

The Beauty 77

Chapter 77 A Thousand Thoughts

After hanging up the phone, Ling Chen returned to the room and saw Zhu Xiaozhu walking out with an exquisitely small suitcase in hand.

"What's this..." Before he finished speaking, he immediately remembered that Zhu Xiaozhu had a flight to catch back to Beijing today. "Let me take you," he said, reaching out to take the suitcase, ready to go out and hail a taxi.

"Ling Chen, where are you two going?" Just at that moment, He Ziyun walked out from the lobby.

"I'm taking Xiaozhu to the airport, will be back soon."

"There's no need to go through all that trouble. It's hard to call for a taxi around here; there's a car in the warehouse in the back, it's been lying there unused, you can just drive her there."

"A car?" Ling Chen's heart leapt with joy, driving there himself was the best option. He immediately followed He Ziyun's steps to the Martial Arts Academy's backyard. He had never been to the backyard before; it was filled with clutter, and rarely did anyone come.

The lock on the warehouse door seemed as if it hadn't been opened for many years, covered with rust. He Ziyun took out a key and unlocked it. As the door opened, a pungent musty smell immediately wafted out. Ling Chen covered his nose and saw that the warehouse was filled with a thick layer of dust, with various items strewn about in disarray.

However, his gaze was quickly captivated by a car in the warehouse. The car was covered by a tarp, but from the contours that bulged out, it was clear this was no ordinary sedan you'd see on the market.

He Ziyun walked over to the car, hands reaching out to gently lift the tarp. In an instant, the ram's head logo appeared before Ling Chen's eyes.

Following the emblem upwards, Ling Chen's eyes sparkled, filled with excitement.

The car body was made of carbon alloy, with metallic paint, the front was not only long but also wide, the cabin only had seats for the driver and passenger, and the rear was streamlined – the whole car exuded a bold and rugged personality.

Dodge Charger, the classic 1966 muscle car.

Ignoring the dust on the car's body, Ling Chen's hand gently caressed it, as if he were touching a treasured possession. And indeed, calling this muscle car a treasure was fitting. Across the world, there were definitely no more than fifty of these original classic muscle cars, most of which were kept in museums. If it were to be auctioned, it would certainly fetch millions of US dollars.

"Mr. He, where did you get this car?"

"I bought it from abroad when I was young, but as I got older, I didn't want to bother with it anymore, so it's been lying here unused." Saying this, He Ziyun tossed a set of keys into Ling Chen's hand, "Don't ruin it for me, this is the only valuable thing I own."

"Don't worry, I won't mess it up."

Overjoyed, Ling Chen eagerly opened the door and couldn't wait to sit in the driver's seat. As a man, who doesn't have a passion for cars. He inserted the key, gave it a gentle twist, and with a roar like that of a beast, the car body slightly trembled to life.

Though the car hadn't been driven for many years, Mr. He had not forgotten to maintain it regularly, so it performed very well. Once Ling Chen carefully drove the car out of the warehouse, he quickly washed off the dust from the car, and then drove up to the front entrance of the Martial Arts Academy.

Sitting in the car, Zhu Xiaozhu looked at Ling Chen, who was full of excitement, and felt a little strange. It was just a car; was it necessary to be so happy?

She didn't know that the greatest hobbies of a man are fast cars and beautiful women. Cars and women hold a nearly equal place in a man's heart.

"All set?" Ling Chen grinned, gently tapping the accelerator. At once, amid the thrilling roar, the muscle car shot out and quickly merged onto the road.

"How long do you plan to stay this time on your trip back?" Ling Chen casually asked while on the road.

"I'm not sure, maybe... two weeks, I guess. Why?"

"Nothing, just asking."

"Oh," Zhu Xiaozhu replied indifferently, feeling inexplicably disappointed.

She was caught off guard by the emotional turmoil within her. For over twenty years, her life had been calm as still waters, her mood like a serene lake, undisturbed by ripples. No man had ever affected her emotions. Yet, for some reason, in Ling Chen's presence, she found it difficult to maintain her composure; his every word stirred countless thoughts in her mind.

Could it be that she...

Without knowing what she was thinking about, her pretty face blushed slightly. She quickly turned her head towards the car window, afraid that Ling Chen would see her change.

In less than half an hour, Ling Chen arrived at the airport smoothly.

"Have a safe trip."

"Mhm," Zhu Xiaozhu murmured softly and gracefully, dragging her suitcase toward security. However, her steps were slow—as if she was hesitating, as if waiting for something.

Watching her receding figure, Ling Chen felt a surge of impulse and blurted out, "Xiaozhu..."

"What's up?" Almost the instant Ling Chen spoke, Zhu Xiaozhu turned around, as if she had already been prepared.

"It's... it's nothing." Ling Chen chuckled awkwardly, swallowing the words he wanted to say and changed them to, "Be safe on the road, and keep in touch when you can."

"I will, bye!"

Zhu Xiaozhu waved with a smile, no longer lingering, and proceeded directly to the security checkpoint. It wasn't until her figure completely vanished from sight that Ling Chen reluctantly left the airport.

Back in the car and thinking about the foolish conversation they just had, he couldn't help but curse inwardly.

Ling Chen, oh Ling Chen, you're usually so bold, why do you go soft at the crucial moment.

He sighed. He could shamelessly flirt with any other beauty without concern, but when it came to a woman he truly cared about, he became hesitant, not even daring to utter a single word.

Shaking his head, he started the car and slowly drove onto the road.

Returning to the Martial Arts Academy, only He Ziyun and Little Hua were home; Tang Yuan had vanished to who knows where. That guy was always so secretive, hardly a ghost shadow to be seen. Ling Chen couldn't be bothered with him; ever since he learned that Tang Yuan was on a secret mission in East Sea City, he seldom inquired about his whereabouts.

After lunch, Ling Chen drove alone to the most bustling area in the city center.

The dinner that Liu Xiyao mentioned was in two days. He still had a day left, but he didn't even have a single formal suit; he needed to prepare early.

With all his savings in his pocket, Ling Chen found a shopping mall and took the elevator to the third floor, which was a menswear specialty. Previously, Ling Chen would never consider buying clothes from such upscale places; with his personality, he'd be content with picking up some random clothes from street vendors.

But there was no choice; Liu Xiyao specifically reminded him it was a formal occasion, and representing the face of the club, he couldn't afford to be dressed too shabbily.

As he browsed, Ling Chen felt as though he was in the wrong place. Everything was so damn expensive; a casual suit cost a few thousand yuan, and that was the cheapest one. Even though Liu Xiyao had said she would reimburse him, he still had to pay upfront.

Hesitating at the shop entrance, he clenched his teeth and stepped inside, prepared to walk in.

"Eh, what are you doing here?"

Just then, a surprised voice suddenly came from behind him.