By the time he arrived, it was already late evening.

At this time, Sang Yu and her course mates were busy preparing skewers for a barbecue. Of course, she prepared vegetable skewers for herself too. While the ladies were arranging drinks and fruits on the picnic mat, the boys were busy grilling the skewers.

Sang Yu kept getting distracted and checked the time on her watch. She wanted to estimate when Shen Peichuan would arrive.

"Do you have anything on your mind? You seem a little distracted ever since you answered that call." One of the female course mates teased her, "I think someone must be missing her hubby!"

All these course mates on this trip had a close relationship with Sang Yu, and this was why they knew she was married.

"Stop it..." Sang Yu lowered her eyes. "I'm just thinking of the clothes I left on the balcony and thought of going home..."

"Oh, come on. Don't be a party pooper! And it's late now, so I'm sure it won't rain. Just forget about it and enjoy a good time here!" One of the boys said.

"He's right. Don't tell me you want to leave at this hour? It's too dangerous! Let's just have some fun for a night here."

The others also tried their best to stop her from leaving.

Sang Yu gave in and texted Shen Peichuan to see if he was coming.

Shen Peichuan replied: I've arrived at the foothill.

Sang Yu raised her head and looked at her course mates, "My hubby's here to pick me up..."

"What? Your husband's here?" Three girls surrounded her immediately. "Introduce him to us."

"But..." They put Sang Yu in a tight spot.

"We're not stealing your husband, okay? We want to see how he looks, that's all." They were really keen to meet the man who Sang Yu was so madly in love with.

"He's a busy man, and he only comes back to meet me once in a blue moon..."

"Enough, Sang Yu. You should really introduce him to us. We might not have this opportunity in the future."

Sang Yu did not know what to say anymore. These were her close friends from the university, and she did not want to upset them.

She then texted Shen Peichuan: Can you please come up? My course mates would like to meet you. She added another line at the end of the text: I'll reject them if you don't want to.

In just a short while, Shen Peichuan texted back: I'll come up.

Since they were all Sang Yu's course mates, Shen Peichuan felt he should not ruin things for her.

A corner of Sang Yu's mouth quirked up. She replied: I'll go and pick you up.

Shen Peichuan immediately stopped her: Don't. It's late now, and it's dangerous for you to walk at night.

Sang Yu insisted: Don't worry. I know the road very well. You walk slowly okay? I'll meet you in the middle of the road.

Sang Yu kept her phone in her pocket and sprang up. "I'll go and get him. He doesn't know how to get here."

"I'll come with you." Another female course mate volunteered to accompany her.

"All right," Sang Yu said.

The course mate switched on the torchlight and held Sang Yu's hand. Before leaving, they turned around. "We'll see you all soon, okay! Hope we'll get to eat something when we get back!"

"You two be careful and watch your steps," one of the course mates reminded them.

"We will," the female course mate answered.

Walking down the mountain was much more challenging than climbing uphill. It was even more dangerous, especially in the middle of the night when the only light source was their torch.

The two ladies took a slow walk down the mountain. Some half an hour later, they noticed a light source from a stone's throw away. The course mate asked, "Is that your hubby?"

Since it was unlikely for anyone to come up at this hour, the person would most probably be Shen Peichuan.

"I think so," Sang Yu said.

The course mate waved the torch in the air and exclaimed, "Sang Yu's here!"

The person then walked towards them.

The course mate said in excitement, "Hey, I think it's really your hubby."

Shen Peichuan told them to stay where they were as the road was slippery.

They heeded his advice and waited for him to come over. In just a short while, Shen Peichuan turned on the torchlight on his phone and walked towards them.

The course mate was thrilled to meet him for the first time. She reached out her hand and introduced herself, "Hey there, I'm Wang Tingxue, Sang Yu's course mate."

Shen Peichuan shook her hand and retracted his hand immediately.

Sang Yu walked up to her as she could not see his face clearly. "Why didn't you tell me you're coming back?"

I would have stayed home and waited for him had he told me earlier. He could have rest at home instead of hiking up the mountain in the middle of the night.

Shen Peichuan answered, "It was a spontaneous decision."

Wang Tingxue teased, "Did you come back because you miss our sweet Sang Yu?"

"Tingxue!" Sang Yu shot daggers at her.

"All right, all right, I'll stop. They're waiting for us. Come on, let's get back to the campsite." Wang Tingxue passed the torch to Sang Yu and said, "I'll walk in front and lead the way."

Sang Yu nodded.

She then walked beside Shen Peichuan while lighting the path for Wang Tingxue.

Wang Tingxue turned around and responded with a cheeky smile. "Say what you want to say to each other, and don't worry about me. I promise I won't eavesdrop on your conversation."

Sang Yu was speechless.

"Stop it."

Wang Tingxue burst out laughing.

Sang Yu and Shen Peichuan did not say anything throughout the journey, but they did hold hands as they made their way back.

Over the campsite, the other course mates heard footsteps approaching. They turned around and looked at the people that were walking towards them.

A few of Sang Yu's course mates walked over.

Sang Yu held Shen Peichuan's hand tightly and whispered, "They can get a little too hospitable and might make you feel uncomfortable."

Shen Peichuan responded by tightening his grip on her hand. *I should be able to handle a group of undergraduates.* 

Being a tall man, Shen Peichuan stood out from the people there and caught everyone's attention.

Sang Yu then introduced Shen Peichuan to her course mates, "He is..."

"Your husband, yea, we know," one of the course mates interrupted her and started studying Shen Peichuan. She then let out a sigh. "No wonder she wanted to get married even before she graduates. What a rare specimen."

"I was the one who was in a hurry to marry her. She is the rare gem," Shen Peichuan said.

Wow!

A commotion suddenly broke out among the course mates.

Sang Yu pressed her lips and looked at Shen Peichuan.

That answer had somewhat warmed her heart and put a smile on her face.

"Stop it, you guys," Sang Yu was so embarrassed. She then turned around, looked at Shen Peichuan, and pointed at the course mate who spoke earlier, "She's my roommate, Chen Nan."

"Hello," Shen Peichuan greeted her.

Sang Yu then introduced all her course mates to him. Shen Peichuan looked at everyone and said, "Thank you for taking care of Sang Yu. Please continue to support her."

They answered, "We're not only course mates but friends. Of course, we'll look out for each other. In fact, we didn't really take care of her too."

Li Ya, one of the male course mates said, "Let's go over there for the barbecue. We brought some good stuff for tonight."

Everyone then walked towards the barbecue site.

Sang Yu intentionally walked slower, so she could grab his hand and whisper in his ear, "Are you okay?"

She knew Shen Peichuan was a serious man who detested nonsense. Yet, all her course mates were a bunch of noisy and jovial people. She was afraid he might not fit in.

I shouldn't have come. It was a mistake. We should have just stayed home and watched television programs. He would have been able to get more rest too.

If only I knew he's coming back. Sigh.

Shen Peichuan leaned forward and spoke softly into her ear, "They seem nice. Don't worry about me."

Sang Yu responded with a grin.

"Hey, what are you two lovebirds talking about? Come faster! You can catch up with each other when you get home, or else we'll punish you for the public display of affection!"

Sang Yu and Shen Peichuan then walked over. The other course mates turned on the lightbulbs that brightened the entire barbecue area.

They had done barbecuing all the skewers, and the food was displayed on the plates.

Since Shen Peichuan was the oldest among them all, everyone addressed him as Mr. Shen out of respect. Li Ya, who had a can of Sprite and Coke in his hands, asked, "Mr. Shen, which do you prefer?"

"Either one is fine," Shen Peichuan answered.

Li Ya then gave him a can of Coke. "Here you go."

Shen Peichuan took over the drink and thanked him.

As they were giggling, laughing, and talking about university life and ambition, Shen Peichuan could only sit quietly and listen to them. He was not annoyed by these youngsters. On the contrary, he enjoyed listening to their conversation.

It reminded him of the good old days when he was still a student too.

How time flies.

Sang Yu cared deeply about Shen Peichuan's feelings. Once in a while, she would nudge him or touch his hand on purpose to see if he were all right.

"We've been talking about ourselves and forgot about Mr. Shen. Why don't we play a game?"

"What game?"

"How about truth or dare?"

"Sure!"

Once everyone agreed, they found a ladle and placed it above a plate that had been flipped over. One of them would then spin the ladle twice, and once the ladle pointed at two people, they would have to play a game of rock, paper, scissors. The loser would have to answer the winner's question and must come clean.

There were so many questions they wished to ask Sang Yu and Shen Peichuan, but luck seemed to be on their side all the time.

The first round was between Wang Tingxue and a male course mate, who lost to her in the game of rock, paper, scissors. Wang Tingxue then asked him, "How many girlfriends have you had?"

The boy answered frankly, "Four."

"What? I've not even been in a relationship before, and you had four girlfriends?" another male course mate exclaimed in disbelief.

Wang Tingxue teased, "You must have started dating at the age of sixteen, huh, Casanova? Did you change your girlfriend every year since you're now twenty years old?"

The male course mate responded with an awkward smile.

"All right! Let's continue."

Someone was eager to move on. Wang Tingxue then grumbled, "Should have asked him a more challenging question."

If I win again, I'll ask them when did he first have sex!

But the moment she turned around and saw Shen Peichuan and Sang Yu, she immediately gave up the idea. The purpose of this game was to ask people their most personal questions, but since Shen Peichuan was around, she was a little hesitant.

Shen Peichuan was a senior, and they were all his juniors. Wang Tingxue did not want him to think of her as a disrespectful person.

Next, the ladle pointed at Sang Yu and another male course mate.

Sang Yu lost in the game and had to answer his question.

The boy took a glance at Shen Peichuan and put on a cheeky smile, "Who stole your first kiss?"

That question had caught everyone's attention, and they all looked at Sang Yu.

Shen Peichuan remained relatively calm.

Sang Yu expected they would ask this kind of question. She grinned and looked at Shen Peichuan. "My hubby."

Everyone started expressing their disappointment. They initially thought they might get some juicy details from that question.

Some five rounds later, it was finally Shen Peichuan's turn. So many of them wished they could ask the questions they had in their minds.

This time, it was Li Ya. He chuckled, "Are you ready, Mr. Shen?"

Shen Peichuan said, "I don't know how to play this game. Can I just give up?"

"Sure. If you give up, you'll have to answer one question."

"Do I still need to answer your question even if I give up? Well then, I guess I should at least put up a fight."

Li Ya and Shen Peichuan then battled it out in the game of rock, paper, scissors.

In the end, Li Ya still won the game. He looked at Shen Peichuan and smirked, "You have to tell the truth, Mr. Shen."

Shen Peichuan nodded. "Shoot the question."

All the other course mates started giving Li Ya idea on what to ask.

"Ask him about his first kiss."

"No, no. no. Ask him who does he think of every night before he sleeps."

"Ask him if he'll drool when he sleeps."

"Does he have the habit of scratching his feet?"

Li Ya shook his head. "Keep thinking. Give me a better question."

Shen Peichuan knitted his brows. These kids.

"Me! I have a question." Wang Tingxue suddenly raised her voice.

Everyone turned around and looked at her.

"What is it? Tell us!" Some of them got a little impatient.

Wang Tingxue chuckled. "Do we want to know when did they spend their first night together?"

Shen Peichuan and Sang Yu were speechless.

"Hey, you guys. My hubby came all the way here, and I bet he's tired. Give him a break, okay?" Sang Yu then tried to pull Shen Peichuan away from the crowd.

All the course mates frowned. "Hey, don't hate the player."

Sang Yu ignored them and walked Shen Peichuan to a stream nearby.

The moon hung in the sky like a shining orb. It was almost impossible for city folks to admire it in all her glory as their vision was dazzled by the blinding neon city lights.

The rocks lying beside the stream owed their smooth and clean surface to the water current that flowed through them. Sang Yu led Shen Peichuan to the riverside and sat down on the ground. She then leaned on his shoulder.

"Look, there are stars above you."

Shen Peichuan tilted his head and looked above. The night sky was not dotted with stars, but there were a few that shone exceptionally bright.

He then turned his attention to Sang Yu and gently lifted the hair strands near her chest. "Are you afraid of staying at home alone?"

Sang Yu shook her head. "Not at all. I've always been alone."

I'm used to it.

Did he forget how my childhood was like?

"I'll try to come back sooner," Shen Peichuan promised.

Sang Yu nodded. "You're back today, so does this mean you'd have to go back tomorrow?"

"Yes. I just came back to spend the weekend with you," Shen Peichuan answered.

Sang Yu inched closer and whispered into his ear, "Did you come back for me?"

Shen Peichuan gently lowered his eyes. Sang Yu cupped his face with her hands and made him look at her. "You came back to see me because you missed me, right?"

Sang Yu gazed into his eyes.

Shen Peichuan sat quietly, and his eyes shimmered with a subtle sharpness of a brave knight. "Yes. I came back because I missed you."

Sang Yu responded with a grin, wrapped her arms around him, and stuck her face to his cheeks. "I miss you too."

Shen Peichuan ran his fingers through her hair. "You still have your course mates here."

"They're all very close to me. They might be a little playful, but they know what they're doing. I'm sure they won't come and disturb us."

Still, Shen Peichuan felt bad. It was not because he was embarrassed, but because he felt he should not engage in physical intimacy with Sang Yu openly as he was the oldest person there.

Even though the night was dark, and no one would see them, Shen Peichuan still did not think it was appropriate.

The corners of Sang Yu's mouth quirked up. *That, indeed, is the Shen Peichuan I know. The most cautious person in the world.* 

"Shall we head back now?" It was not nice for them to stay away from the course mates for too long.

Shen Peichuan agreed.

They arrived at the campsite and realized the course mates had moved their tents to another spot.

It was so sweet of this group of friends to give the couple some personal space.

Shen Peichuan said, "I should buy them dinner the next round."

Sang Yu was glad to hear that. "Really?"

Shen Peichuan nodded.

Sang Yu gave him a hug and kissed him on the lips. She looked into his eyes and said in a serious voice, "I love you."

Very, very much.

What would my life be if I have to live without you?

This question that popped up in her mind suddenly caused her to shudder. She hugged Shen Peichuan even more tightly. "You'll always love me, right?"

Shen Peichuan replied with a low hum.

Sang Yu spoke into his ear, "You'll never leave me, right?"

Shen Peichuan was puzzled as to why Sang Yu kept asking all these hypothetical questions. "Is everything all right?"

Sang Yu rubbed the back of her head against his chest. "Just answer me."

Shen Peichuan patted her back and said, "I'll always be by your side. Are you happy with this answer?"

Feeling embarrassed, Sang Yu gently nodded.

Shen Peichuan smiled and rubbed her head. "Silly girl."

Sang Yu's eyes glistened with delight. It was getting late, so they called it a night and slept in the tent.

Camping outdoor could be an interesting experience, but one might not fall asleep easily because of creatures that crawled on the ground and the creaking noises from the tree branches.

Sang Yu rested her neck on Shen Peichuan's arm and asked if he was exhausted. "You think you can sleep well tonight?"

Shen Peichuan told her he was used to camping outdoor.

They then fell asleep after chatting for a while. Early next morning, Sang Yu woke up first.

She gently nudged Shen Peichuan to wake him up, so they could enjoy the sunrise together.

Shen Peichuan was still in a deep sleep as he slept quite late last night.

Sang Yu looked at him and nudged him once more. "Wake up, sleepyhead."

Shen Peichuan, who was still in a daze, opened his eyes. Seeing Sang Yu sitting right in front of him, he immediately woke up.

Sang Yu grinned. "Let's go and see the sunrise."

Shen Peichuan stood up and walked out of the tent with Sang Yu. They realized all the tents around them were gone, and their course mates had all left.

Sang Yu did hear some noises this morning but did not wake up.

They must have left a while ago.

They sat on the rock by the stream and watched the sun rising from the horizon. As the sky turned red, the sun became more and more radiant.

Like a fireball, the sun that emerged in the morning was not burning hot at all, but it merely dyed the clouds red. It was quite a scenic view.

Sang Yu said, "I've heard how beautiful the sunrise in Mouth South is. I guess what they said is true."

Shen Peichuan took a glance at her. Sunrise has always been beautiful. We just never bother to slow down our pace to enjoy its beauty since we're always busy with our lives.

After enjoying the breathtaking morning view, they packed their tent and left the mountain.

The sunrise was beautiful, but climbing the mountain was a rather taxing affair.

Their empty stomachs made it worse.

After loading their luggage onto their car, they got in and savored the silence around them. The place was almost deserted around that time period.

As the city came into view, Shen Peichuan asked Sang Yu if she was hungry, to which she replied, "It's fine. I'd rather go home and take a bath first. Sleeping in the tent with my clothes on hasn't exactly been comfortable, you know."

"Sure," Shen Peichuan replied.

He parked the car in the neighborhood carpark and they alighted from it, with Shen Peichuan carrying their tent and Sang Yu carrying their water bottles.

They ascended the stairs slowly.

Shen Peichuan put their things down as Sang Yu watched. When he was done, she gave a shy chuckle and disappeared into the bathroom.

After putting the things down, Shen Peichuan looked around for Sang Yu, only to notice the sound of water running from the bathroom. He proceeded to walk out through the front door.

He was not a cook, but he knew where to get the best deals and the most delicious food in town.

Sang Yu took a quick bath and put on her clothes as fast as possible before walking to the living room, only to find it empty.

She turned around and walked into her bedroom, which was empty as well. It was as though no one had been in her house over the past few days.

Where did he go?

She looked around for her phone to give Shen Peichuan a call but was startled by the sound of the door opening. Shen Peichuan walked in while carrying a few boxes of food. "Time for breakfast!"

He placed the food on the table, and Sang Yu walked over as well.

However, instead of sitting down to eat, she embraced him from behind.

He turned around to look at her. "Let's eat."

Sang Yu shook her head and gazed into his eyes. "I'm not hungry," she whispered.

Her fingers undid the belt of her bathrobe, and she let it slide off her body as she pressed herself against him.

"Sang Yu..."

"I'm clean. Don't worry," she said, cutting him off.

She stared into his eyes as her face turned beet red.

She bit her lip in slight embarrassment, but she did not look away.

Shen Peichuan reached out to pull her bathrobe together, only to be cut off by a sudden kiss from Sang Yu. She was not a good kisser, but it was enough to make him forget why he stuck his hands out.

He tensed up in silence.

"You don't want me?" Sang Yu asked in a hushed whisper.

"No," Shen Peichuan answered decisively, his voice raspy beyond recognition.

"Then..."

Shen Peichuan picked her up bridal style all of a sudden. He leaned down to kiss her on the forehead gently as he cooed, "You ready?"

"Yeah," Sang Yu answered, burying her face in his chest.

Shen Peichuan walked into the bedroom and shut the door behind him as Sang Yu breathed heavily into his neck.

They did not come out for a long time, even when the food on the table turned stone cold.

When the clock struck eleven, Shen Peichuan finally sat up on the bed, bare-chested.

He stole a glance at Sang Yu, who had fallen asleep out of exhaustion.

Her shiny black hair spilled onto the pillows like a dark waterfall. Shen Peichuan reached out to brush away a few stray strands of hair stuck to her face with sweat, and it tickled her slightly, making her squirm in her sleep.

Shen Peichuan pulled his hand back and glanced at the corner of the blanket.

Underneath the blanket was a small patch of blood that had turned from a striking red to a dark brown as time passed.

Sang Yu had endured the pain throughout, and she did not even mutter a word of complaint even as the pain mounted.

His eyelashes fluttered as his Adam's apple bobbed in his throat. *All that nervousness... it felt as though I'll never recover from it...* 

He took a final look at Sang Yu and stood up.

Wait... I can't cook...

He sighed and picked up his phone to order takeout from the restaurant downstairs, like what he had done several times before.

The perks of becoming a returning customer!

He ordered a few dishes that he liked, and they arrived in just half an hour, still piping hot.

Handing the money over and putting the food onto the table, he walked into the bedroom to wake Sang Yu up.

Sang Yu was still asleep, and his soft purrs pulled her back into reality.

She rubbed her bleary eyes and groaned, trying her best to figure out what the blurry mass in front of her was.

"It's time for lunch," Shen Peichuan said softly.

Sang Yu pushed herself into a sitting position with her arms.

Sang Yu was about to stand up when she realized that she had been completely naked. Still not used to being so vulnerable in front of Shen Peichuan, she grabbed a blanket and covered herself with it.

She bit her lip and avoided his gaze. "G-Get out! I need to put my clothes on."

Shen Peichuan stayed put and continued to stare at her wordlessly.

Sang Yu began to feel uncomfortable. "Why are you looking at me like that?" she asked, frowning.

Shen Peichuan reached out and pulled her into his embrace, kissing her brow in silence. "I have so much to talk to you about, but I don't know where to start."

He was not good with words, and Sang Yu knew that.

Sang Yu rubbed her head against his chest like a pet dog. "I understand."

She loved his calmness and steadfast personality.

Not only did she love him, but she also respected him too. He was almost like a father figure to her, as her real father was absent from her life.

She would rather see Shen Peichuan's true self than being showered with forced sweet nothings.

The duty of whispering affectionate words was hers, not his.

"Sang Yu..." Shen Peichuan said all of a sudden.

Sang Yu looked up, brushing her nose against his stubbly chin. She pouted at him and said, "You should shave!"

Shen Peichuan reached out to stroke his chin. Two days of not shaving had turned his chin into a spiky disaster. "Sure, I'll shave later," he said, before calling her name once more.

Sang Yu blinked. "I'm listening."

He lowered his gaze and his voice. "Thank you, Sang Yu."

"Why are you thanking me?" Sang Yu asked, chuckling.

Shen Peichuan pursed his lips together. "Thank you for marrying me."

"If that's the case, I should thank you too," Sang Yu said, brushing her lips against his. "Thank you for choosing me."

Shen Peichuan grabbed her head and pressed his lips against hers, which she reciprocated immediately.

The food and her clothes lay forgotten as they were locked in a passionate kiss.

They did not have the mind for anything else.

"Mmm... I'm hungry..." Sang Yu drawled just as Shen Peichuan was about to push her over.

Shen Peichuan paused mid-shove. Sang Yu blinked her clear eyes at him and tickled his nose playfully. "Don't you understand?"

Shen Peichuan's breathing got heavier. "Sang Yu..."

Sang Yu giggled. "I'm hungry for you!"

. . .

Their lunch turned cold, and Sang Yu fell asleep yet again, her appetite long gone. The sky darkened as she slept on.

Sang Yu knew how scary a man could be after a period of holding his libido back.

When the sky darkened completely, she dragged herself off the bed to take a shower. The stickiness in her nether regions and the light smell of both her and Shen Peichuan's sweat made her skin crawl.

She put on her nightgown afterward and walked out with a towel on her head to see Shen Peichuan taking a call. Without making a sound, she tiptoed over to where he was on the sofa and sat down, rubbing her damp hair dry with the towel.

Shen Peichuan had been discussing work matters with his colleague, and he hung up after a few minutes. He looked around to see Sang Yu sitting beside him. "I'll help you with that," he said, taking the towel from her."

Sang Yu snuggled up to him and put her head on his lap, savoring the feeling of his large hands rubbing against her head.

Shen Peichuan carefully dried every strand of her hair with a towel.

When he was almost done, Sang Yu piped up all of a sudden. "I'm hungry."

Shen Peichuan shot her a look.

Sang Yu sat up abruptly, sending a ripple of pain running down from her abdomen. It had been her first time, and his first entry had not exactly been pleasant for her.

I'm hungry for food, not for you! Such a pervert!

Shen Peichuan grinned. "I'm not going to touch you."

Sang Yu heaved a sigh of relief and was about to tell him that she wanted to have dumplings for dinner, but he cut her off before she could say anything. "I'll feed you!"

"Huh?" Sang Yu was startled.

*Is he... being affectionate?* 

Could he be...

Sang Yu blinked out of confusion. "You..."

"I'll get your clothes," he said, standing up and walking towards the bedroom.

Sang Yu smiled and remained seated on the sofa to wait.

However, he did not emerge from the bedroom even after a good ten minutes.

Strange... he should be able to find my clothes pretty easily. We literally share a closet!

What's taking him so long?

Is he picking an outfit for me?

Sang Yu did not have much clothes to begin with, and something told her that she should go and take a look.

She stood up from the sofa and walked over to the bedroom, only to see Shen Peichuan standing still in front of the closet.

He did not even move an inch even as Sang Yu stared at him.

That's strange... what's wrong? "Hey... Peichuan? What are you doing?"