

Wedded Bride 341

Chapter 341 A Treat

"I like anything that you prepare, grandma." Autumn chuckled. She gave her grandparents a hug and then hurried off to work.

Since everything had been cleared up with Charles, Autumn felt relaxed and wore a smile on her face.

The world was beautiful again. As soon as Isla entered the office and saw a new and refreshed

Autumn, she knew that she and Charles had made up.

"Take a look at this, Autumn. It looks like I'm gonna be really busy today, " Isla said holding up a stack of papers and left Autumn's office. The cooperation with Giant Promise Company, along with the fact that their opponent stole their proposal getting out, had led to a gradual increase in the company's business. Now the whole Cloud Advertising Company was swamped. One could feel the energy within the company.

As the company had been constantly getting better, Autumn was exhilarated beyond description.

She remembered that Amy invited her to dinner so she made time to call Charles and asked him to go with her and visit the Zhao family after work. "Okay, I'll pick you up after work then." Charles said holding the phone to his ear while signing a few documents.

"No, you don't have to bother coming here. I'll come to you, " Autumn replied, smiling by herself in her office.

After hanging up, Charles remained in his seat, looking across the table at Leila, and asked, "What did you say?"

"Oh, Mr. Lu, I said..." Leila beamed and repeated what she had just said. Since their return from Europe, tensions between Charles and Leila had eased a lot.

Charles was able to see Leila's abilities based on their latest business trip to Europe. Naturally, he wanted to treasure her talent.

After giving her report, Leila kept looking at Charles, her dark eyes gleaming with expectation. Charles gave her a puzzled look and asked, "What's the matter? Anything else?"

"Mr. Lu, you promised me a reward when we were in Europe, remember?" Leila reminded him with a faint giggle.

Charles smiled and nodded. "Yes, of course I haven't forgotten. So have you decided what you want for your reward?" he replied with one eyebrow raised.

"Yes!" Leila replied with a little hop. "Well, what I want is very simple. I just want you to buy me a meal.

So... are you free today, Mr. Lu?"

Charles paused for a moment and asked, "Er... that's it?"

"Yes, that's it, " Leila answered. "Please don't get me wrong, Mr. Lu. All I want is to have dinner with

you and nothing more. In my opinion, what I did was part of my duty and I don't need any reward at all.

However, I always learn a lot from you every time I talk to you, Mr. Lu. So I want to take the opportunity

to ask you what I need to get better with my job."

After a short pause, Leila smiled earnestly and went on, "I love my job and I want to keep improving at

it. Of course, it doesn't matter if I am the one treating you to this dinner, as long as you are willing to

join me, Mr. Lu."

"You've done a good job." Charles responded coolly.

"Not good enough, " Leila said, shaking her head slightly. "I want to be better. Mr. Lu, I really hope you

can give me some advice. And I hope you don't turn me down."

"All right, " Charles agreed, a little reluctant. 'It's just a meal. No big deal, ' he thought. But it suddenly

occurred to him that he had promised Autumn to go to the Zhao family for dinner this evening. "But I

can't take you to dinner today. I'm sorry."

He then explained, "I have promised my wife to visit her family with her and have dinner with them today, so..."

Instantly, disappointment was written all over Leila's face, but she said, "Oh...I see. Never mind." She then took a pained look at Charles and added enviously, "You really love your wife, Mr. Lu. She must be very happy to have you as her husband. I'm so jealous..."

"Really?" Charles laughed, "You don't have to envy her. You are still young, and you are sure to meet someone who will love you with all his heart. Don't worry."

"I'm not worried!" Leila replied. "I think there is no better man than you in the world, so I am not in a hurry at all."

She didn't need to bother looking for another man, because the best man in her eyes was the one right in front of her now.

"It's settled then, Mr. Lu. Please remember to invite me to dinner when you are free, " Leila said.

"No problem, I'll keep that in mind, " Charles promised, "I'll definitely treat you to dinner when I am

free."

Leila then walked out of Charles' office with a cheerful smile in her eyes. Of course she heard Charles and Autumn talk on the phone. She knew that Charles would not be able to join her for dinner today, but she made the request at this time on purpose. That way, Charles would not be able to refuse her when she asked him out again.

"Congratulations, Leila." David called out to Leila heartily when she passed by him in the hall. He had heard that Leila got that contract done in Europe. "Thank you. I'm treating you guys to lunch. Don't forget!"

Leila returned with a faint smile, but not showing much joy.

Her goal was more than the contract. She wanted Charles to know that there was more she could do and that keeping her close with him was the right thing to do. Knowing that Leila was going to invite some colleagues to lunch, David also asked Charles if he could go with them. Charles agreed after a moment's hesitation.

Over lunch Leila schemed to sit next to Charles, and tried to keep the atmosphere lively until everyone no longer felt uptight with the presence of their boss.

Seeing Leila so lively, Charles felt that she was very different from what he remembered her as. It was as if he really knew her well today.

Halfway through lunch, Charles went to the register and settled the bill. As he turned around, he saw Leila standing in front of him, looking at him confused. This made him feel guilty, as if he just got caught in the act, doing something bad.

"What do you mean by doing this, Mr. Lu?" Leila asked, taking a step towards him. "I said it was my treat. Why did you settle the bill?"

"That's all right, " Charles said. "We seldom eat out together. Besides, I know how much you get paid. It's not easy for you to make money. How could I get you to pay the bill when I'm here?"

"But... " Leila frowned and tried to argue but Charles stopped her.

"It's settled already. Come on, no need to argue about it." Charles said casually, "You may rest assured that this meal is not the one you asked me to treat you to."

Leila smiled and finally added, "But Mr. Lu, if we go out for a meal again, please let me pay for it. I told everyone it was my treat, but you paid for it. It has become embarrassing for me."

"Okay, I'll make sure you pay next time, " Charles replied, and returned to the table with Leila.

An hour before work was over, Autumn handed over the job to Isla, ready to go and pick up Charles.

"I'm going now, Isla. Please take care of these."

"Okay, I'll make sure they're done, " Isla assured her. She was glad to see that Autumn was back to her

original energetic self.

Chapter 342 Hot Pot

Autumn didn't know what was going on, but the road to Shining Company was too congested. It was

almost time to get off work when she finally got there.

"Charles..." Autumn was standing downstairs, waiting for Charles. She saw him coming out of the

presidential private elevator the moment it opened. She wanted to go to him and greet him warmly, but

she also saw Leila following closely behind Charles. Autumn hated Leila's presence. It was like a cold

bucket of water that was poured on her. She was going to wave to her husband, but dropped her hand

on seeing Leila.

As soon as Leila came out of the elevator, she also saw Autumn. She moved close to Charles on

purpose. From Autumn's angle, she could hardly hear what they were talking about, but she could see

they seemed more intimate than before.

"Mr. Lu, I will go now. No need to disturb you and your wife." Leila said with a bright smile on her face.

When she passed by Autumn she also greeted her as if nothing had happened.

Autumn was too overwhelmed to say hello to Leila. The intense feelings in her heart suddenly came up again. Her heart beat too fast.

Charles came close to Autumn and asked curiously, "Hello there! What's wrong with you? Why are you standing here in a daze?"

Autumn didn't answer Charles' question. "Why do you take the elevator down with her?"

That elevator was for Charles only. Without his permission, no one else could take it.

"You are starting to make blind guesses again." Charles just stared at Autumn. He explained, "She said

she had something urgent to deal with after work, so she asked me if she could use the elevator with

me. As you can see, we have so many employees in Shining Company. If she waited for the staff

elevator, who knows when she will be able to come down? Therefore, I allowed her to take the elevator

with me. What's wrong with that? Why are you so terribly suspicious and paranoid?"

Autumn didn't know the reason, either. Recently, she found her mood to be volatile, like the weather

outside. She couldn't help giving malice to the relationship between Charles and Leila. She had lost control of her emotions.

"Sorry, nothing serious. Let's go. Grandpa and grandma must already be waiting for us." Charles didn't mean to scold Autumn. He just thought that there could be something wrong with Autumn's emotional stability.

Autumn forced herself not to think of the relationship between Leila and Charles. She constantly told herself that she must trust her husband, Charles. When they arrived at the Zhao family's house, it was bustling with noise and excitement.

It was freezing cold, that evening. Amy prepared a hot pot for the family. Smelling the spiciness of the hot pot, Autumn sniffed the air and exclaimed as soon as she came in, "That smells amazing!"

"Oh, Autumn. You're here!" Amy greeted Autumn as she carried the dishes to the table and Autumn also greeted her back. She also greeted everyone else. Then, she hurried to look for Emily.

"Grandma." Emily pushed the door open to reach out to Autumn the moment she heard her, and hugged her. "I miss you so much, grandma."

"My silly girl, why haven't you come to visit these days?" Emily took Autumn's hands and caressed

them. She then felt Autumn's face. Afterwards, Emily frowned and asked her, "You seem to have grown thinner. Have you lost weight?"

"Do I?" Autumn replied, sounding like a vulnerable child. In recent days, she did lose some weight because she fell ill. But to her surprise, in spite of grandma's blindness, she could feel it by touching her face. Autumn explained to her grandma, "I've been quite busy these days. Besides, Charles also went on a business trip several day ago, so I didn't come to see you, grandma. I am so sorry."

Charles also came to join them in the room. After an exchange of greetings, Charles said to Emily,

"Let's go, grandma. Let's have dinner."

Charles assisted Emily to the table. Emily could not eat too much spicy food, so Amy made a two-flavor hot pot. Autumn sat between Emily and Cindy so that she could take care of both of them.

"Autumn, you and Charles have been married for quite a while now. Don't you have any plans of having a baby?" Autumn liked Cindy so much, so Emily couldn't help asking Autumn about it.

Autumn suddenly blushed. She didn't know whether it was because of Emily's words or because of the hot pot.

"Grandma, we are having a meal. Why do you suddenly bring this up?" Autumn asked with her face getting redder. Now, everyone was focused on her, which made her feel awkward.

"You are old enough. At your age, it's the right time for you to give birth to a baby." Emily said with smile, "Look, you are so fond of Cindy. If you can have a child of your own in the future, she must be as cute as Cindy."

"Aunt Emily is right, Autumn." Abby, who was sitting across the table, also joined in. "If you're gonna have a baby, that means Cindy will have a playmate, doesn't it? After Cindy was born, there was no baby born in our family for a long time. So we are looking forward to your and Charles' child."

"Sister..." Cindy was sitting quietly to enjoy her meal. But when she heard the adults' talk, she also raised up her head. She looked at Autumn, and asked like a lamb, "Do you have a baby girl in your belly?"

Autumn couldn't help playfully pinching Cindy's cheek, and asked, "You wish I had a baby girl in my belly, don't you?"

Cindy lowered her head down, and thought for a while. Then she raised up her head again to give her answer earnestly, "I want a baby boy first, and then a baby girl. I will buy a lot of pretty clothes for

them."

"How greedy you are, Cindy" Autumn was almost speechless. But other family members who were watching the fun all burst into laughter. "Look, Cindy has made a perfect plan for you. Both a boy and a girl can make you a family full of bliss. It's perfect!"

Abby then turned to Cindy, "Cindy, when the baby in Autumn's belly is born, you are going to be an aunt."

"Wow, I'd like to be called aunt." Cindy was so excited that she clapped her hands. She was too young to know about the seniority in the family, so she was delighted, not knowing that they were just having fun.

Autumn's face turned redder. She stole a glance at Charles beside her, but was surprised to find that Charles was looking at her with a smile. Autumn felt a bit embarrassed.

"Grandma, you can rest assured that I will work hard so that you get to see your grandson as soon as possible." Charles also joined with the joking. Only Autumn looked down at the floor. novelbin

Fortunately, after a little while, they changed their topic. Autumn had been helping Emily eat, so she

had no time to eat anything herself.

After dinner, Autumn assisted Emily to her bedroom. She didn't come back out until she helped Emily

finish bathing and lie on the bed. With everything done, Autumn came out to relax herself on the sofa.

At that time, Amy brought her a plate of fruit, saying, "How about having some fruit? I did not see you eat much at the table."

"Thank you, grandma." Autumn smiled with sweetness. Then, before Abby went downstairs, she said to Autumn, "Remember to make some time. The press conference will be held this Sunday."

Autumn blanked for a while, pausing as she was about to put a piece of fruit in her mouth. She then remembered what the conference would be about. "Okay, I will."

Every time Charles visited the Zhao family, he would always talk about work with Andy. Now as usual, he was chatting with Andy. Abby went upstairs to get Cindy to sleep, leaving Autumn alone sitting on the sofa, bored. It had been a long time before Charles was done talking with Andy. Charles then remembered Autumn was still sitting nearby. So he turned to check on Autumn, only to find that she had almost fallen asleep on the sofa.

"Autumn is so sleepy. Let's chat next time, shall we?" Andy advised with a smile, "It's too late now. Let's

go out for a drink some other day."

Chapter 343 An Apology

"Okay." Charles nodded at Andy and went to Autumn. He gave her a pat on the shoulder and

whispered, "Autumn, wake up. Let's go home."

When Autumn opened her eyes, Charles' face was onto hers. She asked as she rubbed her sleepy

eyes, "Have you finished your conversation?"

"Yes. Let's go home, " Charles said. He was used to ignoring his wife as long as he threw himself into

his work. For this, he felt a sense of guilt.

Charles escorted Autumn into the car. When they left, Autumn was wide awake. Charles noticed that

Autumn was staring blankly in the passenger seat and he apologized, "Were you bored just now? I'm

so sorry about that."

"Sorry for what?" It took quite a while for Autumn to get back into the moment. Her mind had been adrift

somewhere far away. When she realized why Charles made an apology, she replied with a smile, "It's

okay. You were talking about business. I couldn't join in, so yes, I felt kind of bored."

"Work usually eats up all my attention. If I ignore something, especially you, please remind me."

Charles' apology was sincere.

"It is okay." Autumn said gently.

It was odd that she always got distracted. Her good mood was easily spoiled. Even small matters affected her significantly.

As soon as they arrived home, Nancy came forward and took their coats and bags. "Mr. Lu, Mrs. Lu, have you had supper? Do you want some snacks or maybe desert?" Nancy asked eagerly.

"No, thank you, Nancy." Charles replied, "We are okay. You can go to bed."

"What about Mrs. Lu?" Nancy turned her gaze to Autumn. She knew Autumn's habit of having a glass of milk before bedtime. Autumn was about to reply, but Nancy said, "Your milk is ready. Do you want to have it now?"

"Yes." Autumn agreed with a nod. After finishing the milk Nancy brought from the kitchen, she said,

"Thanks Nancy, have an early night."

Nancy wasn't friendly to Autumn. But she treated Autumn with civil respect. It was enough for Autumn.

Autumn had intended to wait for Charles. After his shower, maybe they could have a talk. Sometimes

things didn't work out the way you thought they would. However, as soon as her head touched the pillow, she drifted off to sleep. Never did she know there was something wrong with her body at that time.

After taking a quick bath, Charles was disappointed to find Autumn already asleep. He took off her clothes with a bitter smile and cleaned her up before he tucked her in.

The next day, as soon as Autumn arrived at the Cloud Advertising Company, she found all the girls huddled over something behind the door of the conference room. It seemed as if they were ogling at some precious treasure. She asked in surprise, "What are you all looking at?"

"Manager Ye, finally, you are here." One of the girls walked to Autumn and complained, "Manager Ye, you are married. Why didn't you introduce this handsome man to us? That's so unkind."

It was just a joke. However, Autumn was completely at a loss. She asked the girls in front, "What are you talking about? What handsome man?"

"Manager Ye, when we arrived for work today, we saw him standing beside the door. He said he was your friend and came here looking for you. So we invited him inside to wait in the conference room."

Autumn racked her brains with her brows wrinkled and couldn't think of who he was.

It was impolite to keep the guest waiting whoever it was. She just never thought that it would be Roger.

Never did she want to become associated with him. And now, she had no idea why he came.

Her employees couldn't take their eyes off the handsome Roger. They were astonished at his

outstanding appearance, "Oh my god! He is so handsome! How handsome he is!"

"What are you doing? Don't you have work to do?" The moment Isla entered the company, she was not

pleased to see the unprofessional conduct of the staff. As she passed the conference room, she asked

frowning, "Why is he here?"

"I don't know." Autumn shrugged. She mulled over Roger's motive, 'Is it possible that he is coming to

ask for justice?' There was no time for Autumn to tell Isla about what happened the day before.

"I will deal with him." Isla said as she pushed the door open. When Roger saw Autumn standing beside

the door, he walked to her saying excitedly, "Here you are finally. I have been waiting for you for quite a

long time."

"What are you doing here?" Isla stood in between Autumn and Roger because she had a feminine

instinct that Roger might hurt Autumn.

She thought, 'We are in our company. No matter what he wants to do, we will act accordingly. We won't suffer any liabilities.

"I am here ..." Roger got close to them as he spoke. Isla took one step back and yelled out, "Hey, hey, hey! No need to get too close."

"I mean no harm. I'm here to say I'm sorry." Roger said guiltily, pretending to look sincere.

"Sorry? What are you sorry for?" Isla looked at him with a scowl.

"Isla, it's okay." Autumn pulled Isla away and asked Roger in front of her, "Your name is Roger, isn't it? I don't care about why you came here. It doesn't matter whether you want to apologize or make trouble. Let me remind you, we are strangers. Get out of my company now. If you don't want to get in trouble, you'd better do as I say."

For Autumn, Roger was nothing but a complete stranger. She didn't care one bit about him.

Yesterday she was offended and hurt. It was useless to make an apology. After all, an apology wouldn't fix what had already been damaged.

She could forget about him on condition that her life returned to normal.

"Miss Ye, I am serious. I owe you an apology. Please give me a chance to say it." Roger insisted. He

had to try his best to lure Autumn so as to get the role Rachel promised.

"You seem to not have heard it. Autumn said that she didn't need your apology. Didn't you understand what she said?" Isla retorted. A shameless person like Roger was really annoying.

Roger didn't give up easily. If he couldn't get close to Autumn, it would be impossible for him to win her heart. Even though Isla and Autumn were being difficult, he wouldn't surrender easily.

"Miss Ye, I ..." Roger reached out to Autumn's hands but he was blocked by Isla. She stared at Roger up and down. "If you don't leave now, I will call the guards." Her eyes were reduced to slits.

Isla was smart. She knew Roger's weakness. As a promising actor, his career would be tainted if his shameful behavior was caught on camera. As soon as he heard that Isla would call the guards, he backed down and made no further advances. Before he left, he said, "Miss Ye, I know you are suspicious of my intentions. But I am here to say I am sorry. You will soon see how sincere I am."

It took quite a long time to drive Roger away. When things got settled, Isla asked, "Autumn, what happened? Why did he come here?"

Chapter 344 Something Was Wrong

Letting out a sigh, Autumn told Isla what happened in the last few days. Isla got furious as she got to

know how Roger was so callous and shameless. "I never expected that there would be such a disgusting person. It seems that I shouldn't be so polite to him. Just wait and see. If I meet him next time, I would definitely beat him up and I would not be forgiving next time."

"Calm down. He is gone. What's more, he has received a just punishment, so you don't have to get so irritated for such a shameless man. Remember that he has nothing to do with us. But thanks for stepping up for me, " said Autumn with a smile. She tried to calm Isla and let her cool down.

Getting close to Autumn, Isla shifted her attention to her and exclaimed, "Wow, Autumn, you look great today! Are you back in good terms with Charles?"

"Isla, you are teasing me again!" Autumn blushed since she was embarrassed to hear this from Isla.

"Autumn, I am not teasing you. I am so happy for you, " explained Isla with a sincere smile. "Well, I'm gonna go. I still have a lot on my desk today, " she added.

"Okay." Though Autumn replied briefly, she was moved by Isla's sincerity. She was thankful and fortunate to have such a good friend. When Autumn finished the proposal, she felt dizzy. Perhaps it was because she just recovered from a severe illness. She even felt like she was going to lose her temper though she was frail at the moment.

"Manager Ye, may I come in? I have here the summary of all of our business this month." As Autumn was about to have a rest, she heard the voice outside her office. "Come in, " said Autumn. The door opened and Yoyo walked in and put the files on Autumn's desk. "Manager Ye, here are the papers. Please look through them, " said Yoyo then turned to leave.

"Yoyo, wait for a second." Autumn, confused, stopped her and asked, "Why did you hand this to me?" Obviously, Yoyo was shocked about her question. "Manager Ye, you asked me to hand it to you after putting the papers in order yesterday." She gazed at Autumn, the astonishment visible in her eyes.

"You said that you wanted to have a look at the business achievement for the last month, so you asked me to give you the files. But I was managing the proposal at that time, so I said I would hand it to you today."

Confused and puzzled, Yoyo tried her best to recall their conversation yesterday and tried to figure out whether Autumn was losing her memory or not. 'Did it happen the day before yesterday?

No, I am pretty sure that it was yesterday's conversation, ' Yoyo thought to herself.

"Really? Did I really ask you to hand it to me?" Autumn tried for a long while to recall what happened,

her eyebrows furrowed. But she still couldn't remember if she said this to Yoyo. All of a sudden, she felt a severe headache. Staring at Yoyo, Autumn said very impatiently, "Well, I will look through it later. Go back to work first, Yoyo." She was terribly upset.

After Yoyo left, Autumn leaned forward, hunching over the desk to relieve her pain. She didn't sit up until she felt better. When she was about to get off from work, Autumn made a call to Charles and asked him if he would be home for dinner. Charles told her that he still had work to do. Hanging up the phone, Autumn packed up her stuff and drove home.

As she got home, she found Sam and Chris sitting in the living room. Sam felt something weird when Autumn was in the hospital, so after some thought, he decided to come to check if Autumn was fine. Sam was relieved when he found Autumn was as good as new.

"Autumn, you are back! Come here. The dinner is well prepared," said Chris. Chris greeted Autumn cheerfully as she was setting the tableware with Nancy.

Autumn nodded slightly with a soft smile. "Okay. I will go and wash my hands first," replied Autumn.

When she came out from the washroom, Autumn was surprised to find that Sam was waiting for her outside the door. Confused, Autumn furrowed her brow. "Sam, what are you doing here?"

Autumn misunderstood that Sam was going to talk about something with her, so she looked anxious.

However, Sam did not care about that at all since he was here to see if Autumn was all right. Though they could not be lovers in this lifetime, Sam would like to treat her as his own sister, so he had to protect her from all the time.

"Autumn, are you fine? You are green around the gills." Sam asked her in a low yet caring voice.

Upon hearing this, Autumn nodded her head. "I am fine. There is no other problem with me. I have just recovered from a fever. Don't worry.

Let's go. Chris must be waiting for you, " replied Autumn casually. Then, she turned to leave Sam out in the hall.

However, Sam was still worried about her. "Autumn, you have to tell me if you don't feel good. You have to take good care of yourself, " said Sam worryingly.

"I am fine, Sam. Don't worry about me." Autumn replied with a grin and then went on to add, "Well, Sam, I think you'd better give more consideration for Chris, after all she is your girlfriend now. Have you decided on the date of your wedding? I am really looking forward to it."

When she finished, Sam gazed at Autumn, shocked. 'Doesn't she remember?' Sam wondered.

"What is wrong? Why are you looking at me so surprised?" Autumn asked with great embarrassment

as she found Sam staring at her motionlessly. "Is there anything dirty on my face?"

"Autumn, you really don't remember?" Sam asked, his eye brow furrowed into a frown.

The date of their wedding had been decided on the day when they dined together. And it would be held

at the Day of Vernal Equinox while Sam still remembered that Autumn even said it would be a nice day.
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However, now it seemed that she had forgotten it completely.

"What did I forget?" Confused yet nervous, Autumn asked Sam since she was unable to recall

anything.

"Nothing." Though Sam was unsettled, he kept calm and just smiled, shrugging his shoulder. "Our

wedding date has been fixed. At the Day of Vernal Equinox next year. Don't you forget about it again."

Sam replied calmly.

"The Day of Vernal Equinox? I agree, that is a good day. Congratulations, Sam." Autumn said while she

sat down. "Charles said that he still had work to do, so he won't come back for dinner. Where is

grandpa?"

Handing the chopsticks to Autumn, Chris replied, "Grandpa has gone out to meet his old friends, so he also won't come back for dinner. It is just the three of us today."

During their meal, Sam felt even more worried when he saw Autumn chatting with Chris cheerfully.

Everything seemed to be normal as before while Autumn looked even more optimistic than before.

However, Sam just felt weird and he thought Autumn was different than before though he couldn't tell exactly.

"Sam, enjoy your meal. Well, when shall we pick up the wedding dress?" Sam stared blankly and was absorbed in his own thoughts until Chris patted his hands gently.

Smiling softly, Sam then turned to Chris and responded, "I am available at any time. You decide, Chris.

We can go any time if you want."

Autumn felt good to see that Sam cared so much about Chris. She was pleased and hoped for their continued happiness. Sam, on the other hand, was extremely worried.

After the meal, Autumn excused herself and went back to her room to have a rest, leaving them alone in the living room. Chris gripped Sam's sleeve and said, "I am stuffed. Would you like to take a walk

with me in the yard?"

"Of course, I would love to." Hand in hand, they took a walk in the yard leisurely, enjoying the beautiful moment that belonged only to the two of them. Taking a glance at Sam, Chris felt that he had something serious in his mind. "What's wrong with you, Sam? Something seems to be bothering you.

What happened? Tell me. I am willing to share your worries."

Chapter 345 Premarital Phobia

"Do I?" Sam was extremely worried about Autumn. The moment he realized that he had lost sight of

Chris, he felt very sorry for her. He immediately explained to her, "I have been too busy these days to care about you, and I sincerely apologize for that."

"It doesn't matter." Chris said to Sam with a worried expression on her face, "Sam, I don't know what on earth has got you so worried and anxious. But I want to remind you that after our our wedding ceremonies next year, we will legally be man and wife. With that in mind, I wish we could deal with the dilemma no matter how it may impact us. As you can probably see, Charles and Autumn deeply trust each other, so nothing will do them apart. The foundation of their relationship strongly rests on love and trust. I hope to build the same with you! "

"Are you envious of them?" Sam asked her with curiosity as a frown set on his face.

"Of course, I do!" Chris got happy and excited just at the very mention of Charles and Autumn. "Charles has been my role model even since I can recall. All through childhood he guided me. He is a perfectionist with every work he takes up, irrespective of how small or big it is. So I do admire him quite a lot. And about his marriage, although he married the wrong bride, he married a girl who was the right fit for him, his true soulmate. Autumn is also a very nice person. No matter what difficulty I face in life, she always knows what to say to guide me in the right direction. Besides, they never have a row with each other. I don't know what you think of them, but I really envy them."

Sam couldn't help laughing. "Then, we won't have a row with each other in the future, either, I promise

you that. No matter what happens with me, I will inform you immediately so we can face it together."

"OK. This is a deal." Chris was content and happy with his dedicated answer.

Sam was eager to tell Chris about the Autumn's volatile emotions. But after thinking over it, he decided against it and kept it a secret from Chris. Anyway, this secret would not affect their relationship and it wasn't definite. He didn't want to spread it around because it was her story to tell.

"It is getting dark. I should head back home now, " Sam said. Before he left, he added, "My parents are busy with the wedding preparation. As for things like taking wedding photos and the like, it's all your decision do whatever you think necessary to make yourself happy. You don't need to think about the money, that is my part."

"Then I will make decisions from my own wishes and whims." Chris then added with smile, "Have a safe ride home."

"OK, I will." Chris then went outside to see Sam till his car. Once she returned, she found Autumn was looking at her through the French windows in her room. She waved to her with delight. After she walked into the house, she saw Nancy going upstairs as she carried a glass of milk. Chris asked, "Nancy, is that for Autumn?"

"Ye, Mrs. Lu drinks milk every night before going to bed, " Nancy answered indifferently.

"Then let me take it up to her today." Chris said with a smile, "I am just going to see her."

"How can you do that?" Nancy stopped her in her tracks at once and said, "Miss Lu, this is a servant's duty. I can't let you..."

"What are you talking about?" Chris was taken aback by Nancy's words. She retorted, "You are not a

servant. I was brought up by you since my birth. After all these years, you have been more like a family than most of our blood relatives. Moreover, I just help you take a glass of milk. It's no big deal. Come on! You may take a rest now."

"All right." Nancy was a little hesitant at first, but at last she handed the milk to Chris. Chris took the milk to the Autumn's room. As Chris opened the door, Autumn draw the curtains close. Autumn saw Chris with surprise, so she asked, "Why do you come to send me the milk today?"

"Autumn, I just want to have a word with you. I met Nancy on the way to your room, and she was ready to send you the milk. So I helped her send the milk and asked her to take a rest." As Chris explained, she handed the glass to Autumn.

Both of them then took a seat on the sofa. Chris looked at Autumn with admiration as she said,

"Autumn, you will never know that how much I admire and value you. You inspire me to be a better person everyday. You and my brother have never had a quarrel. You are leading a perfectly content and happy life with my brother. But now, I am starting to get a little scared."

"Afraid of what exactly?" Autumn was a little shocked when she heard Chris' words. Sam was a kind

man. If Chris married him, she would also find her own happiness and source of support.

"I have no idea." Chris thought about it internally. She could hardly make sense of what it was that was terrifying her so very much. Probably, she was worried about the uncertainties of her future life. Chris continued, "Although I have been in a relationship with Sam for a very short time, we have known each other for a longer time. In the past, I always thought it would nice if I became his girlfriend. But now, sooner than later I will be his wife. I am more confused than content in my heart."

Chris smiled bitterly as she added, "I always wonder if I will lead a happy life after I marry him. Even though he is kind to me now, I'm not sure he will not regret this hasty marriage after living with me for a certain time. So what I am essentially afraid of is that my future marriage will end up with unhappiness and resentment."

Autumn finally understood her dilemma. It was a typical premarital jitters that Chris was suffering through. She was getting cold feet and it was only natural because this was probably the most important decision of her life.

"You are thinking too much and stressing over nothing." Autumn smiled at Chris as she comforted her,

"You say you're envious of my marriage with your brother, but on the other side I really envy the way

Sam and you get along. The grass is always greener on the other side."

"Really?" Chris widened her eyes with surprise. "Why are you envious of Sam and me?"

Autumn sighed, and explained, "As you know, I didn't know about your brother from earlier but still our wedding was a mere accident. By chance if you will."

"I know that fact. But the marriage by accident finally leads to a happy ending. It was almost like that accident was written in your destiny." It was the first time Chris heard Autumn complain about her marriage.

Autumn smiled as she said, "Yes, we both do appear quite happy. But you look on the bright side, there is a long enough courtship period for Sam and you to get along with each other. In my opinion, you managed to build up the relationship with Sam when all the conditions were working against you.

Unlike your brother and me, the start between us was confused. But after our wedding, we have no extra time to go shopping. We were caught by life, somehow."

Autumn sighed, "And you know, how excellent your brother is. I am just as ordinary as any other girls. I am now growing tired of fending off the admirers wandering around your brother."

"Autumn, you need not worry about that at all." Chris patted her chest and said to Autumn, "You are the only one in his heart. He won't respond or give any attention to a single one of those admirers. You can give your mind some rest."

Autumn smiled and declined to comment. She said, "You are just suffering from premarital phobia. You are not worried about marriage but your future. You should always be happy by keeping in mind Sam's kindness. You should believe that no matter what direction relationship takes, he will always be nice towards you and take concern in your welfare."

Autumn's words suddenly jolted Chris out of her jitters. Chris smiled at her, and said, "Autumn, every time I talk with you, I feel lighter and always learn something from you. Now I am really happy that my brother married you."

"OK, stop flattering me here." Autumn replied with a smile, "It has gotten way too late now. Please go to bed."

Chapter 346 A Birthday Gift

Over the weekend, a press conference was held in Zhao family's house. Coincidentally, Autumn's birthday was also at the same day. With both these events, both the Zhao family and Lu family were pretty busy and occupied recently.

Autumn got up quite early in the morning, got dressed and did an extensive make-up routine. She put on the clothes bought by Chris especially for the event. In Chris' view, every lady should dress well and enjoy fashion when she was young, otherwise it would be too late for her to spend time on her appearance when she was old.

Autumn instantly laughed as she heard Chris say that. "You got a smart mouth."

"Isn't that true?" Chris stared at Autumn's delicate face, then said, "Autumn, you're so pretty. Why don't you take good care of your skin?"

"I don't consider beauty as a useful and important aspect, somehow." Autumn never thought she could get an edge or receive undue benefits owing to her beauty. When she was a child, her father Bowen always told her that her mother was very beautiful in her early 20s.

Wendy, however, hurt Bowen badly.

Therefore, Bowen always taught her one lesson: Do not care about your appearance, but instead work on your personality and inner beauty. This was the most valuable aspect.

"But beauty is a big advantage." Chris yet again tried to convince Autumn of her perspective, "For

example, if two young girls are seeking jobs in your company, one is good-looking and the other one is rather ugly, who would will you select?"

Chris smiled bitterly, and then continued in a soft tone, "That's the bitter truth. In this society, everyone will choose the former one. And the two girls will diverge to take separate paths in life."

Chris helped Autumn fix up her outfit, gently pushed her in front of the mirror, and said in a cheerful voice, "Well, Autumn, look at yourself in the mirror. Don't you think you look elegant and so much more refined?"

Autumn took a quick and yet casual glance at herself. However, she could not conceal her shock to see that nice clothes had actually made such a magical and transformation effect on her rather humble appearance.

Seeing Autumn's shy smile, Chris knew that she was satisfied with this look and approved of it. She quickly picked up a small box from the dressing table, and then asked Autumn, "You still need some jewel. Autumn, do you like this?"

A diamond necklace was discreetly lying in a small, velvet box. Even though the day was gloomy, this necklace was shiny and bright. Chris wanted Autumn to wear it, but the latter refused the generous

offer.

"No, Chris. This is way too expensive. I cannot accept it." She guessed for certain that this delicate piece of jeweler was much more expensive than the one she had given Chris earlier, unless she's a fool. How could she accept such an extravagant offering?

"Autumn, if you don't accept this, I will be deeply hurt and unhappy. Don't you regard me as your younger sister?" Chris pretended to be angry. "When you gave me a birthday gift, I just happily accepted it with no questions. Now I want to give you one. Why don't you just accept it? It is just a necklace."

"But it's too... expensive and extravagant..." Autumn could not accept it with its high price tag. She was afraid she could never repay her.

"What are you worried about?" Chris smiled in good humor and said, "Autumn, I have to remind you that all the clothes I'm wearing are bought by my brother, who is your husband. All my pocket money is also still given by him. And now I used my pocket money to buy you a gift. It's almost like he has bought you this gift. Why won't you just accept it?"

Autumn could not find another good reason to turn her down or even reply, but she did feel embarrassed. She then mildly said, "Okay, you are right. Please help me wear this beautiful necklace, Chris. And...thank you for your gift."

"That's it." Chris smiled. "Happy birthday, Autumn! Please give me the greatest gift by giving me a niece as soon as possible!"

Autumn wore a white, long dress, with pearls adorned all over it. Her long, silk-like hair was tied behind her head with a embellished hairpin. The pair of red high-heels she wore brought out her milky and long legs. Without the diamond necklace, her collarbone seemed empty. But now with the finishing touch of the glimmering string of diamonds, her collarbone was partly hidden under it. She looked perfect.

"I envy you for the woman you are, Autumn." Autumn's beauty was stunning. Chris felt insecure about herself as she stood beside her.

"Don't tease me..." Autumn's face turned red. She was not used to dressing herself in such a glamorous manner. But once she was all decked up she did feel good about herself.

"Are you ready now?" Charles had been waiting downstairs for quite a while. As the time passed and they were nowhere to be seen, he grew impatient and walked upstairs to urge them.

"Charles, what do you think? Autumn looks astonishingly beautiful."

Chris complacently pushed Autumn forward as she asked him, "It was worth the wait, huh?"

"Is something wrong?" Autumn stood there feeling odd. "You don't like my dress?"

"No, it's quite good, actually." Charles knew that Autumn was beautiful. Even without any make-up, she was still a sight. But this time, he was dumbfounded by her beauty.

Chris grinned as she got out of the room and closed the door. She then discretely shouted to Charles through the closed door, "Charles, don't mess her hair and clothes! It took a lot of efforts to make her look this good."

"You naughty girl." Autumn's face turned red instantly. She asked him again for assurance as his silence was making her feel queasy. "Charles, are you sure I look good?"

"Yes, I am sure." Charles firmly nodded his head, then steadily said, "Let's go. Don't keep them waiting any longer."

Only he knew, how badly he controlled his urge and impulse to put her on the bed and tell her how beautiful she looked with his actions.

When they went downstairs, Sam was adjusting Chris' hair. They were a perfect match for each other.

Upon noticing Autumn going downstairs, Sam came forward and sincerely wished her, "Autumn, happy birthday. I hope you have a good year ahead!"

"Thank you so much." Autumn smiled as she appreciated his blessing.

"I didn't know what you're interested in, so chose this for you. I hope you will like it. Here, do open it."

Sam handed her a box. After opening it, Autumn was beyond stunned. She never imaged he would give her that.

"How did you have this?"

An electronic organ was neatly packed inside the box; Bowen used to teach her to play it years ago.

Even though the electronic organ had been used for a long time, Autumn still cherished it very much.

All the keys were preserved well. It had been lost when Autumn moved out from her original home. She even cried several times thinking of the loss of this electronic organ. Its sudden appearance made

Autumn feel overwhelmed with emotions.

Chapter 347 A Press Conference (Part One)

On the fateful and joyous day, Autumn returned to her origin, the Zhao family, and her father's

electronic organ which had been lost for years was gifted to her. She was grateful as she felt the great

power of fate in works.

"I hope you like it, " Sam said with hopeful eyes. Looking at Autumn's bright and excited face, he felt that it was worth the trouble to find the electronic organ. "I heard you lost this electronic organ when you moved. I wonder if it happened to be picked up by someone nearby. Then I learned that a trash collector had found it. He had a daughter who wanted to learn the piano, so he gave it to her. After I explained the situation to him, I traded him a piano for the electronic organ. The damage has been repaired. A surprise, isn't it?"

"Yes, this really is a big surprise. I cannot even begin to express how much this means to me. Thank you so very much, Sam, " Autumn replied dripping with emotions as she held the electronic organ tightly in a grateful embrace. No birthday present could be better for her than this.

Gary also prepared a birthday gift for Autumn, which was a box of tea sets. He knew that Autumn was a demure girl, who liked making and tasting tea quietly instead of shopping for other extravagant luxuries that tempted other girls.

Autumn took the gift and expressed her gratitude. Then all eyes were affixed on Charles. "Charles, it's

your wife's birthday. All of us have given our presents. What have you gotten her?" Chris asked impatiently as her curiosity was peaking.

"Come on, give me your present, " Autumn demanded with a hopeful look.

Charles glanced at Autumn, and then at Sam with reproachful eyes. "Well, Sam, you gave her your thoughtful present first, and now no matter what gift I give her, it will not be as good as yours, " he expressed his concern in all honesty.

"That is not necessary, Charles, " Chris assured him, "you're the most special man in Autumn's heart, so don't worry. I'm sure she will appreciate and cherish whatever you give her."

Charles let out a dry cough, as he turned to Autumn and lovingly said, "Autumn, I know you've always wanted to travel. But for various reasons, our plans to travel ever since we got married have never materialized, so my birthday gift to you is... "

He paused as he drew out two plane tickets from his pocket, and continued, "After much deliberation over the perfect destination, I got us two tickets to Saipan next week." novelbin

"This is a wonderful gift." Even though Autumn did not appear very excited, she was quite elated in her heart. Charles' gift was just what she wished for in her heart. She was overwhelmed by the love she

received from everyone present in the room.

What was matter more, that the value of a gift, was the thought and the love from the giver.

Before his last business trip to Europe, Charles promised that he would take Autumn out for a trip. The

gift indicated that he remembered this promise and that he was willing to go the extra mile to spend

time with her and make her feel special. She was quite content with this thought.

"Thank you so very much, Charles, " Autumn sincerely thanked him for his thoughtful gesture.

"You are welcome, you silly girl." Charles gave her a indulgent smile and reminded her, "Your birthday

party is about to begin. Let's hurry to the hotel now." Then they all drove to the party.

Once they reached the hotel, the birthday party was just about to begin. While Arthur was preparing the

party, Autumn told him not to make a big and grand deal out of it, but to simply conduct a dinner with

the family and conclude with telling journalists about her identity. However, when she arrived at the

scene, she found that Arthur did not take her advice into account at all.

But Autumn quite understood his excitement and reasons. After all, he only had one granddaughter,

and this was the first time he was celebrating her birthday. It was only in his nature that he would hold

the most grand part he possibly could.

As a result, the party was coming alive as quite a happy affair with more and more people joining in the event.

Hale and hearty, Arthur greeted guests at the door and was surrounded by a group of journalists.

"Doctor Zhao, could you please tell us why you are hosting Mrs. Lu's birthday party and what is the relationship between both of you?"

"Yes, Doctor Zhao, please answer the questions." These journalists relentlessly questioned him, leaving Arthur pretty disgusted and distressed.

Impatient, he told them, "Dear friends from the press, I know you have many questions for me to answer. But as I made clear earlier, I will attend to all these questions later. I will appreciate it if you could ask these questions at that time. I'm very busy now, sorry."

Arthur then saw Autumn entering. He hurried to meet her. "Autumn, you're finally here."

"Grandpa." Autumn smiled.

He then led her and others into the heart of the party as he said, "All the esteemed guests have still not arrived. You take a break and enjoy the party. I will join you after I've finished attending all the guests."

"Okay, thank you so very much, grandpa." As soon as they entered deeper into the hall, Autumn

spotted Amy and Emily sitting on the sofa in the corner. She immediately went to them, and called out,

"Grandmas!"

Amy and Emily had also seen her, and returning the enthusiastic greeting they too asked her to sit by

them to chat.

Watching the party take on such a big scale, Autumn couldn't help grumbling, "Grandma, I told grandpa

not to make the party so grand, why is it so... "

In her opinion, it was only a birthday party and there was no need to make it so extravagant.

"This is the first birthday party we have held for you. It had to be grand, " Amy smiled as she responded

humbly. "You'll have to get used to such big parties and celebrations."

Autumn went silent. 'So my birthday parties will be grander and bigger in the future, ' she thought

bitterly, but she did not speak it out.

As she pondered what to say, she caught a glimpse of a familiar figure appear at the door.

'Rachel? What's she doing here?'

Rachel dressed in a black low-cut dress which accentuated her perfect figure, took Edward's arm and walked around the hall with a wide smile on her face. Once she saw Autumn, she let out a sneer, before she turned her head and said something to Edward. As Edward gave her a nod, she went to Autumn. "Hello, Autumn, long time no see, " she greeted.

Autumn cast a sidelong glance at her, and answered coldly, "Hello, Rachel."

"I didn't know that today was your birthday not until yesterday, so I didn't get a chance to buy you a present. Here's a bracelet. I hope you like it. Happy birthday!" Rachel said and handed her a beautifully wrapped box. This birthday gift was of great value, but everyone knew that Rachel was the spokesperson of the bracelet's brand. And there was high chance it was given to her by the advertiser. Obviously, she was annoying Autumn on purpose by doing so.

Autumn stared at the present and hesitated to take it. "Don't you like it?" Rachel asked with a sly smile in her eyes. Autumn knew that she was deliberately trying to embarrass her in full view of the public. If she did not accept the gift, people would say she was arrogant and rude, but she was angry with Rachel and did not want to accept the gift.

"Well, I guess you don't like this present. I'll send you another gift in a few days then." Before Autumn

could say anything, Rachel sneered and was about to take the gift back when Autumn caught it.

"You're absolutely wrong." Autumn smiled and said, "How could I not like your generous gift? But this bracelet isn't worth as much as your autograph. Why don't you sign the box later, Rachel?"

Chapter 348 A Press Conference (Part Two)

Upon hearing Autumn's quick witted response, Rachel was stunned. "Well... Okay, if that is what you want, " Rachel replied, after a long pause, with a sense of embarrassment in her tone.

Autumn's response was smart. Not only did she refuse Rachel's gift in a polite manner but also showcased how sensible and quick on her feet she was.

"I hope that Miss Bai, you will enjoy yourself tonight. Thank you again for the considerate gift and wishes, " Autumn replied with a courteous smile as she stood up and walked away, leaving Rachel shocked as to how she turned the situation around.

Being tired of dealing with Rachel and her never ending drama, she ended their conversation immediately on a pleasant note and went towards the lady's room.

As she walked out of the restroom, she knitted her brows at the very sight of Roger who was standing at the door. Roger stared at Autumn with a rather mischievous smile.

'What is he doing here? Who invited him to this party?' Autumn's mind was overflowing with questions and concerns.

"Surprise!" Roger exclaimed with a grin and made a prominent entrance. "You must be curious as to what I am doing here. I am a star and I have some connections in this circle. It's not difficult to get invited to your birthday, " he explained.

"Are you?" Autumn sneered, with an intention of leaving.

"Hold on there, what is the hurry?" Roger said as he quickly grabbed Autumn's hand. "I went through great lengths to meet you here. I have something to say to you. Please at least hear me out."

"There is no need for that. I think that I've already made myself clear to you on several occasions, "

Autumn said as she declined his request. "Whatever your intentions are, I advise you to give up, " she added in a stern and resolute tone.

"I honestly made all this effort to come here to just apologize to you, " Roger said in a rather sincere tone. He realized that Autumn was a far more difficult woman than Rachel to convince. Both temptation and threats didn't seem to work on her.

"You have apologized. Can I leave now?" Autumn asked impatiently. "If you only came here to make an apology, then well, you have done that and for all you care I forgive you."

Roger was shocked at her immediate dismissal. The whole apology story was just a front to approach Autumn. In fact he expected Autumn to refuse his apology. If she had, he would have an excuse to keep coming back to her. But now contrary to what he thought, Autumn forgave him. 'This... isn't a part of my plan, ' he thought bitterly, not knowing what to do next.

"I hope everything is clear now! I am saying it yet again I forgive you, " Autumn raised her voice to make herself clear and leave no room for doubts. "My only wish is that you leave my party now and I never have to see you again. I don't want to have anything to do with you or be associated with you in any way possible be it big or small. If you can fulfill this wish, I will not only forgive you, but thank you with all my heart, " she said with total disregard for his feelings.

"Judging by your tone and expressions, I know that you are still angry with me, " Roger tried to manipulate her yet again. "You just needed an excuse to banish me away from your life."

"Thank god then you understand my sentiments. You're not a fool, " Autumn responded sarcastically in yet another attempt to push him away. "Roger, I will not repeat myself again. I don't blame you and I

have moved on. All I want now is for you to stay out of my life. I hope that is clear to you..."

"Why do you detest me so much? What did I do to deserve such hatred?" Roger asked with a rather frustrated expression. He thought that he was losing irrespective of how hard he tried, Autumn kept slamming his attempts down and pushed him away.

"You are thinking too much, " Autumn said calmly. "We are strangers and it should remain that way.

There is no need to move further from mere acquaintances.

Do you think that we have other options besides being strangers?" Autumn mocked his insincerity.

"Of course, " Roger responded, looking at Autumn with expectation and hopes to flip the situation.

"Perhaps we can be friends."

"Sorry, I don't think that is possible, " Autumn refused bluntly without considering his offer. "If you don't leave now, I will call security guards, " she threatened as she grew impatient.

"Besides, my husband is here. If he sees you here, he will not spare you easily. You know what he is capable of doing..."

"Let's wait and watch. I will let you come to me obediently, " Roger snorted, as he pursed his lips shut.

Autumn thought he was joking. She didn't know how Roger sneaked an invite to the party. 'Who brought him here?' she wondered.

After much convincing, Roger finally left the party against his will. His appearance didn't destroy Autumn's pleasant mood.

Isla and Aron had come to the party together. They found Autumn and wished her. Aron then walked to a corner with a stressed look and began making phone calls.

Every family had its own troubles to deal with. So Autumn didn't ask him what was happening.

As the birthday celebration began, the host began his speech. Autumn discovered that Arthur had invited almost all of the powerful and rich figures in Y City including celebrities and politicians.

The whole event seemed unreal to Autumn as she met and greeted those who only showed up on TV and received wishes from them.

Rachel glared at Autumn with her eyes full of jealousy and hatred. She frowned as she failed to find Wendy or even Roger after looking around for them multiple times.

She walked to a quiet corner and called up Roger. "Where are you now? Why can't I find you at the party?"

I am warning you, I can help you with your career or destroy your future in the entertainment business.

Don't forget what you promised me. If you don't fulfill your promise, I will have no mercy while ruining your life, " she asked with bubbling anger. "I finally managed to get you to the party, but you disappeared. What do you mean?"

Roger was hiding in one corner of the party. "Rachel, of course I remember what I promised. I just ran into some problem with my initial plan, " he giggled nervously as he tried to battle her questions.

"What happened?" Rachel asked coldly to understand how he failed.

"Long story. Can we meet now?" Roger requested optimistically. Since everyone present had all gathered in the hall, they decided to meet at the entrance of bathroom.

Once Rachel hung up, Edward walked up to her. "Who were you talking to? Why do you look so angry?" he asked curiously.

"Nothing important. It was no one of significance, " Rachel replied nervously as she was taken aback.

"My assistant is so lame. She cannot handle one task without bothering me... Well, I need to go to the lady's room, " she complained, once she composed herself.

"I see, " Edward replied as he doubted her fabricated response. He fixed his eyes on Rachel's back as she walked away, thinking that she was certainly hiding something and was probably trying to concoct some other devious plan.

Just as he was about to follow her, Chris walked up to him and asked, "Dad, what brought you here tonight?"

Chapter 349 A Press Conference (Part Three)

"Chris." Seeing Chris come closer, Edward suddenly became kind. He gently held Chris' hand and let her introduce Sam to him. "Dad, this is Sam, my boyfriend. You have met him before."

"Hello sir, how are you?" Sam politely said to Edward. Though his welcome was not very enthusiastic, it's not an indifferent one either.

"Hello." As the three people were chatting, Rachel also went near the restroom. After waiting by the door for a while, a big hand quietly reached out from the men's room, tightly grabbed her arm and snatched her inside. She screamed out. When she saw who it was, she then breathed deeply to calm down. "What are you doing?!

Are you crazy, pulling me inside the men's room?!"

"I missed you so much." Rachel once enjoyed his touch on her body. She missed that too. But she

calmed down and immediately pulled him to a corner when she realized that she was inside the men's

room. The task she had set for Roger remained unfinished. She pounded on his chest and asked,

"Why did you do that to me? You are mad."

Then she impatiently fixed her clothes, pretended to be cold, and asked him, "Have you completed

your task? What's the delay? Are you having trouble?"

"Rachel, my dear baby." The wannabe actor rubbed her soft hand. "You are my only love in this life

time. How can I seduce a woman I don't love? I feel guilty doing that."

Rachel sneered, feeling that he was just playing her. "What garbage is this! You have a job to do.

Remember, it is I who let you do this. Do it! Once it is done, I'll satisfy all your needs. I promise you."

"Really?" Roger raised his eyebrow and looked at Rachel. "What if...

I want you to divorce your ancient husband and marry me?"

The veteran actress was stunned. It was hard to believe that an attractive young actor like Roger could

actually fall in love with her.

She frowned, then thought that as long as he was useful to her, it's better to have him dangling for now.

Smiling sincerely, she kissed him on his cheek. "If you do what we agreed on, I will not only marry you.

I will have your baby."

"Okay, great! You have promised me! Remember to keep it!" Shallow newbie actors were so easy to

control. Holding her waist, he whispered in her ear, "You will love what I'm going to do. It will be perfect.

But...

Not today."

"Why not?!" Rachel pushed him away in anger. To seduce Autumn was the only reason she let him

come here.

Why did he not say this when she called him?

"Listen to me..." Roger was unfazed and winked at Rachel, who was seething mad. "Just think. Today

is her birthday, and all people are focused on her. If I seduce her here, everyone around her will

immediately suspect something. If I mess this up, I might not get another chance.

Don't worry, honey. I intend to keep my word. Recently, I have been going to her office every day. She

won't admit it but she now has a good impression of me. I will just need a bit more time

To do it."

"Are you serious?" Rachel looked at Roger with hesitation.

In order to show his confidence, Roger patted his chest, then smiled. "Please, you can rest assured, I will successfully handle this."

Rachel had to admit that he was reasonable this time. It's impossible to do that today. Also, she had someone else working for her.

Roger hugged her tightly and buried his face on her breast when she was tidying her clothes and fixing her make-up. He tried to take more advantage of her but then he gave up. "Honey, I have to go. I can't let other people see us. Okay?"

"Don't forget what you have promised me." The young actor winked then left.

Afterwards, Rachel finished fixing her make-up. She went back to the banquet hall and saw Edward chatting with Chris. She hated what she saw. It instantly made her angry.

She just wanted to teach Autumn a lesson. However, she did not expect, that a few threats were all around her. She had to watch herself at every moment. She gathered her composure and went near them, with a visibly fake smile, then wrapped her arms around Edward's. "What are we happily talking

about here?"

"Nothing." Chris said coldly as she glared at Rachel, then turned to Edward and lovingly said to her

father, "Dad, I'll be back with Sam soon. If you have spare time, remember to call me."

"Okay, okay, sweetie." Edward laughed, as if he heard something sprinkled with sugar dust. However,

Rachel's face turned red with fury but no one noticed her.

After Chris left, she took her husband's hand and asked, "Seriously, what were you talking about? Why

did you all fall silent when I came?"

She was afraid that Chris came to take her share of Edward's possessions. All that talk with Roger in

the bathroom made her think that it might actually be the time for her to have a baby. But she was not

pregnant. And that's a problem.

Edward caught a glimpse of Rachel's worried face, "What are you worrying about? I just talked about

her recent condition. Why you are so anxious whenever I talk to my own daughter?" the senior said,

sounding a bit irritated.

"It's not because of that...I..." Rachel looked at Edward with vulnerable eyes. "My dear, what happened

to you recently?

Why do you treat me like this?"

Rachel believed that Chris was being a hindrance that needed to be hurdled in her relationship with Edward. He used to be at her feet, satisfying any demand she raised. But at present, he tended to criticize her every time he felt impatient. And that usually happened when Chris was around.

Rachel felt insulted and said to Edward with a trembling voice, "I just wanted to know what you were talking about. What was wrong with that? I'm her stepmother. You are married to me. Don't you want me to care about her?"

Rachel sounded more and more depressed, "If you didn't want me to say all these, then why did you marry me? It seems that you are happy just having a daughter."

"Oh, you..." After hearing what his wife had to say, Edward's heart softened. It was true that he had gotten too aggressive. He reached out his hand and held Rachel's to comfort her, "I am so sorry my dear wife. I never meant to hurt you. You know that Chris cannot accept you yet. Just give her more time, please."

Rachel stood angrily. "I'm giving her time! The question is not about that! Actually it is about you two

against me! Tomorrow I'll pack all my belongings and leave your house to give you two some space!"

"Calm down, dear. Don't act like a child." The disadvantages of having a much younger wife had

become apparent. Once she's unhappy, he would need to comfort her without any excuse, or else she

would cry out.

"Don't cry please. Now many people here know you. And there are cameras everywhere. It's not proper

to cry here." Edward almost used all jokes he knew to let Rachel smile through her tears.

Rachel seized this opportunity to raise her demands to Edward. "Dear, now that I'm your wife, you

shouldn't lie to me, remember?"

"Okay, okay, I know. I'll tell you everything..." Edward comforted Rachel immediately to pacify his

hysterical wife.

Meanwhile, Arthur got on the stage, held the microphone given by the host. After looking around the

whole stage, he finally found Autumn and focused on her. A proud smile appeared on his face.

Chapter 350 A Press Conference (Part Four)

"All distinguished guests..." Arthur cleared his throat and said to everyone in the audience. "I believe

everyone is here today to give our beloved Autumn a wonderful birthday celebration. And how can a

birthday be complete without a cake?"

Meanwhile, a hotel staff was wheeling in a huge cake with life sized and vivid figures of Autumn from ages one to three years on one end and her present appearance on the other end. There was some space in the middle that were left out intentionally to show the gap of years in between.

The birthday girl was overcome with mixed feeling at the sight of her birthday cake.

She recalled her impoverished family during her younger days when she could not take pictures at will with a phone camera, and her father would take her to a photo studio instead. However Bowen later plunged into illness with insufficient money to support her family. As a result, Autumn's long span of growth did not have any single picture to show for it.

Autumn became uncontrollably emotional over her sad childhood at the sight of the birthday cake.

"Be calm, be happy and be free of sadness." Charles tried his best to console and soothe her with comforting words, "Today is your birthday. You should be happy rather than sad."

Autumn quickly gathered herself and controlled her emotions.

Amy stood beside Arthur and waved to Autumn, "My beloved granddaughter, come here. It is time to cut the birthday cake."

Meanwhile, those present began to suspect the unusual closeness that they had — a little too close, sharing each other's happiness and sadness.

"Autumn, please forgive my absence from your childhood... And I could not figure out what you looked like then." Amy spoke through her sobs, feeling guilty over Autumn's troubled childhood.

"Now I am living in peace and comfort. Let us not dwell in the past." Autumn replied gently and calmly.

Meanwhile, Arthur handed the knife over to Autumn and urged her, "Please do the honor of cutting the cake."

Autumn gave the biggest share to Arthur and Amy in reverence. "My grandparents, please eat first."

"My good granddaughter." Amy could not control her tears.

Then, Amy was assisted off the platform and Emily tried to soothe her. "Amy, since Autumn has reunited with you, it is worth celebrating!"

"I consider it a blessing to win back my granddaughter!" Amy was too emotional over her joyful reunion mixed with pity over Autumn.

Autumn stood beside Emily and Amy, while Arthur made an official statement after Amy contained her

emotion. "Besides the celebration of Autumn's birthday, I have an important thing to proudly announce in this press conference."

Everyone present were awaiting earnestly Arthur's statement.

Arthur looked at his granddaughter, then addressed the audience, "Let it be known to all our friends, family, partners and acquaintances, that this beautiful lady here beside me, who goes by the name, Autumn, is my verifiable granddaughter. From now on, she bears my surname, Zhao, to solemnize the relationship."

"What a piece of shocking news!" The guests were astounded. But Arthur knew beforehand the collective disbelief and doubt that would come after his announcement. He did not bother to stop the sensation.

"What is the truth to Autumn's identity? Autumn, as we know, is the daughter of Wendy Ye!"

"The fact that Autumn edged her way into the Lu Family on behalf of Yvonne was already a sensation.

We never expected something like this would follow."

"Autumn was thought to be an unsuitable wife to Charles. Now it is surprising to learn that she actually comes from a family of scholars and merchants enough to rival the Lu family."

"Autumn never fails to surprise us."

Arthur continued when the noise had died down. "Despite the apparent disbelief and doubt among you all, I can make a guarantee that Autumn is my granddaughter. I am overcome with guilt for being absent from her life when she needed family care badly."

Arthur sighed and continued, "I consider it a blessing to reunite with her and make up for all the lost years. You are kindly requested to favor her with the same support and trust that you have always given the Zhao family."

Rachel was nearly eaten up by her jealousy at the realization of Autumn's status being exponentially elevated.

She was no longer comparable to Autumn now.

"Doctor Zhao, as far as I am concerned, your son died young. This so-called 'granddaughter' gives rise to our prevailing doubts. Are we missing something?" Someone challenged Arthur with a question.

"My son, Bowen, died an untimely death. He had a daughter, this lady here, " Arthur gestured to

Autumn and continued, "who was brought up by a maidservant of my family. Before that, Bowen eloped

with a faithless woman. Luck had it that the maidservant, Emily, followed them to take care of Autumn even after my son had passed away. My family.... owes much to Emily." Arthur, on behalf of the whole family, remained grateful to Emily for raising Autumn up to make their reunion possible.

"Autumn is a good girl. Now I make her true identity known to all of you in hopes of sharing my happiness to have won back my granddaughter." The Zhao family patriarch spoke with laughter and all smiles.

"Doctor Zhao, what about Autumn's mother? She should have also come to celebrate Autumn's birthday. Moreover, have you gotten Wendy Ye's approval in giving Miss Ye your surname?" A reporter brought forth another issue.

Sensing Arthur's inability to respond to this question, Autumn strode on toward the platform and addressed the reporter, "I am old and mature enough to make my own decision and bear the resulting consequence. My late father's surname was Zhao and it is justifiable for me to adopt his surname."

Autumn continued after a pause, "My late father is my most revered man."

"In that case, you should not have adopted your mother's surname!"

"At that time, I was powerless to make this decision by myself." Autumn replied with great composure.

"Moreover, are you intent on severing the blood relation between you and your mother, as you keep

this important matter a secret to her?" The reporter bombarded Autumn with a more strategic question.

Autumn was about to defend herself, when the door was dramatically burst open. Naturally, everyone's

attention was drawn toward the large door.