiling as he took over the microphone that the host held. He made some conventional greetings earnestly and was planning to continue when there was suddenly a commotion at the entrance that made everyone looked over.

At the flower arch, a tall figure greeted their sight.

The man dressed in a dark tailored suit had a handsome face and exuded an elegant aura while his eyes were profound as a deep lake. His thin lips were pursed slightly, and there was a coldness about him, yet his appearance made everyone, especially the heiresses present...

The First Master of the Jin family was Jin Sheng, the Jin family's most mighty and outstanding figure, and also the most likely successor of the Jin family!

His outstanding looks made one envious. Jin Sheng was no doubt every single young lady's ideal partner. Many of them who wanted to befriend him only got a look of disdain. He rarely had any scandals about him. Apart from the recent talk about how he had been getting close to the Fifth Young Lady of the Dongfang family, Dongfang Rouer, and how they were suspected to be dating, you did not hear too many rumors about him.

"First Master Jin is here!"

"Quickly go in and call my sister to come out!"

When Dongfang Xin saw Jin Sheng walk in, he quickly went up to him eagerly as he called for the servants to call Dongfang Rouer out. His meaning was actually quite obvious.

"Okay, First Master!" the servant replied, and then quickly turned around to walk into the residence.

After a while, before the crowd could react, a graceful figure appeared. Everyone subconsciously looked over to see Dongfang Rouer's figure greet their sight.

Dressed in an off-shoulder dress patterned with red-crowned cranes and adorning a dazzling diamond necklace on her chest with her beautiful hair up in a bun to reveal that exquisitely beautiful face of hers, she looked noble and as holy as a goddess. Even though she looked slightly frail, that only made people feel a tenderness toward her.

The main highlight of this birthday banquet was actually not Dongfang Ren but Dongfang Rouer.

In the corner, Dongfang Liuyun, who leaned against the railing, watched all of this without a change in expression, but a faint curve flashed on the corner of her lips. She lowered her gaze and continued sip the warm water.

"Rouer." Jin Sheng who was greeting Dongfang Xin very quickly turned and looked at Dongfang Rouer tenderly.

"Ah Sheng, you're here!"

Dongfang Rouer walked down the stairs elegantly and over to Jin Sheng.

At this moment, Dongfang Ren smiled and walked over too. Jin Sheng averted his gaze and took a step forward.

"Happy birthday, Uncle Dongfang. May you always bask in the glory that you have today," Jin Sheng wished simply, and then reached out to indicate for his assistant to present the gift.

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Dongfang Ren murmured her assent a few times and then got Dongfang Rouer to escort Jin Sheng in to rest. Dongfang Rouer held Jin Sheng's arm reservedly while he turned his head and smiled at her. The scene seemed to be implying something, which many people were already discussing.

It seemed that the marriage between Dongfang Rouer and the young master of the Jin family was truly just around the corner, just by looking at those flirting winks between the couple.

Dongfang Liuyun kept her indifferent gaze as she stared at the scene in front of her. She thought that as long as she attended the party and stood there in silence, her time at the banquet might pass by peacefully. However, her thoughts were obviously too simple. When the gloomy gaze of a man caught her eyes, she already knew the reason behind Dongfang Rouer's invitation.

Jin Sheng was not some random individual. He was a figure that Dongfang Liuyun was familiar with, the man who almost became her fiancé before this, but their relationship was not close. They had only had a few opportunities to meet each other in person. When Old Master Dongfang was still alive, he had been quite satisfied with him and had the intention to betroth Dongfang Liuyun to him. However, who knew that Fujiwara would have appeared?

Fujiwara, Fujiwara...

Thinking of the name, Dongfang Liuyun felt a tingling sensation in her head. Nevertheless, the stern gaze naturally dragged her back from the trance.

Jin Sheng had always been a person in the spotlight at the banquet, so when he stopped and looked ahead, everybody in the courtyard naturally followed his gaze, including Dongfang Rouer, Dongfang Xin, and others...

Despite being placed in the center of attention all of a sudden, Dongfang Liuyun did not feel nervous at all. Her cold and indifferent stare pierced through the crowd as she glanced at Jin Sheng for a split second. Her gaze swept by swiftly and finally stopped on Dongfang Ren who was standing not far behind Jin Sheng.

She finally took a step forward after a while, still holding the glass in her hand. The air around her seemed to have condensed suddenly, and everyone's gazes fell on her.

Dressed in black casual wear and a pair of sandals of the same color, her long straight hair cascaded down her shoulders and ended at her waist. As usual, she wore her cool-looking expression. However, despite the low profile and ordinary attire, she still attracted everyone's attention.

That had always been the case for her. She could always become the center of the spotlight just by standing in the crowd, and there had never been a need to dress up for it. However, it was a pity that

she hardly attended such occasions throughout the years, so not many people know her. The crowd started whispering, trying to figure her identity out.

“Fourth Sister is here!” Upon seeing that Dongfang Liuyun had already arrived in front of her, Dongfang Rouer smiled faintly as she tightened her grasp on Jin Sheng’s arm, and her pretty eyes glanced fixedly at the former. “I thought you wouldn’t come!”

“You delivered the invitation to my doorstep personally, so this is the least I could do. I don’t plan to wear the dunce hat for the second time, not to mention that it’s Uncle’s birthday, which is another reason for me to be here.” Dongfang Liuyun gave her a sideways glance, not even taking a glimpse at her tightening grasp on Jin Sheng’s arm. She also could not care less about sparing them another gaze. She walked past them, holding a red brocade box in the other idle hand, and then handed it to Dongfang Ren.

“Happy birthday, Uncle,” Dongfang Liuyun’s gentle and soft voice greeted.

The crowd was taken aback at this moment. Everyone seemed to be able to get a hold of Dongfang Liuyun’s identity. Besides, her facial features did somewhat resemble those of Dongfang Gan, so there was almost no need to guess her identity.

She must be Dongfang Liuyun, the gorgeous and the smart legendary archeologist of the family.

Seeing her here today was a surprise, and meeting her in person left everyone in shock.

Looking at the brocade box that Dongfang Liuyun presented in front of him, Dongfang Ren was stupefied at this moment. He had heard the news of Dongfang Liuyun’s return before this, but Rouer had actually invited her over to the banquet!

After a while, he nodded and was about to reach out to receive the gift, but another arm came out of nowhere and beat his to it unexpectedly.

Bang!

Dongfang Liuyun felt like something flashed by in front of her eyes, and she let go of the box when she saw the hand approaching the box. However, the hand loosened its grip abruptly, and a crisp and clear sound followed. Before she could make a sound, she subconsciously lowered her head and looked at it, only to find out that the brocade box had already fallen to the ground. Heralded by that brittle sound, it seemed that the contents of the box were...

Dongfang Liuyun creased her brows subconsciously. A flash of pity beamed through her eyes, but her expression was still as calm as always.

“What’s this? This was the case on my birthday last time, and you’re still doing it during your uncle’s birthday. If you feel reluctant, you don’t have to come. After all, you haven’t taken care of the family on such occasions over the years!” Before Dongfang Liuyun could make a sound, the cold and dissatisfied voice of the owner of the hand, which had been hanging in the air in front of her, had already slashed through the whole hall.

What a slippery trick! Dongfang Liuyun could almost know who it was without hazarding a guess!

It was Dongfang Rouer’s mother, Dongfang Ren’s wife, Lin Yuanyuan. She was her aunt, a woman who excelled in pinning a person down without having to lift a finger of hers. Dongfang Liuyun had suffered a lot due to this woman.

In her usual festive black and red cheongsam, she emitted an imposing aura on her domineering face filled with fury. Looking at her and the scene that she had just created, Dongfang Liuyun almost thought that it was she who had dropped the brocade box at her feet.

Dongfang Ren’s expression dimmed as he squinted his eyes and glared unconcernedly at Dongfang Liuyun.

With an indifferent gaze, Dongfang Rouer witnessed the whole drama on the side. Meanwhile, Jin Sheng, who was standing next to her, constricted his pupils slightly and stared at Dongfang Liuyun’s fair face for a moment. Meanwhile, Dongfang Xin was getting ready for the show, just like everyone else.

Who was Dongfang Liuyun?

She had grown invulnerable to such farce over the years.

Lin Yuanyuan was trying to show her who the boss was. Since Dongfang Liuyun was going to start working in the marketing department, and Lin Yuanyuan would be her superior in the department, how could she forget that?

Dongfang Liuyun felt extremely inexpedient at this moment as she realized that her life would definitely not be easy in the future.

She took a glimpse at Lin Yuanyuan indifferently before calmly bending down to pick up the brocade box on the ground. She then opened the box and found out that the jade Buddha statue had indeed shattered into pieces!

Its value was in the millions, but that was a price they were willing to pay just to create a scene.

Dongfang Liuyun looked down at the fragments in the brocade box and felt a painful bummer deep down, but she just sighed and closed the box. She handed it to the butler who had followed her there. Then, she raised her eyes to meet Lin Yuanyuan's unwelcoming gaze.

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She smiled faintly and took a step forward before whispering into Lin Yuanyuan's ear, "You can only play dumb tricks like that. Don't you ever get tired using the same trick?"

Lin Yuanyuan's face stiffened and a chill flashed across her eyes as she glared back at Dongfang Liuyun with a sharp, cold gaze!

Lin Yuanyuan had always hated Dongfang Liuyun, but of course, much of her hatred for Dongfang Liuyun came from Song Siting.

What was Song Siting like?

She was a vicious woman who did not care about her own family. With the mere ability that she had, she had almost forced them to death. She was the reason why the formerly successful Lin family ended up in such a downfall!

She would never forget the time when she almost got on her knees and begged Song Siting, but the evil woman did not merely refuse to help her, but she had also ridiculed her. Later, the Lin family lost their power, and she gradually lost her status in the Dongfang family. Otherwise, it would not have been Dongfang Gan that inherited the family business!

When Old Master Dongfang took into account the strong background of Song Siting and Dongfang Shuman, he had to hand over the company to Dongfang Gan.

She always had such wishful thinking!

Therefore, the aggravation Lin Yuanyuan felt was just how much she hated Song Siting and Dongfang Liuyun. Her intention of destroying this family of three had always been clear, but Song Siting was very smart. She was always cautious and alert, and it made her matchless. Although Dongfang Gan always looked calm and peaceful, he was not easy to deal with either. There was also Dongfang Liuyun, who was thoughtful and careful. She could always emerge safely out of challenges and would often defeat her opponents instead.

All of these made Lin Yuanyuan feel a deep sense of frustration, and having to suppress it made her angry.

Dongfang Liuyun certainly knew what she was thinking.

She did not bother to look at Lin Yuanyuan anymore but glared at Dongfang Rouer who was beside her. She turned slightly and kept her volume down so that only the people in front of her could hear her, "I know you guys have put together a well-planned show for me, so now that I'm back as you wish, how are you going to entertain me? Your mother can't wait to start plotting against me."

"Fourth Sister, don't try to blame this on me. You were the one who embarrassed me, so it's not my call to start a fight, is it?"

Although Dongfang Rouer was weak, she was imposing. Despite lowering her voice, Jin Sheng, who was beside her, heard it clearly, and there seemed to be some deep meaning in his eyes. He immediately looked at Dongfang Liuyun's face.



“Do you mean I should save you some pride and wait until we get upstairs before starting our argument? I don’t believe you’d let such a good opportunity slip.”

Dongfang Liuyun looked at her, and spoke softly so that only both of them could hear it, “You should stop your plot right now. If you want to play your tricks on me, then I’ll definitely fight you to the end. You’ve always lost and I know you’re upset. So, do you want to show off in front of me and crush me?”

When Dongfang Liuyun said this, she glanced casually at the man next to Dongfang Rouer, only to see that he was staring at her in deep contemplation. His expression made Dongfang Liuyun silent for a moment.

Undoubtedly, those words pained Dongfang Rouer. To many people, she was indeed congenial and loved, but in front of Dongfang Liuyun, she did not have the confidence because no one knew better about the grudges between them.

Dongfang Rouer suddenly clenched her hands tightly and took a few breaths. She tried to control herself so that her repressed anger would not erupt.

“So what? No matter what, I’m still better than you. A woman like you isn’t favored by the Jin family, and if it weren’t for your grandfather who protected you, you’d already be a dishonorable woman by now. Why would you say that I’ve lost now that Ah Sheng is about to get engaged to me?”

There was a smirk on Dongfang Rouer’s face, and she never needed to hide her true self in front of Dongfang Liuyun. If it were not for the special circumstances, she would not have been so polite to Dongfang Liuyun.

A people-pleaser was what Dongfang Liuyun would describe Dongfang Rouer as.

With good communication skills, she was a public relations manager at a subsidiary company of the Dongfang Group. She was good at using her delicate appearance and tactics to attract clients. Dongfang Liuyun did think she should at least admire her because of this, but...

When Dongfang Rouer said this, she turned her head and gave Jin Sheng a gentle look. He also smiled quietly. They looked good together, and Dongfang Rouer thought that they looked conspicuous to Dongfang Liuyun.

“I’d like to seize this opportunity to share good news with everyone.”

At this moment, Dongfang Ren was already holding the microphone and there was another couple beside him. It was Jin Sheng’s parents, and also Lin Yuanyuan who had joined them and was having a pleasant chat.

When the crowd heard this, they snapped out of their daze. They found the situation a little inexplicable, but they did not have much time to think either because Dongfang Ren had already continued, “My family, the Dongfangs, and the Jin family have decided to come together as one. Rouer and Ah Sheng have been together for many years, and the time has finally come. We’ve discussed it and we plan to hold an engagement ceremony for them the next month on the 8th of August. All of you are welcome to come to witness the ceremony!”

When Dongfang Ren said that, everyone was really surprised!

Although they knew that Dongfang Rouer had a close relationship with the Jin family, they did not expect the two to marry so quickly!

Everyone was obviously shocked. The Dongfang family was very significant in the jewelry industry. In several foreign countries, they almost dominated the market. They were rich in wealth and were a powerful family consortium. Now that they were going to form an alliance with the Jin family, their influence would certainly change drastically.

But why was Dongfang Rouer getting married instead of Dongfang Liuyun?

Something interesting seemed to be happening!

Before this, there had been rumors that Dongfang Gan’s daughter, the mysterious Dongfang Liuyun who was well known in City Z, was going to marry into the Jin family, but that was many years ago. Some of the elders present had also heard about the rumors years ago, and they vaguely remembered that on

old Master Dongfang's birthday, the old guy seemed to have announced that before although it was not as formal as it was now...

Chapter 1536. I Will Marry You! (2)

When they thought about this, they could not help but turn to look at Dongfang Liuyun who stood on the side. Those eyes kept looking back and forth at Dongfang Liuyun, the Jin husband and wife, Jin Sheng, and Dongfang Rouer. Naturally, they could easily catch that the Jin husband and wife were glaring at Dongfang Liuyun not too happily.

The crowd could not help but suspect that it was Dongfang Liuyun who had made them unhappy.

As Dongfang Rouer lowered her gaze and held tightly onto Jin Sheng, no one could see through her.

At this point, Dongfang Liuyun could basically guess Dongfang Rouer's thoughts. She just wanted to dampen Dongfang Liuyun's spirits, but sadly, she did not know about the truth back then. If she did, all of this meticulous planning today would just be a joke!

At the thought of this, Dongfang Liuyun's cold and outstanding face flashed with a smile as she looked meaningfully towards Jin Sheng and Dongfang Rouer. Jin Sheng's gaze sank.

"I wish you two the best of luck."

Amidst the crowd's long applause, Dongfang Liuyun lifted her glass of water slightly and smiled calmly. Just as she turned around and was about to leave, her calm tone sounded hostile. "Next time, if you want to make me look bad, use a smarter trick. You know I don't care about these things."

"You don't? Why do I hear jealousy in your words then?" Ling Yuanyuan's voice was heard once again.

"She's still thinking of the Fujiwara family. After all, I heard that Fujiwara has a fiancé now."

...

Although Dongfang Liuyun squinted, her eyes dank and her expression remained calm and unchanged. She was about to say something when suddenly someone called out 'President Gan' from behind, and then after that, she heard her father call out her name.

She abruptly turned around and realized that Dongfang Gan had already walked up to her.

"Father," Dongfang Liuyun quickly greeted Dongfang Gan softly.

"You're back. Why didn't you wait for me to bring you over?" Dongfang Gan's tone was filled with concern. His calm gaze looked towards Dongfang Liuyun as he sized her up. When he saw that she was fine, he averted his gaze while Dongfan Ren and the rest had walked up to him.

"Third Brother, you're back." It was Dongfang Ren who had spoken.

Dongfang Gan's gaze fell silent for a moment. He looked at Dongfang Ren, then turned to look at the Jin family who stood aside with Jin Sheng and Dongfang Rouer. Darkness flashed in his eyes as he could naturally read the family's thoughts.

"Happy birthday, Brother," Dongfang Gan said, then glanced at his assistant, Ah Fei. Ah Fei swiftly handed a heavy gift box over to Dongfang Ren.

"Third Brother, you're too kind now. There's no need for this, we're family."

"Gifts are still necessary. But Sister-in-law's hands aren't too sturdy, so let them take it first. Otherwise, unnecessary misunderstandings will arise. This time, Liuyun wasn't quick enough that she couldn't catch it in time. The last time, Ah Ting was swifter. Otherwise, all these well wishes will go to waste."

Dongfang Gan looked at Lin Yuanyuan beside Dongfang Ren, but the latter's expression suddenly sank, appearing rather repugnant. She just silently lowered her gaze and gritted her teeth.

"Just a misunderstanding. Your sister-in-law hasn't been doing too well recently. I'm sorry, Liuyun. It's fine. Quickly go in and have a seat."

...

After the whole commotion, Dongfang Liuyun naturally lost her mood. Actually, if Dongfang Gan did not come, she might not have planned to be petty with these people. She was going to join the company as a newbie soon. If she were to really take over the Dongfang Group when the time came, there would be many who would not be convinced by her, and she could no longer do as she pleased in many situations.

Now that she thought about it, she did feel a little affected, but it seemed like there was nothing she could do.

“Don’t be in such a hurry to leave. If you don’t like banquets like these, then come sit with me in my study. There are a few people I wanted you to meet anyway.”

On the balcony by the living area on the second floor, he saw that Dongfang Liuyun stood alone by the railing while watching the guests walk about below. Dongfang Gan left the guests around him and went over.

When she heard the voice, Dongfang Liuyun turned to look and saw that Dongfang Gan had already stopped beside her and followed her gaze to look below.

“It’s fine. Mother won’t be around for the next few days, so I’ll go home and stay with you for a day or two,” Dongfang Liuyun said calmly.

Upon hearing that, Dongfang Gan easily smiled. “That would be best. As for the thing earlier, Mr. Xavier told me about it. Don’t take it to heart. These people are shortsighted, and they can’t change no matter how many years it takes. In time to come, what you’ll have to face isn’t them, but...”

“I know, Father. I don’t care about them either,” Dongfang Liuyun replied calmly as she lifted her head to finish her glass of water. She set the glass on the flower pot beside. Her voice was slightly hoarse as she asked, “If they are combined in marriage with the Jin family, will that mean a lot of pressure for you, Father?”

As she said this, Dongfang Liuyun turned to look at Dongfang Gan. Her gaze was sharp.

Dongfang Gan's eyes darkened slightly, but his voice did not seem to reveal too much emotion. "Naturally, there will be pressure."

"When Mother came looking for me before this, she told me about it. I do notice the pressure that you two feel, plus the fact that it hasn't been too peaceful recently, and we don't know how much more Grandmother's health can keep up. Even though you've been the acting President all these years, they haven't stopped pressuring you on the sly."

"Where there are benefits, there will be struggle. You'll get used to this in time. I know what you're trying to say too. To live in such a huge family like this is unfortunate. I do hope that you'll be able to live a happier life in time. That's why I'm hoping that you can have a good marriage that lasts till the very end to make up for all that you've lost. So, no matter what it is, I'm willing to go with your choice. You don't have to care about what your mother says. With me around, you'll definitely be making your own decisions when it comes to your marriage."

Dongfang Gan looked at his daughter with a gaze filled with tender affection.

He knew all too well what he was about to face. He really did not want Liuyun to bear these unhappiness and stress from life. Otherwise, life would be meaningless, then what would be the point?

He was quite lucky. Although he needed to bear those things, he did not want to. At least, he had a wife who loved him back, and a daughter like Liuyun who made him proud and happy. But right now Dongfang Liuyun still had nothing...

"I'm obviously happy that you are so supportive of me, but clearly with this family, we can't just get what we want because we think that way."

Chapter 1537. I Will Marry You! (3)

"Okay, now don't think too much. Even if something were to happen, I'll still be here sharing the burden." Dongfang Gan raised his arm and patted Dongfang Liuyun's shoulder while offering his weighty but earnest advice, "However, you're way past the optimal age for marriage. You should start to take things more seriously, but you should search slowly. There's no need to rush. You'll definitely end up with your Mr. Right."

"You're my only daughter. I worry that no one will be there to take care of you when your mother and I grow old. So, before both of us reach that point, I certainly hope that you can find a man who suits you

and to whom I can safely entrust my daughter's happiness. A huge family like ours is nowhere near better than others. The circle is just too complicated. You have to keep your eyes wide open. As for those incidents in the past, let's just not think about it, okay?"

Dongfang Gan's deep tone was full of concern. He was very sentimental, and it somehow made Dongfang Liuyun feel a little embittered deep down, but she just took a breath as she suppressed the sour discomfort in her throat and nodded.

"I have news for you. Fujiwara will arrive in Z City next Saturday. You should know that the Fujiwara family owns quite a few branches over here, so if he's here to deal with their company's agenda, I'm afraid that he might be staying here for quite a long time. I think you should understand what this is about."

Having said that, Dongfang Gan took a good look at Dongfang Liuyun. Seeing that there was still no response on her beautiful face, he finally sighed. "Your mother has always liked Fujiwara, but it's up to you. Still, be careful. He's not a man to be trifled with. How long has it been since he started to have a thing for you? Ten years?"

"I can't remember, but no matter how long has it been, it's already reached the end." Dongfang Liuyun retracted her gaze and turned around. "I'll go back tomorrow. I'm going out for some air."

Such a conversation made her feel suffocated because she knew her situation too well. Her options were always pathetically limited.

"Liuyun..." Dongfang Gan wanted to stop her, but her silhouette had disappeared at the stairwell.

...

It hurt!

Dongfang Liuyun had just exited the door and was about to walk to her car when excruciating pain from her stomach made her frown. Her face turned pale instantly while her forehead started perspiring a little. At that moment, she held onto the car door with one hand and pressed against her stomach with the other.

Given the level of pain, even a mere breath would lead to oppressive suffocation.

“Miss Dongfang, are you okay?” A familiar voice rang out, and before she could react, a pair of strong arms had already held on to her and supported her.

She took in a deep, cold breath as she turned her head around to look, only to realize that it was Yang Sheng.

“I’m fine. Help me grab my medicine. It’s in the car. Thank you,” Dongfang Liuyun moved her body slightly and said weakly.

“Alright, okay, just a second. I’ll grab them for you right away.” Yang Sheng opened the car door to go through all the contents of the car. He found the medicine and gave it to Dongfang Liuyun. She then took a pill and felt better after a while.

“Thank you.” Dongfang Liuyun thanked him again. Yang Sheng was about to say something, but the phone in her pocket vibrated suddenly. She took it out and saw that it was Lan Xiu calling. She thought about it for a while and then answered.

“Liuyun? How was it? Did they embarrass you?” Lan Xiu’s deep and hoarse voice came from the other end of the phone call and a hint of concern could be sensed between his words.

As Dongfang Liuyun paused for a split second, her eyes lit up and flickered. She then said, “Can you meet me? Let’s meet at the New Era Plaza, right next to the musical fountain. I’ll wait for you there.” She hung up immediately after conveying the message, enduring the faint pain coming from her stomach while she got into the car directly.

“Miss Dongfang, you’re not feeling well. You shouldn’t be driving, Miss Dongfang!” Yang Sheng wanted to catch up to her, but she had already started the car.

He could not help but feel anxious. Looking at the pallid face of Dongfang Liuyun’s just now, it was a no-brainer to him that it must be...



After giving it a thought, he could only take out the cell phone from his pocket and dial a number swiftly.

Of course, the call went directly to Qi Lei, who was still busy in the office.

...

Half an hour later, at the New Era Plaza.

The sky had gone dark and silent. The streetlights around the plaza were lit up, and there were not many people in the center of the square. Maybe it was just time for dinner.

Dongfang Liuyun endured the faint pain and pulled the car aside. Soon, she saw a black luxury sedan parked in front of hers. The license plate number was naturally familiar since it was Lan Xiu's car.

"I'm here," Lan Xiu's voice came from the front when she just got out of the car.

Dongfang Liuyun looked up and saw him standing beside the car in front of her.

In light-colored casual wear and a pair of sneakers, he looked like he was at a racetrack or a golf course. After all, these two sports were Lan Xiu's favorite. Besides, Dongfang Liuyun had always been aware of Lan Xiu's habits, he would spend some time exercising during the weekends, especially at this time.

"Did I disturb you?" Dongfang Liuyun closed the car door and walked towards the bench beside her while Lan Xiu followed suit and sat down next to her.

"It's okay, but you did call me out in a hurry. What's the matter? Did Dongfang Ren do something to you again?" Lan Xiu asked out of concern.

"They won't be able to plot against me that easily, but I just learned from my dad that Fujiwara is coming over next weekend." Her faint voice pierced through the still air, and her eyebrows frowned slightly while her back was already drenched with cold sweat.

Lan Xiu listened and nodded. "Yeah, I just got the news. At first, I wanted to tell you tomorrow, but it seems that Uncle Dongfang's eyes and ears are very efficient too."

"Dongfang Rouer and Jin Sheng will get engaged on the eighth of next month." His eyes froze for a while when the news hit him. He then sucked a breath in. "If that's so, you..."

"My grandma is someone who always focuses on the big picture. She had the courage to marry my grandpa, and later on, take over the whole Dongfang Group from him. You can see her means from all that. Back then, while my father married my mother, both families were never considered equal in both their financial and social status, and because of that, my mother has been trying her best to prove herself. Therefore, the relationship between grandma and my father has been rather rigid. I really don't want to relive such tragedy." Having said this, Dongfang Liuyun suddenly turned her head and looked at Lan Xiu quietly.

A gloomy light flashed across Lan Xiu's eyes. His body stiffened a little, and he stared fixedly at Dongfang Liuyun. However, when he saw the determination and despair in her eyes, his heart sank once again.

"Liuyun, do you like me, or do you love me?" While he threw the question, his palms, which were placed on his knees, were silently clenched.

Chapter 1538. I Will Marry You! (4)

Dongfang Liuyun was startled when she heard that, and there was a hint of reluctance in her eyes for a moment.

She could not give him an answer.

Lan Xiu looked at her as she remained quiet. His eyes gradually darkened and he broke into a smile. However, his smile seemed desolate. He was silent for a while and he finally continued, "You've never had feelings for me and you don't love me, so it'll be unfair to force ourselves to do it."

"I just want you to remember that no matter what, I'll always be there for you, Dongfang Liuyun. We will always be each other's confidant, and that's enough..." Lan Xiu said. Although he sounded lonely, saying so made him feel better.

Lan Xiu had always been very clear about his feelings and admiration towards Dongfang Liuyun, but a woman like her might not choose someone like him. Forcing her would only change the relationship between them, or he might even lose her...

He would do anything for the person he loved, which was her, and only for her. However...

When Dongfang Liuyun saw Lan Xiu's gloomy expression, she forced a smile and turned to look at the fountain beside her. "I'm sorry, Lan Xiu. It was just wishful thinking, and I shouldn't drag you into it. I never thought about using you. It's just..."

She did not go on. Even after a long wait, Dongfang Liuyun did not continue.

"No, Liuyun, it's not wishful thinking. I just hope that we can be more cautious. Sometimes, when things change, they can never go back. No matter where you go, you'll always be the closest person to me..."

"Just like a brother?" Dongfang Liuyun asked as she turned to look at him.

Lan Xiu paused for a while, but he nodded and smiled bitterly. "Yes, just like a brother and a sister. But besides that, we've still been best friends for many years, and nothing will change the relationship between us. In the years to come, we'll still be the same. That's what I hope for."

As Dongfang Liuyun listened, she suddenly fixed her gaze and stared at him in a daze. After staring at him for a long time, she looked away and sighed. "I understand. There's no need to explain. I understand your intentions, and I know I'm very fortunate. Anyway, you should go back first. I need some time alone."

"Liuyun..." Lan Xiu whispered, "No matter what, I wish you happiness, but I can't...marry you. Forgive my selfishness because I'm afraid that once I marry you, I'll lose you forever..."

Dongfang Liuyun did not reply, but she seemed to have calmed down a little. "Then, let's stay just like this. Now, go back and let me have some time alone. Don't worry."

“Liuyun, you...” Lan Xiu could not conceal the worry in his dark eyes. He looked at her silently and stopped in his tracks.

“Go back,” she repeated calmly as she closed her eyes and leaned back quietly without saying anything.

Lan Xiu looked at her for a long time and finally sighed. “Things may not be as bad as you think. At least, Uncle Dongfang won’t force you to marry Fujiwara.”

However, Dongfang Liuyun did not say anything. She simply closed her eyes and sat quietly.

“I know you’re in a bad mood, Liuyun, but I hope you can be more sensible, and there’ll always be a way. I’ll head back first, and I’ll come to meet you again when you feel better. You must take care of yourself. Call me if there’s anything, okay?” Lan Xiu said before he headed to his car. He looked at her worriedly for a while, but in the end, he sighed and drove away.

When Dongfang Liuyun heard the sound of his car driving away, she slowly opened her eyes and watched the silhouette of the car leaving until it disappeared in the traffic ahead. She continued watching it in a daze for a long time before finally looking away.

The pain from her stomach suddenly felt apparent when it was quiet. The surroundings suddenly became dead silent, and the stillness felt oddly suffocating.

She thought she should be able to live more freely, and she had almost forgotten the life she would be forced to live in the future.

She did not want to be trapped in this bubble. Many people in her family had been sacrificed, but she had tried hard to break away from this fate. However, human beings were infinitely small in the face of fate, and she was no exception.

She did not dare to imagine her own future. The future she could foresee was probably the same as her aunt, Dongfang Xue...

Her heart felt heavy thinking about it, and that was why she was never one who liked to dream and be reminiscent.

She combed through her silky hair with her fingers. Finally, she covered her face with her hands and crouched down. All she wanted was to capture the tranquillity of this moment...

However, there seemed to be a faint fresh scent from the evening breeze and it smelled familiar. Before she knew it, there were footsteps coming from her front at a steady pace. She moved her hands away slightly and saw a pair of bright, clean leather shoes standing in front of her.

Her gaze froze for a moment and then followed the man's trousers up until she saw the calm, handsome face in front of her.

Qi Lei?

"Why're you here?"

She could not hide the surprise in her eyes as her gaze met his deep eyes.

He seemed relaxed with one hand in his pocket and the other in his suit. He was looking at her and was relieved when he saw her expression slowly at ease.

"That man isn't that great. If you want to get married, why don't you consider me?" Qi Lei said earnestly as he looked at her and pondered for a long time.

When Qi Lei said that, Dongfang Liuyun was startled and did not know how to react. Her beautiful eyes widened, and she looked at him quietly. "What did you just say?"

"I said, if you're willing, I'll marry you! Anyway, I've always had feelings for you. I'd be elated if the story in the game can come true. Also, I think I'm better than that man just now, so if you have to, you should consider me first!"

Chapter 1539. Marrying Not For Love (1)

Qi Lei's words were no doubt like a large rock that had been dropped into the peaceful lake, instantly startling it into many great waves.

Dongfang Liuyun's hand that laid by her side suddenly clenched tightly as she looked at him. Moments after that, she lowered her gaze as she said calmly, "Did you hear what I said earlier?"

"Without a word left out, I heard it very clearly," Qi Lei admitted frankly.

He had actually reached earlier than Dongfang Liuyun and had just gotten down the car when he saw her car arrive. Unexpectedly, someone from the car in front of him got down, so he sat down on a bench not too far away and heard the two discussing this.

He was not dumb either. From their conversation, he could vaguely catch a thing or two. From a certain perspective, it seemed like Dongfang Liuyun wanted to get married to this man, but he had rejected her and even said a bunch of nonsense.

For some reason, even Qi Lei himself got furious hearing those words. If he did not want to marry her, then so be it. Why did he have to drag out so many excuses that were all nonsense!?

However, he began to feel sorry for Dongfang Liuyun.

The Dongfang Liuyun he knew had always seemed so aloof and otherworldly. He never thought that she would be bothered by these matters too. That meant that all her free and easy composure from before once everything else had settled down was...

After a long while, Dongfang Liuyun looked straight at him and said in a calm tone, "Since we're allies and friends, keep this secret for me. I want to die with dignity."

It seemed as if there were no more of that bleakness from before. Was she trying to change the topic?

Qi Lei was not going to give her the chance to.

“Answer my question earlier. I’m proposing to you, Dongfang Liuyun.”

There was some determination between his brows as his gaze was locked onto Dongfang Liuyun.  
“Actually, we’re quite compatible, don’t you think? Whether it’s in the game or in life.”

When Qi Lei finished, Dongfang Liuyun asked, “What’s the reason?”

Her clear gaze was filled with a calm and seriousness like never before. “You’ll need to suffer a lot of stress if you marry me. Even I’m worried I won’t have the courage to. Besides, even if we really get married, I can’t guarantee that I won’t use you.”

Upon hearing that, Qi Lei only smiled and tossed his coat onto her lap. His intentions were clear while his dark eyes flickered. “The wind is quite chilly here. Put this on.”

“I’ll give you the right to use me openly then since I’ve just been living life alone anyway. You’re my ally, and you even bear the title of my wife in the game. It wouldn’t be a bad thing to turn something fake into reality.”

Qi Lei’s tone was filled with sincerity. When Dongfang Liuyun looked at him, she tried hard to catch something from his eyes, but she realized that this time, she could not read any of his emotions at all.

“The game is just a game, and reality is reality. After all, you’re my friend, and I don’t want to...”

“Don’t talk about wanting to or not. You should choose me even more actually because...I’ve got nothing to lose. Although reality is reality, my face is like Eastern Gust in the game. I’m all alone in the world, so I don’t have that many worries.”

Now that he said that, Dongfang Liuyun was quite speechless.

“Don’t hesitate too long. Tai Yu Corporation seems to need a lady boss to hold the fort down too. I’ll feel assured with you taking this spot. If you’ll feel better knowing that, that’s something I’d like you to know.”

“We don’t love each other, and we aren’t a harmonious couple. We’re both too rational.” Dongfang Liuyun lowered her gaze and said slightly bitterly, “I admit that the pressure from my family’s making it a little suffocating. I never thought of sacrificing my marriage to get any so-called benefits. You should know that this is the bottom line I have for my life.”

“That way...Well, how about this? If you meet someone you like in the future, as long as you say it, I will let you go any time. However, please do keep at it for at least a year or two. That way, everyone can settle down a little,” Qi Lei suggested with a smile, yet his eyes contained some bleakness.

“I can’t take such a huge advantage of you. At least, I wouldn’t do that with you,” she responded while her smile hid a hint of helplessness.

“If that’s the case, accompany me for a few more years then. Who knows? After we get married, we might just go on with our days and find ourselves with a lifetime.”

The corner of Qi Lei’s lips was decorated with his devilish smile that had not been seen for a long while now. He watched her and then looked up to survey around before he said, “Wait here for me.”

Then, his tall figure walked past her and went towards the center of the plaza.

Dongfang Liuyun took a look at him and then took a deep breath. Her fingers slowly combed through her beautiful long hair as she massaged her temples. The pain in her stomach seemed to have reduced. When she felt the chill attack, she pulled the coat closer and briefly put it over her shoulders.

After a few minutes, Qi Lei returned with a huge bouquet in his arms.

They were not blooming red roses but a bouquet of cape jasmines that seemed a little more refreshing and elegant, unlike those beautifully alluring red roses. Qi Lei liked this flower.

He carried the bouquet of flowers and walked up to Dongfang Liuyun before handing it to her.



“Let’s get married, not for love, but for an alliance. We can still be like we are in the game. I’ll let you have my back and you can safely let me have your back. Don’t reject me. I’m afraid of losing face too. If you reject me, I’ll have to commit seppuku.[1]”

Qi Lei’s eyes were filled with earnestness whilst his tone was exceptionally solemn too. Dongfang Liuyun actually felt quite moved by this.

She was not one to admit that she was moved, and she rarely accepted the good intentions of others, but right now, after hearing Qi Lei’s words, she had to admit that she felt grateful for him. At least, in such an embarrassing state, he had stepped up for her.

He was a good partner, a good comrade, and an ally...

She looked down at the large bouquet of cape jasmine. In that instant, she could feel the faint warmth flowing through her heart, but she only gave him a lonely smile. “Thank you. I know you have good intentions, but you’re finally living some peaceful days now. I hope that you’ll live well. I’m not a good person and I have my flaws too. We...”

“Do you have someone you like?” Qi Lei frowned and asked.

Dongfang Liuyun calmly shook her head.

“Then, what are you hesitating for? It’s me. Here, catch this.”

Chapter 1540. Marrying Not For Love (2)

As soon as he finished speaking, and before Dongfang Liuyun could respond, he had already stuffed the bouquet in his hand directly into her arms.

Dongfang Liuyun received the bouquet subconsciously, thus it did not fall right to the ground. However, at this moment, she stared at Qi Lei profoundly. He had a smile on his face. “This is it. Don’t think too much. Just take it as an alliance. You’ll know more about it from now on.”

“But from what I’ve listened so far, this whole thing sounds a lot like a trap that you’ve set up especially for me.” Dongfang Liuyun glanced down at the bouquet in her arms before raising her eyes to gaze at him.

“Otherwise, you’re welcome to name your terms,” Qi Lei said generously.

“But marrying me won’t do you any good.”

“Whether there are any benefits, that’s up to me to decide,” he replied while staring at her fixedly, “Hesitating? Hmm, that’s so not you. We’ve known each other for so long. Have you thought of me as someone who takes advantage of my friend?”

Dongfang Liuyun gazed at him without uttering a single word. She took a light breath after a while, leaned back into the chair behind her, and looked up at the bright half-moon in the sky until her eyes were dry. After a while, she stood up slowly all of a sudden, bowing her head. She sniffed the bouquet in her arms, then walked forward without looking at Qi Lei.

“Thank you, Qi Lei! You’re a good person, and I’m very touched. Marrying me may not provide you with happiness, but I’ll do my best. As for your proposal, I’ll accept that kindness of yours. I’ll go directly to your office at three in the afternoon and wait for you downstairs, and I’ll call you beforehand, so remember to bring your documents along. Of course, we still have one whole night to think about whether we should start such a marriage...” Her gentle and faint voice traveled in the air and was soon brought away by the cold breeze.

A faint beam flashed across Qi Lei’s eyes while he watched as the slender figure get into the car, ignite the engine, and leave...

...

The car rushed towards the Beach Villa District.

In the driver’s seat, Dongfang Liuyun was driving silently. Light jazz music was being played in the background in the car, and in the front passenger seat lay the gigantic bouquet that Qi Lei had just given to her.

She took a deep breath, stopped the car, and waited for the next green light ahead. She turned her head and glanced at the bouquet of cape jasmine while waiting. The pure, bright white petals were quivering gently in the night wind. She then fell into a trance, and Qi Lei's voice repeated in her head, "Let's get married, not for love, but for an alliance. We can still be like we were in the game. I'll let you have my back, and you can safely let me have yours..."

"After we get married, we might just go on with our days and find ourselves with a lifetime

"If you don't mind, I'll marry you!"

...

For a moment, she suddenly felt that her eyes were scorched and dry...

A conversation between Lan Qi and her came to her mind abruptly.

"Liuyun, some people are destined to be lonely, just like you and me. Will we keep being like this?"

"I don't know about you, but I might."

"Nonsense. Maybe you'll find someone who treats you sincerely in the future. As for that person, I hope he can tolerate you. I also hope that he will be the person to whom you can entrust your back with and vice versa."

"This isn't a game."

"Life is a game and you have keen insight. You'll surely find that person."

"But I'm not lucky enough, so maybe I won't have that honor."

“Maybe the other person is the lucky one who’ll run into you.”

...

All the scenes began to reappear in front of her eyes until the green light ahead lit up. Only then did Dongfang Liuyun recover from her trance. She quickly started the car after being honked at by the car from behind.

She could not help but sigh deeply as she forced the warm sensation in her eyes back. With a few blinks, she turned her head to the side and took another glance at the bouquet.

The cell phone next to her rang suddenly, so she lowered the volume of the music in the car before picking up the phone. She took a glimpse at the caller ID and found out that it was Qi Lei. After a thought, she then hit the ‘accept’ button.

“I’ll go over and pick you up at two in the afternoon. You should rest early.”

She paused for a split second, then responded, “Okay.” She hung up after the reply...

...

The night was destined to be an extraordinary night. After putting away his phone, there was not much change in Qi Lei’s expression. It seemed that the things he had said and done tonight were totally normal, but...

Marriage...

It was a phrase that should be very foreign to him originally, but now it became so real all of a sudden.

He drove straight back to the Grand Lake Villa District and took a comfortable bath. After that, he got some sleep and waited for the arrival of the next day.

Compared to Qi Lei, Dongfang Liuyun was equally calm. She did some cleaning up after arriving home, took her medicine, and went straight to bed. She was a little exhausted and wanted to have a good rest since there were many things that she would have to deal with after this.

The night seems to have become infinitely short. In Grand Lake Villa District, Qi Lei felt that he had not slept for long, but the corner of the dark sky had already been lifted. He got out of bed when he vaguely saw the first rays of the dawn sun shining in through the French windows.

He got into a clean suit after freshening himself up. Then, he went downstairs, planning to make himself a delicious breakfast. However, Yang Sheng was already there with breakfast.

“Master Qi, your schedule for the day is as follows: a joint meeting with the Commerce and Marketing departments at nine sharp in the morning. President Wang of the Wang Corporation will be coming over to discuss matters about the game development at eleven. After that, you’ll be having lunch with President Wang. At three in the afternoon, you’ll be going to—” Yang Sheng started reporting Qi Lei’s itinerary to him while he was enjoying his breakfast elegantly.

However, Qi Lei cut him off before he could finish the whole report, “Keep the morning’s itinerary and cancel everything in the afternoon for me. I’m going out.”

“Cancel? But the person-in-charge wanted to...”

“You can get Vice President Wang and the others to arrange for it. I have something to attend to. Also, go up to my study and bring me the document folder placed on the third row of the second bookshelf,” Qi Lei lowered his gaze and ordered.

“Master Qi...Oh, okay, I’m on it now.” Yang Sheng wanted to ask something at first, but upon seeing Qi Lei lower his head and continuing to enjoy his breakfast, he took back his words and went upstairs to retrieve the folder.

The folder was used to store all of Qi Lei’s papers such as his identity cards or passport, and Yang Sheng had always been taken care of it, so he was familiar with it.

However, what would Master Qi need these for?

He still could not understand after thinking about it for a long time, so he did not continue to speculate and brought the folder downstairs.

At this moment, Qi Lei had finished his breakfast. He then took a few sips of tea, got up, and exited the house as soon as he saw Yang Sheng coming down.