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The Reluctant Bride Book II

Table of Contents

- 1. [Overview](#)
- 2. [One](#)
- 3. [Two](#)
- 4. [part 1](#)
- 5. [part 2](#)
- 6. [Four](#)
- 7. [Five](#)
- 8. [part 1](#)
- 9. [part 2](#)
- 10. [Seven](#)
- 11. [Eight](#)
- 12. [Nine](#)
- 13. [Ten](#)
- 14. [Eleven](#)
- 15. [Twelve](#)
- 16. [Thirteen](#)
- 17. [Fourteen](#)
- 18. [Fifteen](#)
- 19. [Sixteen](#)
- 20. [Seventeen](#)
- 21. [Eighteen](#)
- 22. [Nineteen](#)
- 23. [Twenty](#)
- 24. [Twenty-One](#)
- 25. [Twenty-Two](#)
- 26. [Twenty-Three](#)
- 27. [Twenty-Four](#)

28. [Twenty-Five](#)
29. [Twenty-Six](#)
30. [Twenty-Seven](#)
31. [part 1](#)
32. [part 2](#)
33. [part 1](#)
34. [part 2](#)
35. [Thirty & Thirty-One](#)
36. [Thirty-Two](#)
37. [Thirty-Three](#)
38. [Thirty-Four](#)
39. [Thirty-Five & Thirty-Six](#)
40. [Thirty-Seven](#)
41. [Thirty-Eight](#)
42. [Thirty-Nine](#)
43. [Forty](#)
44. [Forty-One](#)
45. [Forty-Two](#)
46. [Forty-Three](#)
47. [Forty-Four](#)
48. [Forty-Five](#)
49. [Forty-Six](#)
50. [Forty-Seven](#)
51. [Forty-Eight](#)
52. [Forty-Nine & Fifty](#)
53. [Fifty-One](#)
54. [Fifty-Two](#)
55. [Fifty-Three](#)
56. [Fifty-Four](#)
57. [Fifty-Five](#)
58. [Fifty-Six](#)
59. [Fifty-Seven](#)
60. [Fifty-Eight](#)
61. [Fifty-Nine](#)

62. [Sixty](#)
63. [Sixty-One](#)
64. [Sixty-Two](#)
65. [Sixty-Three](#)
66. [Sixty-Four](#)
67. [Sixty-Five](#)
68. [Sixty-Six](#)
69. [Sixty-Seven](#)
70. [Sixty-Eight](#)
71. [Sixty-Nine](#)
72. [Seventy](#)
73. [Seventy-One](#)
74. [Seventy-Two](#)
75. [Seventy-Three](#)
76. [Seventy-Four](#)
77. [Seventy-Five](#)
78. [Seventy-Six](#)
79. [Seventy-Seven](#)
80. [Seventy-Eight](#)
81. [Seventy-Nine](#)
82. [Eighty](#)
83. [Eighty-One](#)
84. [Eighty-Two](#)
85. [Eighty-Three](#)
86. [Eighty-Four](#)
87. [Eighty-Five](#)
88. [Eighty-Six](#)
89. [Eighty-Seven](#)
90. [Eighty-Eight](#)
91. [Eighty-Nine](#)
92. [Ninety](#)
93. [Ninety-One](#)
94. [Ninety-Two](#)
95. [Ninety-Three](#)

96. [Ninety-Four](#)
97. [Ninety-Five](#)
98. [Ninety-Six](#)
99. [Ninety-Seven](#)
00. [Ninety-Eight](#)
01. [Ninety-Nine](#)
02. [One Hundred](#)
03. [101](#)
04. [102](#)
05. [103](#)
06. [104](#)
07. [105](#)
08. [106](#)
09. [107 – 108 – 109 – 110](#)
10. [111](#)
11. [112](#)
12. [113](#)
13. [114 -115](#)
14. [116](#)
15. [117](#)
16. [118](#)
17. [119](#)
18. [120](#)
19. [121](#)
20. [122](#)
21. [123](#)
22. [124](#)
23. [125](#)
24. [126](#)
25. [127](#)
26. [128](#)
27. [129](#)
28. [130](#)
29. [131](#)

- 30. [132](#)
- 31. [133](#)
- 32. [134](#)
- 33. [135](#)
- 34. [136](#)
- 35. [137](#)
- 36. [138](#)
- 37. [139](#)
- 38. [140](#)
- 39. [141](#)
- 40. [142](#)
- 41. [143](#)
- 42. [144](#)
- 43. [145](#)
- 44. [146](#)
- 45. [147](#)
- 46. [148](#)
- 47. [149](#)
- 48. [150](#)
- 49. [151](#)
- 50. [152](#)
- 51. [153](#)
- 52. [154](#)
- 53. [155](#)
- 54. [156 – 157](#)
- 55. [158](#)
- 56. [159](#)
- 57. [160](#)
- 58. [161 – 162 END](#)

Overview



Overview

Genre – Modern Romance, Melodrama, Angst Book I – 326 chapters

Book II – 162 chapters

Total Number of Chapters – 488 chapters Approximate Total Word Count – 500,000 words Approximate Translation Completion Period – 18 months to 24 months Notice

Spam

Recently there have been an increase of spamming in the blog.

It takes a long time sorting through comment posting in spam box to check for legitimate comment posting, and deleting spam.

Examples of Spam:

- Double comment posting
- Comment posting by same user under multiple accounts – Unrelated links
- Random comment posting just to post a spoiler of an important plot twist As

a result, for The Reluctant Bride Book I & Book II translation posts: Please...

- Do not spam

- Do not link to The Reluctant Bride Book I & Book II translation before status is **complete** on the index page.

e.g. Husband Be A Gentlemen (Status – Complete) Spam noticeably increased after past chapter posting updates were linked individually by other blogs.

- Do not repost text from blog. It's a not for profit blog. The purpose of blog is to share a variety of c-novels with non-Chinese readers.

The Reluctant Bride Book II

Readers who liked reading BGWWW's stories are likely to enjoy reading Zen Xin Yue's stories.

Readers who don't like the modern romance *melodrama* angst genres, give the Reluctant Bride Book I & Book II stories a miss, and spend time reading your favorite genres. It's not possible for a story to cater for everyone's personal taste.

The Reluctant Bride Book I & Book II are independent stories of each other.

The reason The Reluctant Bride Book II will be translated before The Reluctant Bride Book I is because Book I's storyline is similar to BWAGS' storyline.

I was looking for an ancient series to translate alongside BWAGS for variety. But most untranslated ancient series have time travelling elements. I love watching ancient series, but it takes a long time to translate historic components. Since I couldn't find a non-time travelling untranslated ancient series that's as good as HBAG, The Reluctant Bride Book II is next on my wish list of c-novels to translate.

Female Lead – Qiao Tan Yuan

Male Lead – Gu Jiao Wu

Synopsis:

QTY secretly paid GJW's ex-girlfriend to leave GJW. GJW's family and QTY's family are close, and arranged GJW to marry QTY.

During GJW and QTY's marriage they have a baby after GJW's drugged by an enemy. QTY lies to GJW she aborted their baby, and agrees to divorce him.

After a series of events, GJW and QTY are trapped together in an elevator, and GJW unknowingly helps QTY give birth to their baby. GJW demands a DNA test and finds out the truth.

GJW and QTY make a compromise, and agrees to live together to raise their baby. They bond as a family. At first GJW wants to remarry QTY for the sake of their baby, but GJW slowly falls in love with QTY.

Many misunderstandings (hence the melodrama / angst warning) happen between GJW and QTY. One of the main misunderstandings is GJW's ex-girlfriend's lookalike appears, and exposes QTY's secret about paying off GJW's ex-girlfriend. Afterward QTY takes custody of their child and cancel their plan to remarry.

Miscellaneous

BWAGS readers, upcoming postings will be either TRB bk II or BWAGS chapter postings.

DGSTE and RFF readers, check for chapter updates after xmas.

Related

One



Chapter One

Note:

Chapter One of TRB Book II is Side Story One of the OTP from TRB Book I.

Reminder:

- Please do not copy text from the blog.
- Please do not link to The Reluctant Bride Book I and Book II before translation status is complete.
- Please do not spam TRB Book I and Book II. Less spamming means more available time to translate and post chapters.
- Please read [TRB Book II overview](#) before reading TRB Book II.

TRB Book I OTP:

Male Lead – Gu Jiao Wen

Female Lead – Tan Pan Ting

TRB Book II OTP:

Male Lead – Gu Jiao Wu

Female Lead – Qiao Tan Yuan

Legend of Leading Chapter Pictures:

- Confectionary = sweet chapter
- Musical Instruments = angst chapter
- Superheroes = action chapter

The Reluctant Bride Book II – Chapter One

In the morning, Tan Pan Ting looked at herself in the mirror.

Tan Pan Ting slowly spun around. Her slim waist was replaced by plumpness and her legs were swollen. Her cheeks were rounder and her slender arms were meatier.

Tan Pan Ting frowned, she was frustrated about her body. Why was she fatter only after a few days?

Tan Pan Ting blamed Gu Jiao Wen. Since she was pregnant, every day he forced her to eat everything nutritious. He fed her like she was a pig. As a consequence, even though she was six months pregnant, she looked like she was eight months pregnant.

The last visit to the hospital, the doctor told Tan Pan Ting that her stomach was too big and suggested she cut back a little on food portions. It was the same thing she told Gu Jiao Wen. She wanted to have a smooth natural delivery. If their baby was too big, it would be a painful delivery. Gu Jiao Wen conceded and stopped forcing her to take additional vitamins. But just because Gu Jiao Wen stopped feeding her like a pig, it didn't mean other people stopped feeding her.

After Gu Jiao Wen seek Chen Ting Yu to explain, Chen Ting Yu felt guilty toward Tan Pan Ting, and asked aunty Zhang to make daily nutritious meals for Tan Pan Ting.

Tan Pan Ting could hold her chest high and directly tell Gu Jiao Wen when she didn't want to eat. But she couldn't say no to Chen Ting Yu. If Chen Ting Yu didn't see her eat, Chen Ting Yu's face would turn into a worrywart and ask, 'Pan Ting, are you still angry at me?'

The look in Chen Ting Yu's eyes made Tan Pan Ting helpless, she could only obediently eat. It would be strange if she wasn't fatter after eating and drinking

like a pig.

‘Ah...’ Tan Pan Ting yelled.

Tan Pan Ting hated being that fat and wondered if after labour she would stay that fat. If she couldn’t get her pre-pregnancy body back, she truly could vomit to death.

‘Pan Ting, what’s wrong?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked.

Gu Jiao Wen heard Tan Pan Ting’s scream before stepping into the bedroom. After he entered the room, his wife was standing in front of the bed, and looking at him resentfully. He quickly helped her sit on the bed, assessed her from top to bottom.

‘What’s wrong?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked. ‘Do you feel uncomfortable somewhere?’

‘Isn’t this your fault?’ Tan Pan Ting asked.

Tan Pan Ting pouted, scoffed coldly and looked in a different direction to ignore him.

‘What did I do?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked confusedly.

Lately Gu Jiao Wen was busy at work, but he still came home to his wife after work.

‘What do you think?’ Tan Pan Ting asked without looking at Gu Jiao Wen.

‘Is it because lately I’ve been busier at work?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked.

Gu Jiao Wen was at the beginning stage of establishing a company, and it was his duty to oversee that everything was implemented properly as planned.

‘After this busy work period, I promise I’ll take you on a holiday,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

Tan Pan Ting shook her head and glared at Gu Jiao Wen. ‘After this busy work period, I would have given birth. How could I go on a holiday?’

‘Aren’t you six months pregnant?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked.

Gu Jiao Wen thought if they go on a short holiday, it wouldn’t be problematic.

‘Six months?’ Tan Pan Ting asked and pointed at her stomach. ‘Have you seen

another pregnant woman's stomach that's this big? Have you seen another six month pregnant woman that's fat as me?'

Fat? Gu Jiao Wen finally understood the root problem. He smiled helplessly, sat on the bed, held Tan Pan Ting's small hand.

'You're pregnant,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'It's normal for your stomach to be this big. Doesn't it prove our baby is developing well?'

Tan Pan Ting scoffed, Gu Jiao Wen only cared about the baby. 'Of course the baby is healthy. But I've turned into a fat pig.'

'Nonsense,' Gu Jiao Wen said sternly.

Gu Jiao Wen understood why people say a pregnant woman's mood swings changed four seasons in a day. He felt lucky it was the first time he got Tan Pan Ting pregnant. He would be crazy if he got her pregnant again.

'Have you seen a pig as beautiful as you?' Gu Jiao Wen asked. 'Right now, you're the most beautiful. From top to bottom you exude an appealing maternal glow.'

'What appeal?' Tan Pan Ting asked. 'I can only see I'm pregnant. I hate being this fat. No wonder you don't care about me.'

'Of course I care about you,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'Every day, you're the first person I see after work.'

Tan Pan Ting didn't want to admit what Gu Jiao Wen said was true. 'Lately you don't want to sleep with me. It's because I look like this that you don't love me anymore.'

'I'm innocent,' Gu Jian Wen said. 'Little Mistress, right now you're pregnant. If I touch you, you would protest and say I'll affect our baby. Even if I want to sleep with you, I need to be considerate of our baby.'

'Baby, baby,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'Right now, only the baby is in your heart. There's no room for me.'

Gu Jian Wen could only look up helplessly, and think of a way to appease Tan Pan Ting. Alternatively he could sleep with her until she became reasonable again.

‘How can I only care about our baby?’ Gu Jian Wen said. ‘I do care about our baby, but I care about you more.’

Because of past misunderstandings, Gu Jiao Wen was cautious about Tan Pan Ting overthinking everything, and treaded carefully to reassure her.

‘It’s obvious you only care about the baby,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Before I was pregnant, if I told you not to sleep with me, you never listened. What about now? Why do you listen to me now?’

Gu Jian Wen couldn’t stand being accused wrongly anymore. He forcefully kissed Tan Pan Ting’s lips. He was too aroused to care about her fierce face turning into a frightened face. He easily took off her flimsy maternity dress.

‘Gu... Gu Jiao Wen,’ Tan Pan Ting called.

Gu Jian Wen kissed Tan Pan Ting fiercer.

Gu Jiao Wen’s hand invaded Tan Pan Ting’s most responsive body part. After she was pregnant, he could touch her anywhere on her body and she would be over sensitized.

‘No... wait,’ Tan Pan Ting said and moved away from Gu Jiao Wen.

Gu Jiao Wen didn’t let Tan Pan Ting move far. It was hard for him to suppress his desire to sleep with Tan Pan Ting every day, but she didn’t appreciate his consideration.

Gu Jiao Wen avoided putting pressure on Tan Pan Ting’s stomach. But he couldn’t satisfy his desire if their bodies stayed angled in an awkward position.

Tan Pan Ting protested for several minutes. Afterward sounds of begging and pleasure escaped her mouth.

Even if Gu Jiao Wen was in a frenzy, he was still considerate. He propped her legs on a pillow and propped her back on a comfortable pillow. Then he quickly took off his clothes and entered her.

‘Ah...’ Tan Pan Ting cried out.

Since Tan Pan Ting was pregnant, her body was too sensitive. Gu Jiao Wen could easily arouse her by touching her anywhere on her body. He held tightly onto her legs and thrustured into her at different angles.

Tan Pan Ting cried when she orgasmed, but Gu Jiao Wen didn't let her go. He gripped her waist, his hot cheek pressed against her cheek and his breath on her neck made her body tingle again.

'Right now, can you say I don't need you?' Gu Jiao Wen asked.

Tan Pan Ting shook her head. 'You're hateful. You bullied me.'

'I... when did I bully you?' Gu Jiao Wen asked.

'You're bullying me now,' Tan Pan Ting said. 'I'm a pregnant woman, but you bully me this way...'

Tan Pan Ting began sobbing.

Gu Jiao Wen tried to pull Tan Pan Ting's hands away from her sobbing eyes.

'Go away, stop bullying me,' Tan Pan Ting said.

'I'll let you bully me,' Gu Jiao Wen said.

Although in the past Tan Pan Ting could be childish, but he didn't think she was capable of not distinguishing between right and wrong. Why was she making a commotion?

Tan Pan Ting didn't stop sobbing. 'Do you mean it?'

'Um, you can bully me,' Gu Jiao Wen said.

Gu Jiao Wen managed to pull Tan Pan Ting's hands away from her eyes. There wasn't a single tear, and she was smiling too happily.

'Tan-Pan-Ting,' Gu Jiao Wen called and wanted to bite Tan Pan Ting.

Tan Pan Ting poked her tongue out. 'You promised you'll let me bully you.'

'Mrs Gu, how are you going to bully me?' Gu Jiao Wen asked.

'I haven't thought of how yet,' Tan Pan Ting said. 'But I'll remember you owe me.'

'OK,' Gu Jiao Wen said.

Gu Jiao Wen didn't care how Tan Pan Ting would bully him as long as she wasn't crying and hate him.

'You're so gullible,' Tan Pan Ting said.

Tan Pan Ting sat up. Her big stomach made it hard for her to put on her dress.

‘I don’t cry that easily,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘I only covered my eyes and you believed me. You’re easy to fool.’

‘I’m only easily fooled by you,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. ‘It doesn’t matter what you say, I’ll believe you.’

Of course Gu Jiao Wen knew Tan Pan Ting wasn’t really crying. But he liked to see her think she had the upper hand.

Tan Pan Ting turned her head around to face Gu Jiao Wen. Her cheeks were rosy pink.

‘Don’t think you fooled me, Mr Hateful,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

‘Who’s fooling who?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked affectionately.

End of Chapter One

Related

Two



Chapter Two

Note: TRB Book II Chapter Two is TPT & GJWen's Side Story Two.

'You don't want to admit you're gullible?' Tan Pan Ting asked.

'Yes, yes, I'm gullible,' Gu Jiao Wen said.

'Mr Hateful, it's your fault I missed breakfast time,' Tan Pan Ting said.

Gu Jiao Wen began putting on clothes. 'We'll go outside and eat. Besides, today is Saturday. You don't need to go to work.'

Even if Gu Jiao Wen was shameless, Tan Pan Ting wasn't shameless. She didn't want everyone speculating why they didn't show up for breakfast.

When Gu Jiao Wen and Tan Pan Ting entered the dining room, they did miss the breakfast service. The elders finished eating breakfast. Only Gu Jiao Mai who woke up late was at the dining table, and smiling cheekily at them.

'Good morning Jiao Wen, Pan Ting,' Gu Jiao Mai greeted.

'Good morning,' Tan Pan Ting said shyly.

Since Tan Pan Ting moved into the Gu Mansion, at most she saw Gu Jiao Mai

twice a month. But lately Gu Jiao Mai was at the Gu Mansion on the weekends.

‘Lately you’ve been too free,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

Gu Jiao Wen sat at the dining table and saw aunty Zhang bring reheated plates of food onto the dining table. Aunty Zhang didn’t forget to bring the special nutritious bowl of soup for Tan Pan Ting.

‘Not too free,’ Gu Jiao Mai said. ‘I’ve been researching, and training two new assistants to lighten my workload.’

Gu Jiao Mai slurped a mouthful of congee.

Tan Pan Ting didn’t know why, but she thought her big sister-in-law looked more tired than usual.

‘Big sister, what’s your new research project?’ Tan Pan Ting asked.

‘A side research project,’ Gu Jiao Mai said.

‘What side project?’ Tan Pan Ting asked. ‘Big sister, are you developing a new fragrance or a cosmetic line?’

Tan Pan Ting thought Gu Jiao Mai was capable of creating quality fragrances and makeup.

Gu Jiao Wen coughed and looked like he was choking.

‘Jiao Wen, what’s wrong?’ Tan Pan Ting asked. ‘Did I guess right?’

‘Yes, yes,’ Gu Jiao Wen lied.

How could Gu Jiao Wen say his big sister was developing a new gun range? Guns were different to fragrances and cosmetics.

‘Liar,’ Tan Pan Ting said to Gu Jiao Wen and looked at Gu Jiao Mai. ‘Big sister, you can tell me. I promise I won’t tell anyone. Big sister, you can trust me with secrets.’

‘It’s nothing important,’ Gu Jiao Mai said. ‘I’m developing a new gun range.’

It was Tan Pan Ting to cough. ‘Big sister, are you joking?’

Tan Pan Ting couldn’t believe a feminine woman like Gu Jiao Mai would make weapons.

‘Do I look like I’m joking?’ Gu Jiao Mai asked.

Gu Jiao Mai ate another bowl of congee and sighed in a satisfied manner. ‘Home made congee here still tastes the best.’

‘If the congee here is good, why don’t big sister move back here?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked. ‘And you can eat congee every day.’

Gu Jiao Mai shook her head. ‘It’s too far from the work site.’

‘Big sister, if it’s inconvenient to travel, why don’t you agree to have surgery?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked. ‘A fifty percent success chance is better than zero percent.’

Gu Jiao Wen didn’t understand why his big sister didn’t want to have leg surgery.

Gu Jiao Mai satisfied face turned cold. She couldn’t argue with her little brother. But she glared at him and put her bowl of congee down.

‘I heard big brother Gu Wu’s back today,’ Gu Jiao Mai said. ‘Remember to come home early for dinner tonight.’

If Gu Jiao Mai didn’t remind her little brother and sister-in-law, Gu Jiao Wen would have taken Tan Pan Ting out on the weekend.

‘Yes big sister,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

Tan Pan Ting wasn’t close to her big brother-in-law, Gu Jiao Wu. She hated seeing Gu Jiao Wu’s usual cold face.

‘Big sister, how did you know big brother is back today?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked.

‘Last night, aunty told me,’ Gu Jiao Mai said. She wiped her mouth with a napkin. ‘Something about a formal work meeting on Monday. Perhaps big brother is back for the meeting and will stay several days.’

Gu Jiao Wen understood, nodded and turned to Tan Pan Ting. ‘I’m free today. Where do you want me to take you out today?’

‘I don’t need to work today so I scheduled a doctor’s appointment today,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Since you’re free, come with me to see the doctor.’

Tan Pan Ting had a stable pregnancy. She was looking forward to having a second ultra sound at six months, and she wanted Gu Jiao Wen to come with her

to the hospital.

‘OK, we’ll go to the hospital together,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

Gu Jiao Mai glanced enviously at Tan Pan Ting’s stomach, and wheeled her wheelchair back to her childhood bedroom. Gu Jiao Mai thought perhaps she wasn’t fated to have a child in this life.

On the plane, Gu Jiao Wu carefully put his bag in the overhead compartment and sat in his allocated seat. He was departing from the south. June was a hot month in the south, so he wore a loose white shirt and pants.

Gu Jiao Wu picked up a newspaper, read and didn’t pay attention to the passenger next to him.

‘Hello Executive Gu,’ a lady greeted.

The lady offered her manicured hand to Gu Jiao Wu. He looked at her face, and was startled briefly before composing himself.

‘Hello,’ Gu Jiao Wu greeted.

The lady waited for Gu Jiao Wu to shake her hand. ‘Executive Gu, I’m sorry if I’m bothering you.’

‘No, you haven’t,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu shook the lady’s hand, quickly retrieved his hand and he looked wearily at her.

The lady smiled comfortably. ‘Executive Gu, I’m sorry if I come across as too forward. Even though you were working in the south for a year, but your reputation precedes you and I was excited to meet you in person.’

Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t interested in the usual rehearsed flattery he heard from many people.

‘It’s part of my work duties,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘It isn’t easy to perform your work duties,’ the lady said.

The lady was confident in her looks like the way her white shirt hugged her chest.

‘Um,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and read the newspaper.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to chat with the lady, but she was persistent.

‘I work for a northern company and often take business trips to the south,’ the lady said.

The lady looked at Gu Jiao Wu’s indifferent face, and persisted to engage him in conversation.

‘I’m sorry, I forgot to introduce myself, I’m Li Lam and you can call me Xiao Lam,’ Li Lam said.

‘Miss Li,’ Gu Jiao Wu said politely.

‘Miss Li sounds too distant,’ Li Lam said. ‘You can call me Xiao Lam. My close acquaintances call me by my nickname, Da Da.’

Gu Jiao Wu’s hands gripped the newspaper, but he looked calmly at Li Lam.

‘Miss Li, we’re not close acquaintances,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes were colder than his tone of voice, and intimidated Li Lam.

‘Yes, we’re not close acquaintances,’ Li Lam said and laughed awkwardly. ‘I don’t know why Executive Gu look so familiar like we’ve met before, and I wanted to chat with you. I’m sorry if I’ve bothered you.’

‘No need to apologize,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu ignored Li Lam and read again.

The captain announced the plane was experiencing turbulence. Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t affected by the turbulence and kept reading. But a fragrance disturbed his nose, he looked up and saw Li Lam looking over his shoulder and reading the newspaper. He folded the newspaper and put it away.

Two hours later the captain announced preparing the plane for landing, Gu Jiao Wu opened his eyes and realised he had slept.

‘Executive Gu, you’re awake in time for landing,’ Li Lam said.

The plane landed, Gu Jiao Wu stood and looked for his bag. He was unsettled why he slept, he rarely slept on planes. He didn’t bother replying to Li Lam. But he noticed a silver bag next to his bag. A faded photo tag was attached to the

silver bag... was it Da Da? Was he seeing double?

‘Executive Gu, can I trouble you to get my bag?’ Li Lam said.

Gu Jiao Wu silently passed the silver bag to Li Lam.

‘This is a photo of my big sister,’ Li Lam said. ‘My identical twin big sister. Do you think we look alike?’

End of Chapter Two

Related

part 1



Chapter Three (Part 1)

‘Li Lam?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu looked closely at the person in front of him, clenched his hands and acted calm.

‘Yes, I’m Li Lam,’ Li Lam said. ‘This is my big sister, Li Da. Isn’t it funny, her nickname is Lam Lam but my nickname is Da Da.’

Gu Jiao Wu silently compared Li Lam’s face to the Da Da’s face in his memory. Although their faces were identical, their personalities were opposites.

‘I’m sorry, I talk too much,’ Li Lam said and smiled dazzlingly.

Gu Jiao Wu and Li Lam were the only passengers left on the plane.

Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t affected by Li Lam’s smile. He carried his bag and walked off the plane without looking back at Li Lam.

Li Lam watched Gu Jiao Wu walked off the plane, but she was satisfied he reacted to Da Da’s photo.

The feigned sweet innocence on Li Lam’s face disappeared. Her eyes gleamed and she carried her bag off the plane.

Outside the airport, the Gu driver spotted Gu Jiao Wu and opened the

passenger door.

‘Young master, Madam asked me to pick you up from the airport,’ the driver said.

An hour later, the driver parked in front of the Gu Mansion.

Inside the Gu Mansion, Gu Jiao Wu took off his clothes in his bedroom and as usual he checked pockets for loose items. He found a photo of Da Da with a hint of Li Lam’s fragrance. He compared their faces in his head again, gripped the photo and put it on the foot of the bed.

Gu Jiao Wu entered the bathroom and showered. While he was drying his body, he could smell a faint floral scent. He rarely stayed at the Gu Mansion. Qiao Tan Yuan bought all the items in the bathroom. He remembered she loved roses. But he was determined to look for aunty Zhang and ask aunty Zhang to get rid of all the items in the bathroom.

Wang Tu Ya walked into Gu Jiao Wu’s bedroom when he finished buttoning his shirt.

‘Jiao Wu, your home,’ Wang Tu Ya said happily. ‘Are you feeling jet lag? Do you want to take a rest?’

‘Mum, I’m not tired,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu quickly picked up the photo of Da Da and hid it in a bedside table drawer.

Wang Tu Ya was too happy to see her son home, and didn’t notice the photo. She sat on a chair and looked closely at her son’s face.

‘Jiao Wu, this time are you staying for a week?’ Wang Ta Ya asked.

‘Yes mum,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘It’s Sunday tomorrow,’ Wang Ta Ya said. ‘You’re rarely home. Can you take me out tomorrow?’

‘Just taking you out?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Of course just taking me out,’ Wang Tu Ya said.

Wang Tu Ya’s word wasn’t questioned at work, but she didn’t know how to

deal with her son, Gu Jiao Wu. She didn't know who he took after, he was stubborn since he was a boy. She wasn't an interfering mother, but she and her son, Gu Jiao Wu weren't close.

'OK,' Gu Jiao Wu said. But he regretted agreeing after he heard Wang Tu Ya sighed softly. 'Mum, you promised I'm just taking you out.'

'Of course, of course,' Wang Tu Ya said and pointed outside the door. 'You're home in time for dinner. Come out when you're ready.'

'Yes mum,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

After Wang Tu Ya left, Gu Jiao Wu transferred the photo of Da Da into a drawer of the desk in his study room and locked the drawer.

At the hospital, Tan Pan Ting walked out of the ultra sound room. She looked at Gu Jiao Wen's face, it was as shocked as her face. She pinched his hand to check if they were awake.

'Jiao Wen, did you hear what the doctor said?' Tan Pan Ting asked.

'Um,' Gu Jiao Wen said. He nodded his head and looked at the dazed Tan Pan Ting. 'Did you hear too?'

'Um,' Tan Pan Ting said. She nodded her head, but she didn't believe what she heard. 'How can I be having twins? It's too surreal.'

'It's not that farfetched, twins run in my family,' Gu Jiao Wen said.

Tan Pan Ting laughed like a fool. 'I'm in shock and happy too.'

'Me too,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'I think if your dad knows, he'll be happy.'

'Of course,' Tan Pan Ting said and rubbed her stomach. 'It's surreal I'm having twins.'

'No wonder why your stomach is this big,' Gu Jiao Wen said.

'That's right,' Tan Pan Ting said. She smiled, held Gu Jiao Wen's hand and propped her head on his shoulder. 'Husband, I'm really happy.'

'Me too,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'Pan Ting, thank you.'

‘Dummy,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Did you hear the doctor said the twins are growing at a normal rate?’

‘Of course,’ Gu Jiao Wen said and walked outside the hospital with Tan Pan Ting.

Gu Jiao Wen didn’t doubt his children would be healthy.

‘Are you tired?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked. ‘Do you want to rest?’

‘You’re worrying too much,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

‘We can go home if you’re not tired,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

‘Um,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

Tan Pan Ting followed Gu Jiao Wen to the carpark, and they saw a white Mercedes-Benz parked at the carpark.

Shen Cheng got out of the car and opened the passenger door.

Gu Jiao Wen and Tan Pan Ting realised Shen Cheng didn’t notice them standing behind the car. Shen Cheng was only looking at a woman getting out of the car. The woman tied her hair in a ponytail, she wore a white maternity dress and her stomach was big as Tan Pan Ting’s stomach.

‘Big sister?’ Tan Pan Ting asked.

Gu Jiao Wen pinched Tan Pan Ting’s hand, and she realised what she said.

Shen Cheng supported Qiao Tan Yuan to Gu Jiao Wen and Tan Pan Ting.

‘Big brother Wen, big sister Ting,’ Qiao Tan Yuan greeted.

‘Shen Cheng,’ Tan Pan Ting greeted.

It wasn’t the first time Tan Pan Ting saw Qiao Tan Yuan together with Shen Cheng, but she wasn’t used to seeing them together yet. She looked closer at Qiao Tan Yuan’s stomach, it was a little bigger than her stomach.

‘Tan Yuan,’ Tan Pan Ting corrected her greeting.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Tan Pan Ting’s stomach. She heard Tan Pan Ting was pregnant. But they haven’t seen each other for a long time.

‘Do you go for check-ups in the maternity ward at this hospital?’ Qiao Tan

Yuan asked Tan Pan Ting.

‘That’s right,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘I just had a check-up.’

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at the indifferent Gu Jiao Wen who didn’t say anything.

‘I need to go inside for my appointment,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and pointed at the hospital.

‘Big brother Wen, we need to go before we’re late,’ Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng supported Qiao Tan Yuan’s back and led her into the hospital.

After Qiao Tan Yuan and Shen Cheng entered the hospital, Tan Pan Ting turned her head to face Gu Jiao Wen.

‘I heard big sister Qiao Tan Yuan was pregnant two months before me,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘At that time, were big sister and big brother Gu Jiao Wu divorced yet?’

‘I don’t know,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t tell the family when he divorced Qiao Tan Yuan.

Tan Pan Ting saw the way Shen Cheng was protective of Qiao Tan Yuan, it was a loving sight. But she thought there was something missing between Shen Cheng and Qian Tan Yuan, and her intuition suspected why.

‘I think big brother Gu Jiao Wu is the father of big sister Qian Tan Yuan’s baby,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

Gu Jiao Wen frowned and gently hit Tan Pan Ting’s head. ‘There’s something wrong with your brain.’

Gu Jiao Wen knew Gu Jiao Wu hated Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu never slept with Qiao Tan Yuan. It wasn’t possible for Gu Jiao Wu to be the father of Qiao Tan Yuan’s baby.

‘You’re hateful,’ Tan Pan Ting said even if Gu Jiao Wen didn’t hit her head hard. ‘Why not? I think it’s possible. Big sister Qiao Tan Yuan loves big brother Gu Jiao Wu. I don’t think she would be together with Shen Cheng that soon after divorcing big brother. That’s why I think big brother is the father of her baby. She’s only using Shen Cheng as a buffer to make others think big brother isn’t

the father.'

Gu Jiao Wen thought Tan Pan Ting's reasoning was off base. 'Let's go, it has nothing to do with you. You don't need to worry about it.'

'You're no fun at all,' Tan Pan Ting said.

Gu Jiao Wen led Tan Pan Ting to the car.

'It's not that I want to interfere in someone else's business,' Tan Pan Ting said. 'I only wanted to state the possibilities. If big brother is the father of big sister's baby then she's carrying the Gu Household's heir.'

Tan Pan Ting knew if she was right, her nephew or niece's status in the Gu Household was higher than her twins' status. Also she didn't think the elders of the Gu Household would let go of their first grandchild. She turned around and looked at the hospital but she couldn't see Shen Cheng or Qiao Tan Yuan.

A while later Gu Jiao Wen silently drove Tan Pan Ting home. She thought since Gu Jiao Wu hated Qiao Tan Yuan, perhaps Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't wait any longer for Gu Jiao Wu to have a change of heart, and Qiao Tan Yuan accepted Shen Cheng's love.

After all, it would be tiring to love someone for a long time and not have that person reciprocate. Besides, the cold hearted Gu Jiao Wu wouldn't let his child roam around outside the Gu Household. Gu Jiao Wu had been working in the south for a long period so perhaps Gu Jiao Wen was right, and Gu Jiao Wu wasn't the father of Qian Tan Yuan's baby.

End of Chapter Three (Part 1)

Related

part 2



Chapter Three (Part 2 of 2)

‘Is it a boy or a girl?’ Shen Cheng asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was sitting in the car, looking at the scans in her hands. Her twenty-nine-week-old baby was healthy. She could clearly see her baby’s arms and legs. Her baby’s mouth and eyes were closed, and she could picture what her baby would look like after her baby was born.

‘I don’t know,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

One of the hospital’s policy was doctors weren’t allowed to tell their pregnant patients if they were expecting a boy or girl.

‘I hope it’s a boy,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Why?’ Shen Cheng asked.

Shen Cheng didn’t expect Qiao Tan Yuan favored boys over girls.

‘No reason,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

If Qiao Tan Yuan’s baby was a boy, he would grow up to be cold hearted like his father and wouldn’t be heartbroken. If her baby was a girl, she was scared her daughter would grow up to waste years being a fool in love.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought she was overthinking. No one could predict the future. There was a possibility if she had a son, he could grow up to meet a girl who had someone else in their heart.

At the red lights, Shen Cheng was heartbroken to see Qian Tan Yuan's sad expression.

'Tan Yuan, are you thinking about him?' Shen Cheng asked.

'No,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I haven't thought about him for a long time.'

Shen Cheng didn't believe Qiao Tan Yuan. If she wasn't thinking about Gu Jiao Wu, she would have accepted his marriage proposal. He didn't want her baby to be looked down on by others if her baby was born illegitimate.

'Do you think big brother Wen would tell Gu Jiao Wu about you being pregnant?' Shen Cheng asked.

It wasn't a secret Qiao Tan Yuan was pregnant. But Gu Jiao Wu was working away from home for a long time, and he wouldn't know she was pregnant. Gu Jiao Wen wasn't an idiot. Gu Jiao Wen would be suspicious after seeing how big her stomach was, he would tell Gu Jiao Wu and complicate the situation.

'I don't know,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn't close to Gu Jiao Wen, and couldn't predict his choices.

'But I'm not scared,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'But...' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng knew Gu Jiao Wu was the Gu Household's firstborn... if Gu Jiao Wu found out Qiao Tan Yuan was pregnant, he couldn't predict what Gu Jiao Wu would do.

'No but,' Qian Tan Yuan said.

Qian Tan Yuan carefully put her baby's scans in her bag. She kept all her baby's scans as momentums for her baby to see when her baby was older.

Shen Cheng resumed driving after the lights turned green.

'So what if he knows?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'It's not his baby.'

Shen Cheng knew Gu Jiao Wu hated being deceived. He was surprised Gu Jiao

Wu didn't die from hating Qiao Tan Yuan intensely for years. He was scared Gu Jiao Wu would... it was a scary thought. It was safer for him to concentrate on driving.

On Sunday, Qiao Tan Yuan was slowly walking outside of a Bai Hua Qiao store. Bai Hua Qiao was crowded upstairs and downstairs, it made her smile. Bai Hua Qiao was a relatively popular franchise in the northern districts.

'Big sister,' Qiao Jie called. He ran to help Qiao Tan Yuan walk outside the store. 'Your stomach is this big, and you still run here by yourself. Big sister, you should have asked me to check-up on any Bai Hua Qiao stores.'

'It's nothing,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'm pregnant not sick.'

'Big sister, your stomach is carrying the Qiao Household's precious heir,' Qiao Jie said. 'You should take it easy and let me do the hard work. Unless you don't trust your little brother's abilities.'

'Of course not,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'm proud of my hard working little brother. How can I look down on you?'

'Then big sister should rest and let me do the hard work,' Qiao Jie said and patted his chest. 'You can leave one hundred and twenty hearts here. I promise they'll be safe.'

'OK,' Qiao Tan Yuan conceded. She had walked around two levels and felt tired. 'I'll go to the cafe downstairs to take a rest. After work, come find me there and drive me home.'

Qiao Jie nodded his head. Since Qiao Tan Yuan was pregnant, no one in their family let her drive. Because in her first trimester, she had severe morning sickness. Then it became a habit of being driven around. She wasn't a weak pampered heiress, but others perceived her that way.

Nearby the cafe Qiao Tan Yuan was walking toward, in a clothing store, Gu Jiao Wu was shopping with Wang Tu Ya. He didn't understand why he needed to look at maternity and baby clothes.

'Jiao Wu, Pan Ting is six months pregnant,' Wang Tu Ya said. 'What do you think I should buy for Pan Ting's child?'

Although Chen Ting Yu was taking care of Tan Pan Ting's daily needs, Wang Tu Ya felt it was her duty as an elder to show she cared about the members of the Gu Household.

Gu Jiao Wu hated shopping and wasn't good at picking out clothes for other people.

'Mum, I don't know, you choose,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Wang Tu Ya mostly heard the same replies from Gu Jiao Wu while they were shopping, 'Mum, I don't know, up to you... not bad, buy it if you like it... you choose.'

Compared to shopping with Gu Qi Jiang, Wang Tu Ya thought it was more pitiful to shop with Gu Jiao Wu. Even though Gu Qi Jiang hated shopping, at least Gu Qi Jiang gave her opinions when shopping with her.

'Jiao Wu, is this cute?' Wang Tu Ya asked.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at the childish pink underwear Wang Tu Ya was holding, and frowned.

Wang Tu Ya suppressed her frustrations at Gu Jiao Wu's lack of cooperation.

'Jiao Wu, Pan Ting is six months pregnant,' Wang Tu Ya said. 'When will you give me a grandchild to hold?'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to answer Wang Tu Ya's question.

'You're the firstborn,' Wang Tu Ya said. 'You and Qiao Tan Yuan are divor-'

'Mum, do you still want to shop?' Gu Jiao Wu asked coldly. 'If not, I'll go home first.'

'You...' Wang Tu Ya said. She could see what sort of good son she gave birth to. 'You rarely come home. Is it too much to ask you to go on an outing with me?'

Gu Jiao Wu picked up the children's clothing in Wang Tu Ya's hands, and passed it to a shop assistant.

'Help me wrap this,' Gu Jiao Wu said to the shop assistant.

'Jiao Wu...' Wang Tu Ya called.

Gu Jiao Wu paid for the clothes at the counter, and gave the Gu Mansion

address for the clothes to be delivered there.

Gu Jiao Wu turned around to face Wang Tu Ya. 'Mum, do you want to buy anything else?'

'I'm tired,' Wang Tu Ya said. 'Let's go somewhere to rest for a bit.'

'Mum, where do you want to go to sit?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Sir, downstairs there is a cafe,' the shop assistant said. 'It's a good cafe. You and Madam can order light refreshments and sit there to rest.'

'Mum, let's go to the cafe downstairs,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Mo Mo Xiao cafe below the Bai Hua Qiao store was Qiao Tan Yuan's favorite cafe. She could smell the delicious coffee, but she was pregnant and couldn't drink coffee. She hated sweets, but her tastebuds changed since she was pregnant. The cafe desserts were delicious.

Qiao Tan Yuan ordered two small desserts and a glass of warm milk. Afterward she browsed through a book about what to expect while pregnant. Usually she was too busy to read, she skipped the first two trimester sections since she was in her third trimester.

Qiao Tan Yuan's back was facing the door so she couldn't see the customers entering the cafe. A waiter called her name, she raised a hand and the waiter brought her order to the table. She put the book down and remembered she hadn't washed her hands yet. It meant she had to stand up and go to the toilet. Since she was pregnant, she had to go to the toilet to urinate often but it was inconvenient to stand up to go to the toilet often.

Qiao Tan Yuan slowly stood and walked to the toilet. She washed her hands, walked out of the toilet and accidentally bumped into someone. She instinctively stretched her hand to hold onto something to stop herself from falling and protect her baby. A person's hand held onto her hand and stopped her from falling.

'Thank you...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qian Tan Yuan thought she was seeing things... Gu Jiao Wu?

'Gu Jiao Wu...' Qiao Tan Yuan called.

Qiao Tan Yuan could see how much Gu Jiao Wu hated her on his cold handsome face. After she stood steadily, he let go of her hand and took a step back.

Gu Jiao Wu looked coldly at Qiao Tan Yuan. She wore a loose maternity dress and her hands were protecting her round stomach... she was pregnant?

Gu Jiao Wu narrowed his eyes. He could see the anxiety in Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes briefly before she composed herself. She turned around, and intended to leave like nothing happened but he grabbed her arm.

'You're pregnant,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was forced to turn around and face Gu Jiao Wu. She didn't expect to see Gu Jiao Wu a day after seeing Tan Pan Ting and Gu Jiao Wen. Yesterday she acted cheerful in front of Shen Cheng, but she couldn't sleep at night. She dreamt about that day Gu Jiao Wu told her to abort her baby and give him a divorce. When she woke up, she thought about what she would do if Gu Jiao Wu knew she was pregnant.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't think Gu Jiao Wu would suddenly return to the city from the south. Even if he was in the city, she didn't expect to see him. So what if he knew she was pregnant? She could deny the truth about him being the father. There was nothing he could do to her baby. But standing in front of him made her momentarily anxious. Then she saw his eyes narrowed, looked coldly at her and her anxiety disappeared.

Qiao Tan Yuan held her chin high and spoke firmly. 'That's right. I'm pregnant. Is there a problem?'

End of Chapter Three (Part 2 of 2)

Related

Four



Chapter Four

‘Qiao Tan Yuan,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu remembered the day Qiao Tan Yuan opened the bottle of the day after pills to prevent pregnancy. His intuition told him, she deceived him.

‘You’re a brave woman,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Gu Jiao Wu,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu looked contemptuously at Qiao Tan Yuan like he always did in the past. A pity, she didn’t want to appease him anymore. She forced herself to smile and her eyes gleamed to hide the truth.

‘What is there for you to be angry about?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘You’re not the father of my baby.’

Gu Jiao Wu looked suspiciously at Qiao Tan Yuan’s stomach. ‘I’m not the father?’

Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t easily deceived by Qiao Tan Yuan’s lies.

‘Of course you’re not the father,’ Qiao Jiao Wu said. ‘Do you think your sperm

is strong enough to hit the target after one time?’

Gu Jiao Wu tightened his grip on Qiao Tan Yuan’s arm, but her heart ached more. She used her strength to pull free of his hold.

‘I’m only six months pregnant,’ Qiao Tan Yuan lied and forced herself to smile like a woman in love. ‘Shen Cheng is the father of my baby.’

Gu Jiao Wu looked closely at Qiao Tan Yuan’s stomach, it was as big as Tan Pan Ting’s stomach who was six months pregnant.

Gu Jiao Wu’s look of anger changed a look of condescension. He remembered how often Qiao Tan Yuan declared she loved him. But what happened after they divorced? She crawled straight onto Shen Cheng’s bed. What about Shen Cheng? Shen Cheng was the father, but he didn’t hear news of Shen Cheng wanting to marry Qiao Tan Yuan.

Gu Jiao Wu scoffed, walked past Qiao Tan Yuan and into the toilet.

Qiao Tan Yuan understood Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes were condescending her. She knew what he was thinking, but she didn’t want any involvement with Gu Jiao Wu. Luckily he believed her lies, and eased her anxiety. After she watched him disappear into the toilet, her strengths were drained and she registered a lingering pain on her arm. His cruelty made her body limp, she would have fallen on the ground if a familiar hand didn’t support her back. She turned around, it was Qiao Jie supporting her.

‘Big sister, a waiter told me you were standing in front of the toilet for a long time,’ Qiao Jie said.

‘I’m OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Big sister, are you sure nothing is wrong?’ Qiao Jie asked. He didn’t think Qiao Tan Yuan looked OK. ‘You need have a nutritious meal. When we’re home, I’ll ask aunty Chen to make you a bowl of soup.’

‘I’m OK,’ Qian Tan Yuan reassured.

‘Alright, let’s go,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘If I don’t take proper care of big sister, big brother Cheng will worry.’

Gu Jiao Wu was at the toilet door, he heard Qiao Tan Yuan and Qiao Jie’s

exchange. He creased his brows and walked back to his table.

At Qiao Tan Yuan's table, the desserts were beautiful but she lost her appetite. She drank a sip of milk, it tasted a little sour. Suddenly her heart raced fast and she gripped the glass of milk.

'Big sister...' Qiao Jie called. He was drinking coffee, but noticed Qiao Tan Yuan's complexion paled. 'Are you OK?'

Qiao Tan Yuan shook her head. She waited for her heart to stop racing fast. Her baby kicked her and her complexion whitened. Could her baby feel that Gu Jiao Wu hated her baby? She put the glass down and gently rubbed her stomach where her baby kicked.

'My precious baby...' Qiao Tan Yuan whispered.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to protect her baby who would grow up without a father. Although she prepared mentally before the confrontation with Gu Jiao Wu, why did she still taste bitterness?

'Big sister...' Qiao Jie called.

Qiao Jie thought Qiao Tan Yuan was acting unusual. He checked around the cafe to look for anyone who could have affected her, and saw Gu Jiao Wu walking out of the toilet. Immediately he understood why she was upset. He glared at Gu Jiao Wu. If the Qiao and Gu Households didn't have good relations, he would have given Gu Jiao Wu a beating for the way Gu Jiao Wu treated Qiao Tan Yuan.

Gu Jiao Wu sensed someone staring at him, it was Qiao Jie. He ignored Qiao Jie's glare and calmly sat next Wang Tu Ya. Except there were two more people sitting at their table, which startled him briefly.

'Jiao Wu, greet aunty Li,' Wang Tu Ya said.

'Aunty Li,' Gu Jiao Wu greeted.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to contribute to their conversation.

'Big sister Gu, you're blessed to have such a handsome and polite son,' Mrs Li said.

'Not at all, your daughter is beautiful and talented,' Wang Tu Ya said. She was

happy to hear Mrs Li praise her son. 'Jiao Wu, this is aunty Li's daughter, Li Lam.'

'Hello Executive Gu,' Li Lam greeted. She smiled and offered her hand to Gu Jiao Wu. 'We seem to be fated to meet again.'

Gu Jiao Wu looked coldly at Li Lam's fake smile. He politely shook her hand, she gripped his hand and he quickly retrieved his hand. Afterward he ignored her and drank coffee.

'Do you two know each other?' Wang Tu Ya asked.

'Aunty Gu, Executive Gu and I met once on a plane,' Li Lam said.

'How fateful,' Wang Tu Ya said happily. 'Xiao Lam, you don't have to call Jiao Wu, Executive Wu. You're not in a work environment. You can call him by his name.'

Li Lam glanced at Gu Jiao Wu's disgruntled face. 'Aunty Gu, I don't think I should.'

'Calling someone by their name is nothing,' Wang Tu Ya said.

Although Wang Tu Ya thought Gu Jiao Wu was a good catch, but she lowered her expectations of potential daughter-in-laws after Gu Jiao Wu's divorce. She thought Li Lam looked like someone who would be a suitable supportive wife for Gu Jiao Wu.

Wang Tu Ya looked at Gu Jiao Wu and couldn't stand his cold eyes. 'Jiao Wu, say something.'

Gu Jiao Wu looked coldly at Li Lam who acted like a frightened deer.

'Calling someone by their name is nothing,' Gu Jiao Wu said coldly.

'Thank you Gu Wu,' Li Lam said.

Li Lam noticed Wang Tu Ya believed her shy act.

'Oh, I forgot, I wanted to buy makeup from Chu Cosmetics,' Mrs Li said. 'Big sister, do you want to go to Chu Cosmetics with me?'

'OK, my nephew's wife works at Chu Cosmetics,' Wang Tu Ya said. 'Why don't the old folks like us, let the young ones chat among themselves? Xiao Lam, stay here and chat with Jiao Wu.'

Wang Tu Ta and Mrs Li left the cafe without noticing Qiao Tan Yuan and Qiao Jie. But Qiao Jie saw them leave and turned around to look at Gu Jiao Wu's table, Gu Jiao Wu was sitting opposite a young woman. Then Qiao Jie waved a hand in front of the shocked Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Big sister...' Qiao Jie called.

'Huh?' Qiao Tan Yun asked.

Qiao Tan Yun gently rubbed her chest. Was she seeing things?

'Qiao Jie, what are you doing waving your hand in front of my face?' Qiao Tan Yun asked.

'Big sister, I should be asking you, what are you doing?' Qiao Jie said. 'I've been sitting in front of you this whole time, but you can't see I'm sitting in front of you.'

'What?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Of course I can see you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan picked up the glass of milk, drank a sip and looked at the young woman who was sitting opposite Gu Jiao Wu. The young woman's face shocked her, and she lost her grip on the glass of milk.

Luckily Qiao Jie caught the glass of milk. He wiped the table and looked disappointedly at Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Big sister, can you not make a mess?' Qiao Jie asked.

Qiao Jie wiped milk off Qiao Tan Yuan's hand. He wondered if all the men in the world have died. Shen Cheng loved Qiao Tan Yuan, but she acted like she couldn't see Shen Cheng. In her eyes there was only Gu Jiao Wu. It was one thing to like someone, but there was no need for her to make herself suffer by loving someone who didn't love her.

End of Chapter Four

Related

Five



Chapter Five

‘Mess?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked down at her hand, grabbed a tissue and wiped her fingers. How could Qiao Jie understand? Four years ago, he was still in college.

Qiao Tan Yuan raised her head and looked at Gu Jiao Wu’s table, was the young woman Chu Da? She dug her fingernails into her palms. If it was Chu Da, why did Chu Da return when Chu Da promised not to return? Her heart raced even faster.

‘Big sister...’ Qiao Jie called. He stood and helped Qiao Tan Yuan stand. ‘I’ll take you home.’

‘Qiao Jie, I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan stopped what she was going to say. She stood and had a clearer view of Chu Da, it wasn’t Chu Da. The Chu Da from four years ago was timid. The young woman’s face resembled Chu, but looked confident and stylish. If Chu Da was an ugly duckling then the young woman was a goddess.

Qiao Tan Yuan promised herself that she would stay strong. But how could she stay strong if Chu Da was back to be with Gu Jiao Wu?

Qiao Tan Yuan followed Qiao Jie outside and they didn’t notice Li Lam’s eyes followed Qiao Tan Yuan.

A while later, Qiao Tan Yuan was still shocked and didn't know how she got home. She walked to her bedroom, sat on the bed and remembered what happened years ago...

Qiao Tan Yuan arrived home, put her school bag down and ran to the door.

'Tan Yuan, where are you going?' Mrs Qiao asked.

'I'm going out,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Where?' Mrs Qiao asked. She looked at Qiao Tan Yuan who hated studying. 'Tan Yuan, your dad's angry at you for doing poorly on your maths test. Go back to your room and study.'

'I hate maths, isn't it enough that I pass the math test?' Qiao Tan Yuan said and waved bye to Mrs Qiao. 'Mum, don't nag anymore. I promise I'll do better next time.'

Qiao Tan Yuan ran straight outside and didn't hear Mrs Qiao sigh behind her. She wanted to find Gu Jiao Wu. Gu Jiao Wu was a college student, Gu Jiao Mai and Shen Cheng told her Gu Jiao Wu had many female admirers in college.

Qiao Tan Yuan was scared Gu Jiao Wu wouldn't wait for her to grow up and fall for one of the college students. No, no, no... Gu Jiao Wu belonged to her. She was young, but if she loved something, she wanted to obtain it. She wanted Gu Jiao Wu to belong to her. Her studies could wait, but she couldn't wait to see for herself if it was true Gu Jiao Wu had many female admirers at college.

The Qiao Mansion was close to the Gu Mansion. It didn't take long for Qiao Tan Yuan to enter the Gu Mansion.

'Qiao Tan Yuan?' Wang Tu Ya asked. She was happy to see Qiao Tan Yuan. 'Why are you free today?'

'I'm free so I came to see aunty,' Qiao Tan Yuan said sweetly.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew how to sweet talk adults at a young age.

Wang Tu Ya's company and Qiao's company have cooperated with each other for many years so Qiao Tan Yuan visited the Gu Mansion often.

'Your little small mouth is too sweet,' Wang Tu Ya said affectionately.

Wang Tu Ya thought the thirteen-year-old Qiao Tan Yuan would grow up to be a beauty. But thinking about her cold hearted son, Gu Jiao Wu made her sigh. She didn't know who he took after. 'Oh...'

'Aunty, what's wrong?' Qian Tan Yuan asked.

'I regret I didn't get to give birth to a daughter in this life,' Wang Tu Ya said. 'In the future come and visit me more often.'

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded. She looked in the direction of Gu Jiao Wu's bedroom and wondered if he was home.

'I forgot,' Wang Tu Ya said and rubbed her forehead. 'Jiao Wu just got home from college and asked if I could prepare refreshments for him. Tan Yuan, wait here. I'll go bring the refreshments to his room.'

'Aunty, let me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'It's good to have your help, aunty Zhang isn't here today,' Wang Tu Ya said.

Qiao Tan Yuan happily brought a platter of fruits to Gu Jiao Wu's bedroom. The door was opened, she walked into his room and put the platter on the table.

'Gu Jiao Wu?' Qian Tan Yuan called softly.

Where was Gu Jiao Wu? Qian Tan Yuan didn't want to leave his room so soon. She checked in the connecting study room. A hot cup of coffee was on the study table so he must have left not long ago.

'How hateful, I'm here but you disappeared,' Qian Tan Yuan mumbled and stomped a foot.

Qian Tan Yuan's eyes were drawn to a pink envelop on the study table. Gu Jiao Wu was a man, why did he keep a pink envelop on his table? She couldn't resist satisfying her curiosity and opened the pink envelop. It was a love letter. Gu Jiao Mai and Shen Cheng were right, Gu Jiao Wu had many female admirers at college. Gu Jiao Wu belonged to her, she wouldn't allow anyone else to have him.

At the age of thirteen, Qiao Tan Yuan was the indulged Qiao heiress. Whatever she wanted, the Qiao elders would grant her. After she saw the love letter, she felt like someone wanted to steal Gu Jiao Wu away from her. She ripped the love

letter to pieces, threw the pieces on the ground and stomped on them.

‘How dare you steal my Jiao Wu?’ Qiao Tan Yuan mumbled.

‘What are you doing?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu was picking up a delivery before and returned to the study room. He creased his brows after he saw Qiao Tan Yuan in the study room stomping on pieces of paper.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, what are you doing here?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was embarrassed she got caught by the eighteen-year-old Gu Jiao Wu. She was scared of his intimidating gaze, but she acted confident.

‘I’m helping big brother take rubbish away,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘This female student dared to write a love letter to big brother. She doesn’t have the right to write you a love letter if she made grammatical errors. I know big brother hates this kind of female so I helped big brother take rubbish away.’

‘Are you saying I should thank you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu never accepted love letters from another person. The love letter on the floor was hidden in his textbook. He disliked the girl who wrote the love letter, but he disliked Qiao Tan Yuan’s behaviour more.

‘Big brother... of course you have to thank me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was more scared of someone stealing Gu Jiao Wu than Gu Jiao Wu’s silent glare.

‘How can big brother like a country bumpkin like this girl?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Who I like is none of your business,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and pointed at the door. ‘Leave.’

‘I’m not leaving,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, I love you. I won’t let another girl steal you.’

‘Do you know what love means?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Do I have to love you if you love me?’

‘Of course you have to love me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Big brother Jiao Wu, I love you. I’m begging you don’t fall in love with someone else. You can only love me.’

Gu Jiao Wu was unaffected by Qiao Tan Yuan’s love declaration. He sat at the study table, picked up a textbook and read.

Qiao Tan Yuan was crazily angry. Wasn’t she beautiful and loveable? Why didn’t Gu Jiao Wu love her?

Qiao Tan Yuan grabbed Gu Jiao Wu’s textbook. ‘Big brother Jiao Wu, I’m beautiful and smart. Why don’t you love me?’

Gu Jiao Wu pointed at the textbook. ‘Give back my textbook.’

‘I’m not giving it back,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I want you to love me.’

‘You love me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked coldly. ‘What do you love about me? Do you understand what’s written in the textbook? Do you know what I’m studying? You said that girl didn’t have the right to write me a love letter. But do you think you have the right to love me?’

When Gu Jiao Mai was Qiao Tan Yuan’s age, Gu Jiao Mai behaved well. Gu Jiao Mai studied and never made the elders worry.

‘I heard you received low school grades,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Qiao Tan Yuan, doesn’t that mean you don’t have the right to love me?’

Gu Jiao Wu snatched back the textbook, sat and read without looking at Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘I... I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan stuttered.

Qiao Tan Yuan bit her lips. It was true, members of the Gu Household were scholars. Her grades didn’t compare to them. Did that mean she didn’t have the right to love Gu Jiao Wu?

‘So what?’ Qian Tan Yuan asked. ‘I’ll rank first in school and be accepted in big brother’s college. I’ll read the textbooks you read, and I’ll know what you study. Gu Jiao Wu, wait for me.’

Qian Tan Yuan turned around and ran home. Gu Jiao Wu sighed in relief. He thought at least she knew how to be embarrassed and can be saved. He resumed

reading and forgot about her childish tantrum.

What Gu Jiao Wu didn't know was starting that day, Qiao Tan Yuan sacrificed her social life and focused on studying. She was ranked first in all her classes and shocked her parents. But no one knew she studied because she wanted to be with Gu Jiao Wu. If Gu Jiao Wu loved someone who was studious then she would study hard.

Qiao Tan Yuan chose the same high school and college Gu Jiao Wu attended. She was naturally smart, and putting efforts into her studies earned her many academic awards. After graduating from college, she didn't study to get a master's degree because Gu Jiao Wu stopped studying after college graduation. Instead he worked in a small southern district. She only heard about Gu Jiao Wu's work life through Gu Jiao Mai and Wang Tu Ya.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted Gu Jiao Wu to be the first person she shared news with about her graduating with a high distinction GPA. She wanted to prove to Gu Jiao Wu how she improved, matured and was suitable to be with him.

After Qiao Tan Yuan found out Gu Jiao Wu returned to the city from the south, she was excited to show him her college graduation degree and the best photos of herself in her graduation gown.

Qiao Tan Yuan visited the Gu Mansion, but Gu Jiao Wu wasn't there. She made a phone call and found out where Gu Jiao Wu was staying. When she got there, a scary sight awaited her.

End of Chapter Five

Related

part 1



Chapter Six (Part 1)

Four years ago, at Huang Zi Reserve Park.

Below a hill, a young man was kissing a young woman.

Qiao Tan Yuan pulled the young man away from the young woman.

‘Big brother Jiao Wu, how can you be with another girl?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan took no notice of the young woman’s shocked face, she only saw Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Big brother Jiao Wu, the person you should love is me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She showed Gu Jiao Wu her degree certificate. ‘I worked hard to be suitable to be with you. You can’t be with another girl.’

Gu Jiao Wu heard Qiao Tan Yuan’s emotional tone of voice, but he wasn’t pleased to see her. His former classmates and family members have told him about how she worked hard to rank first at school, enter the same college as him and was training at Qiao’s company.

Gu Jiao Wu rarely returned to the Gu Mansion. But when he was at the Gu Mansion, Wang Tu Ya would talk about Qiao Tan Yuan. He understood Wang Tu Ya’s intentions for him to marry someone who could support his career. But Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t the type of woman he liked. Qiao Tan Yuan was a clinger and he always rejected her feelings in the past.

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan’s emotional outburst was one of her usual childish tantrums. She always had to get what she wanted and relied on her

parents' support.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't love Qiao Tan Yuan. He wrapped his arm around Chu Da and looked coldly at Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, it's been many years but you still haven't changed,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'The person I love is Chu Da. In the past I don't love you, right now I don't love you, and in the future I won't love you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan finally looked at Chu Da. Chu Da was an average looking person. She admitted Chu Da's long hair was clean, a natural face and looked like a decent person. But Chu Da's red outfit was outdated.

'Big brother Jiao Wu, do you really love this country bumpkin?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'A girl that has no appealing body or looks.'

'Don't be disrespectful,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He disliked Qiao Tan Yuan's poor attitude. 'Her name is Chu Da. She is the woman I love. If you insult her again, I won't be courteous toward you.'

'Big brother...' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She put her certificate back in her bag. 'You said you'll love me. Why do you love someone else?'

'I never said I'll love you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan's heart ached, Gu Jiao Wu looked lovingly at Chu Da while he looked coldly at her.

'Let's go,' Gu Jiao Wu said to Chu Da.

'Jiao Wu... who is she...' Chu Da asked.

Chu Da didn't know why she felt threatened by Qiao Tan Yuan. Qiao Tan Yuan was stylish and beautiful. Qiao Tan Yuan had naturally red lips and ebony eyebrows. Qiao Tan Yuan was articulate and had a loveable face. Did Qiao Tan Yuan really love Gu Jiao Wu?

'Don't pay attention to her,' Gu Jiao Wu said and led Chu Da away from Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan's world darkened after she saw Gu Jiao Wu held another woman in his arms and walked away from her. Why did she persist for many years? Why did she study so hard? If Gu Jiao Wu was together with another

woman then who was she to him? Her chest hurt and it was hard for her to breathe. She took out her phone and tried calling many people.

‘Why didn’t anyone tell me Gu Jiao Wu loved another person... why...’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan bit her lips. There was no reception on the other end. She put the phone in her bag. The sunlight shone brightly on her, but she felt no warmth.

Qiao Tan Yuan clenched her hands and looked up at the sky. ‘I’ll never let go.’

Qiao Tan Yuan wasted years and energy to pursue Gu Jiao Wu, she wasn’t going to give up.

Qiao Tan Yuan spent time to investigate Chu Da’s background. Chu Da was a teacher at the small southern district Gu Jiao Wu was staying. Chu Da had the title of the prettiest teacher in the small southern district. What if Gu Jiao Wu decided to formally introduce Chu Da to his family and marry Chu Da?

Qiao Tan Yuan’s head spun crazily. She remembered how Gu Jiao Wu looked lovingly at Chu Da. She wasn’t going to let them marry each other, she had to get rid of Chu Da.

While Qiao Tan Yuan investigated Chu Da, Gu Jiao Wu drove Chu Da to the Gu Mansion to introduce her to his family and inform them of his intentions to marry her. But Wang Tu Ya was on a business trip and Gu Qi Jiang wasn’t home either so he drove Chu Da back to the southern district.

That weekend, Qiao Tan Yuan drove to the southern district to separate Chu Da from Gu Jiao Wu.

Chu Da was shocked to see Qiao Tan Yuan at her house.

‘Miss Chu, stay away from Gu Jiao Wu,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘You... I don’t understand...’ Chu Da said.

‘Don’t understand?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘In the future Jiao Wu will be the head of Gu’s company. What can you give him to support his career?’

‘I...’ Chu Da said.

Chu Da wanted to say Gu Jiao Wu loved her and he didn’t care about her poor

background.

‘I investigated your background,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You’re an orphan. The villagers in this small southern district raised you. To repay them, you promised you’ll live here your whole life. Have you thought if you live here, what is Jiao Wu supposed to do? Do you know how established and powerful Gu’s company is in the northern districts? Look at yourself. If Jiao Wu is with you, he’ll be a laughing stock.’

Chu Da bit her lips and didn’t know what to say.

‘Even if I’m a laughing stock, it has nothing to do with you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know how long Gu Jiao Wu was standing at the door.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, you dare come here to insult Chu Da again?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘What right do you have to insult her?’

‘Jiao Wu?’ Chu Da asked.

Chu Da was hurt by Qiao Tan Yuan’s words. Chu Da’s eyes stung and she was on the verge of tears after seeing Gu Jiao Wu. It made his heart break to see Chu Da hurt.

Since Gu Jiao Wu met Chu Da in the southern district, he thought she was different to the rich families’ daughters in the city. Chu Da was simple and happy. Although she was an orphan, she was confident and independent. She relied on herself to pay for her college education, she worked and studied at the same time. She would give away all her money to help other people. He never met anyone like her before. It was love at first sight for him. He was determined to marry her and give her a happy family.

Earlier when he heard Qiao Tan Yuan insult the woman he love, it felt like Qiao Tan Yuan was insulting him.

‘Big brother Jiao Wu, I love you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘This girl isn’t suited to be with you. I’m the person who is suited to be with you.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t look at Qiao Tan Yuan, he stepped in front of Chu Da and hugged Chu Da.

‘Don’t be scared, I’m here,’ Gu Jiao Wu said to Chu Da.

‘Jiao Wu,’ Chu Da called and shook her head.

Chu Da wasn’t scared but she felt insecure. What Qiao Tan Yuan said was true, she wasn’t suitable to be with Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Jiao Wu, I...’ Chu Da said.

‘Don’t say anything,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu knew what Chu Da wanted to say. He turned around to look at Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I’m warning you a second time, there won’t be a third time. I never loved you or toyed with your feelings. In the future, stay away from me.’

If Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t there protecting Chu Da, Qiao Tan Yuan would have slapped Chu Da’s cheeks hard enough to make Chu Da remember for a lifetime. She hated weak females like Chu Da. Didn’t Gu Jiao Wu say he hated girls who cry? Didn’t he say girls who cry are ugly? Why did he love Chu Da who was crying?

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Chu Da put a spell on Gu Jiao Wu to make him change. But she wasn’t going to give up on Gu Jiao Wu. She turned around and left. But in her heart she was determined to make Gu Jiao Wu belong to her.

On the anniversary day of dating Gu Jiao Wu a year, Chu Da decided to give her guarded virginity to Gu Jiao Wu. Even though she was insecure about not being suited to be with Gu Jiao Wu, they loved each other. They weren’t married, but he gave her a feeling of belonging in a happy family. That night, she cooked Gu Jiao Wu dinner and offered her heart and body to him. Gu Jiao Wu was a man, she was the woman he loved and planned to marry so he accepted her heart and body.

Since Chu Da and Gu Jiao Wu lived together, she thought it was the most beautiful period in her life. But lately she experienced regular pain on the lower region of her stomach. She didn’t want to worry Gu Jiao Wu so when he drove her to the city to introduce her to his family, she went to see a doctor at a hospital when he went to see his family and prepare them to meet her.

At the hospital, the doctor who examined Chu Da, informed her she had ovarian cancer and was at the final stage. After treatment, she would be infertile

and could never be a mother.

Outside the hospital, Chu Da's sky had fallen. She had ovarian cancer and couldn't be a mother. Heavens, she loved children. After she lived with Gu Jiao Wu, she never thought she couldn't have a child with him. She thought if they had a son, their son would look like Gu Jiao Wu and if they had a daughter, their daughter would look like her.

Chu Da didn't know how she managed to return to the hotel. She entered the elevator in a daze and didn't notice the people around her. She kept thinking about how Gu Jiao Wu would react after he found out she couldn't give him the opportunity to be a father.

End of Chapter Six (Part 1)

Related

part 2



Chapter Six (Part 2 of 2)

Qiao Tan Yuan arrived at the hotel.

The moment Qian Tan Yuan saw Chu Da entered the elevator, she didn't get a chance to confront Chu Da because Chu Da was in a daze looking at a medical report. Was Chu Da sick?

Qiao Tan Yuan thought the heavens were on her side. She glanced over Chu Da's shoulder. Chu Da had ovarian cancer?

The elevator doors opened, Qiao Tan Yuan followed the dazed Chu Da to a hotel room. Inside the hotel room, Qiao Tan Yuan confronted Chu Da a third time.

'I'll give you five hundred thousand to leave Jiao Wu,' Qiao Tan Yuan offered.

Chu Da finally registered she had ovarian cancer and her misty eyes looked at Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan had a friend who was a doctor that specialised in treating cancer patients. She knew how expensive cancer treatments were.

'Look at yourself, you're sick,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'm willing to pay for your treatments. After your treatments are successful, you can live a good life. But

even after treatments, you can't have children. Gu Jiao Wu is a firstborn of the Gu Household. He can't marry a woman who can't have children. You should voluntarily retreat. Or else when his grandparents and parents hate you, you'll have to deal with the consequences.'

Qiao Tan Yuan purposely said too much. But she was happy to death to see Chu Da's white complexion. As long as Chu Da agreed to leave Gu Jiao Wu, five hundred thousand was nothing, she was even willing to give Chu Da one million.

Qiao Tan Yuan signed a cheque and waved it in front of Chu Da's face.

'I thought I lost hope,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'But now I can't let go. The Gu Household would never accept an infertile woman.'

'You don't need to say anymore, I'll leave,' Chu Da said.

Chu Da accepted the cheque and left the hotel room.

Qiao Tan Yuan was overjoyed she got rid of Chu Da. She thought Gu Jiao Wu didn't love Chu Da deeply otherwise he would have introduced Chu Da to his family already. Unbeknownst to her, Gu Jiao Wu wanted to protect Chu Da from his family's harsh scrutiny for as long as possible, and Chu Da was the most important person in his life.

Qiao Tan Yuan asked the hotel staff to change the beddings then she waited on the bed for Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu ate lunch at the Gu Mansion and he informed his parents he would bring Chu Da to meet them at dinner. But when he returned to the hotel room, he only saw Qiao Tan Yuan and couldn't see Chu Da anywhere.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, what are you doing here?' Gu Jiao Wu asked accusingly. 'Where's Chu Da?'

'She left,' Qiao Tan Yuan said happily.

'Left?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Where? Did you force her to leave?'

'Yes,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She stood in front of Gu Jiao Wu and clapped her hands mockingly. 'Big brother Jiao Wu, she doesn't love you. I gave her a five hundred thousand cheque, she took it and left. She loves your money, she doesn't love you-'

Gu Jiao Wu slapped Qiao Tan Yuan's cheek hard. 'Qiao Tan Yuan, what right do you have to interfere in my business? I warned you to stay away from me. Who do you think you are?'

'She loves your money,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She bit her lips crazily. 'Gu Jiao Wu, wake up. You're only worth five hundred thousand. Your woman left you for five hundred thousand. You...'

Qiao Tan Yuan could see Gu Jiao Wu was about to slap her again. She bit her lips and didn't allow herself to cry.

'Go ahead and hit me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'No matter how you hit me, it can't change the truth. The woman you loved, left you for five hundred thousand.'

Gu Jiao Wu retrieved his hand. He didn't have a habit of hitting women. Before Qiao Tan Yuan provoked him and he slapped her. His red eyes glared at her.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, leave,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I don't want to see you.'

'I want to force you to see me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Gu Jiao Wu, wake up. I'm the person who truly loves you. She didn't love you.'

'Are you leaving or not?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. He could still smell Chu Da's fragrance. He bit his lips and looked contemptuously at Qiao Tan Yuan. 'If you're not leaving, I'll leave.'

Gu Jiao Wu turned around and left to find Chu Da.

But since that day, Chu Da disappeared. Gu Jiao Wu couldn't find her even after a month. He looked for her at her school and places they visited often.

Gu Jiao Wu used his connections to find Chu Da around the country, but no one saw her.

Time past quickly, on New Year's Day, Gu Jiao Wu ate dinner with his family and drank with his friends at night. Because he still couldn't find Chu Da, he didn't have an appetite and only drank to forget his pain.

Gu Jiao Wu hated himself for being powerless. Why couldn't he find Chu Da? He believed Chu Da would never accept Qiao Tan Yuan's money. Qiao Tan Yuan was a MF, he was a MF too.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't understand what he did wrong? Why couldn't he find Chu

Da? Chu Da, where did you go?

Gu Jiao Wu's friends didn't know what happened, but no one dared to persuade Gu Jiao Wu to stop drinking except Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Jiao Wu, stop drinking,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu heard Qiao Tan Yuan's hateful voice. 'Leave.'

Qiao Tan Yuan's body froze after seeing the intense hatred in Gu Jiao Wu's eyes.

'Big brother Jiao Wu, you don't need to be like this, she...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'I dare you to say her name one more time,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Do you believe I'll strangle you to death if you say her name?'

Gu Jiao Wu drank another beer can.

A while later, Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't stand watching Gu Jiao Wu poison his body with alcohol, and opened a beer can.

'If you want to drink then I'll drink with you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Who wants to drink with you?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. He snatched the beer can from Qiao Tan Yuan's hand. 'Stay away from me.'

'Gu Jiao Wu...' Qiao Tan Yuan called frustratingly, stood and left.

Four days later, Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't stand Gu Jiao Wu drinking himself to death. So she secretly put a sleeping pill in his wine glass. Then she asked Shen Cheng to help her carry the drunk Gu Jiao Wu home.

At the Gu Mansion, the elders were asleep. Shen Cheng and Qiao Tan Yuan carried Gu Jiao Wu into Gu Jiao Wu's bedroom and laid Gu Jiao Wu on the bed.

'Tan Yuan, I'll drive you home,' Shen Cheng said.

'No need,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She shook her head and looked at the drunk Gu Jiao Wu. 'I need to stay here and take care of him.'

Qiao Tan Yuan was scared something would happen to Gu Jiao Wu after consuming alcohol and a sleeping pill.

'But...' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng didn't know Qiao Tan Yuan gave Gu Jiao Wu a sleeping pill, he only thought Gu Jiao Wu was drunk.

'No but,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Big brother Cheng, you can go home. I'll stay here and take care of him.'

'Tan Yuan...' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng understood Qiao Tan Yuan's heart. Qiao Tan Yuan compared to Lam Tian Di, Lam Tian Di lived a blessed life because Gu Jiao Wen loved Lam Tian Di. While since the start, Qiao Tan Yuan's love was unrequited.

'Tan Yuan, I can take you anywhere you want to go,' Shen Cheng said. 'Auntie Zhang can take care of Gu Jiao Wu.'

'No need,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Big brother Cheng, you can go home. I'll stay here to take care of him.'

'OK,' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng knew he couldn't persuade Qiao Tan Yuan to leave with him. He walked to the door, turned around and worried about Qiao Tan Yuan for a while. He sighed and left.

After Shen Cheng left, Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Gu Jiao Wu's cold drunk face. She stepped to the bed. It was the first time she saw Gu Jiao Wu's handsome face at a close distance, because he always pushed her away and hated her.

'Jiao Wu...' Qiao Tan Yuan called. She dared to stroke Gu Jiao Wu's eyelids because she knew he wouldn't wake up suddenly. 'Why won't you look at me? I love you more than anyone else who loves you. Why don't you love me?'

Qiao Tan Yuan's heart hurt too much. But she couldn't cry. She kissed Gu Jiao Wu's lips, it was her first kiss that she saved for him. She liked the taste of wine on his lips.

Was it because Qiao Tan Yuan loved someone too long, and could accept everything about the person she loved?

Qiao Tan Yuan laid next to Gu Jiao Wu, something he would never let her do if he was awake.

'Jiao Wu, did you know I waited for this day for a long time?' Qiao Tan Yuan

asked.

Suddenly Qiao Tan Yuan thought of something and sat up. What if her parents found out she didn't sleep at home and found her in bed with Gu Jiao Wu...

Qiao Tan Yuan's heart raced fast. She clenched her hands and stood. It was the perfect opportunity, and there was no reason for her not to seize the opportunity. She turned off her phone and began to take off Gu Jiao Wu's clothes. It was her first time taking off someone else's clothes. She felt shy, sweaty and struggled to take off his clothes.

After a while, Qiao Tan Yuan threw Gu Jiao Wu's clothes on the floor and took off her clothes. Then she laid next to him and thought of something else. She stood and walked to the study room. She found dark red stamp ink, returned to the bed and smudged it on the middle of the bed before lying next to him again.

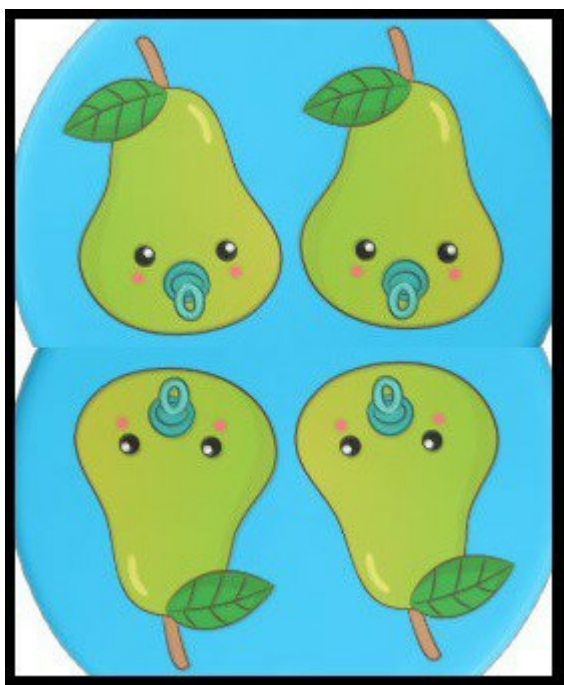
The following morning, as Qiao Tan Yuan predicted, her parents couldn't find her in her bedroom. They couldn't connect to her phone so they rang Shen Cheng, he told them she was at the Gu Mansion.

A while later, Wang Tu Ya and Gu Qi Jiang didn't know why Qiao Tan Yuan's parents came to the Gu Mansion early in the morning and said that Qiao Tan Yuan was at the Gu Mansion. The four of them checked in Gu Jiao Wu's bedroom, and saw the two of them in bed together.

End of Chapter Six (Part 2 of 2)

Related

Seven



Chapter Seven

‘I slept with you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She knew she couldn’t turn back. ‘I’m your woman, you have to take responsibility.’

‘Responsibility?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘You’re certain I slept with you?’

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She pointed at the dark red stain on the bed. ‘You were drunk last night.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan...’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu thought the situation was absurd. He had strong control over his urges. Why couldn’t he remember what happened? How much did he drink last night? Did he sleep with Qiao Tan Yuan and had no recollection?

‘OK, Qiao Tan Yuan, if you want to marry me, I’ll marry you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Jiao Wu, you want to marry me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t expect Gu Jiao Wu would agree to marry her so easily.

‘Yes, I’ll marry you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Prepare yourself, in this lifetime I won’t sleep with you. If you can accept my decision then we’ll get married.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know what Gu Jiao Wu’s motives were.

During their three year marriage, Qiao Tan Yuan found out why Gu Jiao Wu married her. He used marriage to punish her. It was three years of hell, in the world, Gu Jiao Wu was the cruellest person. She lost herself during their marriage. No matter how she looked like, in front of Gu Jiao Wu, she didn’t exist.

At the start of their marriage, Qiao Tan Yuan put aside her career in the city and followed Gu Jian Wu to the small southern district. But after a month of living in a remote village, she returned to the city. She couldn’t stand being in a quiet place with no trendy places, makeup and clothes. After she returned to the city, they spent more time apart than together.

During their marriage, Gu Jiao Wu had many opportunities to stay in the city often, but he rarely returned to the city because he didn’t want to be in the same place as Qiao Tan Yuan. She realised no matter what she did or how much she loved him, he never loved her.

Four years later, Qiao Tan Yuan sat on the bed and looked out the window into the beautiful garden. She thought the heavens didn’t want her to be too arrogant. She was given a loving family and a comfortable lifestyle so the heavens didn’t want her to receive love from the man she loved.

Qiao Tan Yuan rubbed her stomach, and thought about the young woman who looked like Chu Da at the cafe. If Chu Da left four years ago, why did Chu Da return... to be with Gu Jiao Wu? If it was true then it proved she had no hope left, hers and Gu Jiao Wu’s life paths would never meet again. She berated herself, they were divorced. Who Gu Jiao Wu chose to spend his life with was none of her business.

At the cafe, Gu Jiao Wu sat coldly opposite Li Lam for twenty-five minutes.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, is sitting here with me hard to endure?’ Li Lam asked.

‘No,’ Gu Jiao Wu said politely.

If Wang Tu Ya and Mrs Li didn’t leave Gu Jiao Wu to wait at the cafe with Li Lam, he would have made an excuse to leave sooner.

‘Miss Li, I...’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You have somewhere you need to be?’ Li Lam asked. ‘I don’t mind if you leave first.’

Gu Jiao Wu stood. The look in Li Lam’s eyes, showed him that she wasn’t a simple person.

Later, at the Gu Mansion, Tan Pan Ting and Gu Jiao Wen shared the good news with their family.

‘Really?’ Chen Ting Yu asked. She sat on the sofa in the living room, and looked at Tan Pan Ting’s stomach. ‘No wonder Pan Ting’s stomach is this big. She’s having twins.’

Tan Pan Ting felt awkward more than happy while sitting in front of everyone, including Gu Tian Chu.

‘Yes, Jiao Wen said it wasn’t good to have too many ultra sounds so I only made appointments for ultra sounds when necessary,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘We didn’t expect to have twins.’

‘This is good news,’ Chen Ting Yu said. She clapped her hands and looked at Gu Qi Jiang. ‘I wonder if Pan Ting will give birth to a boy and a girl like me that year.’

A boy and a girl? Tan Pan Ting didn’t think about the twins’ gender. She was happy to give birth to healthy twins, she didn’t care about the twins’ gender.

‘Mum, you shouldn’t have high expectations,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. ‘It’s rare to have twins, it’s rarer to have a boy and a girl. Don’t pressure Pan Ting.’

‘I said one thing and my son says I’m pressuring his wife,’ Chen Ting Yu said.

‘Jiao Wen,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘It’s OK, I hope it’s a boy and girl too.’

Tan Pan Ting didn’t want speculations about the twins’ gender to spoil the happy atmosphere.

‘Pan Ting, I didn’t say it to pressure you,’ Chen Ting Yu said. ‘I’m happy to hear you’re having twins.’

‘We should celebrate Pan Ting having twins,’ Gu Tian Chu said.

‘There’s no need for a celebration,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

Gu Jiao Wen patted Tan Pan Ting's hand. 'It's OK, grandpa's happy and wants to celebrate.'

Gu Jiao Wu entered the living room and Gu Qi Jiang called him to sit.

'Jiao Wu, you're home,' Gu Qi Jiang said. 'Won't you taking your mum out? Why are you home by yourself?'

'Mum is shopping with Mrs Li,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I've arranged a driver to drive mum home.'

Gu Qi Jiang nodded.

'Jiao Wu, stay home tonight,' Gu Tian Chu said. 'Pan Ting is having twins. We're having a celebratory dinner tonight. You should call Jiao Mai to come home too. It's been a long time since our family had good news to celebrate.'

'Twins?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. He looked at Tan Pan Ting's stomach then he looked at Gu Jiao Wen. 'Congratulations.'

'Big brother, I'm going to be a father of twins,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'It's time for big brother to move faster.'

The atmosphere in the room turned awkward for a while.

'Jiao Wu, you've been working in the southern district for a year,' Gu Qi Jiang said. 'Have you thought about moving back here?'

'Is there an opportunity here?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Qi Jiang nodded. 'Mr Chen recommended you to be the head of the Finance Department. Son, if you want to accept the position, I'll approve the recommendation.'

'Head of the Finance Department?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu was surprised to be offered the CFO position.

'Yes, you're ready to take on the position,' Gu Qi Jiang said.

'OK,' Gu Jiao Wu accepted.

Gu Jiao Wu stood and left the living room. Gu Jiao Wen patted Tan Pan Ting's hand and chased after Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu stopped near his bedroom after he heard Gu Jiao Wen's footsteps.

'What is it?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I have something I want to discuss with big brother,' Gu Jiao Wen said.

Gu Jiao Wen didn't want to discuss with Gu Jiao Wu Qiao about Tan Yuan's pregnancy in front of the elders.

Gu Jiao Wu nodded and led Gu Jiao Wen to the study room.

'Big brother, have you seen Qiao Tan Yuan since you returned?' Gu Jiao Wen asked directly.

Gu Jiao Wu frowned at the mention of Qiao Tan Yuan's name. 'So what if I saw her?'

'Big sister is pregnant,' Gu Jiao Wen said.

'I know,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I saw her today.'

Gu Jiao Wen sighed in relief to see Gu Jiao Wu's calmness.

'Big brother, so you're not the father of her baby?' Gu Jiao Wen asked.

'I'm not the father,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'How can I be the father of her baby?'

'Really?' Gu Jiao Wen asked. 'That's good. I thought she was pregnant with big brother's baby before the divorce.'

'We divorced a year ago,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'What she does with her life is none of my business.'

'Oh?' Gu Jiao Wen asked. 'Pan Ting is having twins. That's why her stomach is this big at six months. Usually eight month pregnant women's stomachs are this big.'

Gu Jiao Wu was stunned. He remembered how big Qiao Tan Yuan's stomach was at the cafe. Qian Tan Yuan's stomach was as big as Tan Pan Ting. Was Qiao Tan Yuan having twins like Tan Pan Ting too?'

End of Chapter Seven

Related

Eight



Chapter Eight

‘At the hospital, she said she’s eight months pregnant,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

‘What are you implying?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Nothing,’ Gu Jiao Wen said in the same cheeky tone of voice as Tan Pan Ting. ‘Big brother hates big sister that much, you wouldn’t sleep with her.’

‘Say what you want to say,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wen shrugged his shoulders. ‘I have nothing to say except big brother, if you didn’t sleep with big sister there’s no problem. But if you slept with her...’

Gu Jiao Wu’s hands gripped the table.

‘If big brother is the father of big sister’s baby, her baby is the first born of the next generation of the Gu Household...’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t need to hear the rest to understand. He wanted to choke Gu Jiao Wen’s cheeky neck.

‘Have you said enough?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I’m done,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. ‘I’m going to go find my wife.’

Gu Jiao Wen left Gu Jiao Wu to brood alone.

After dinner, Gu Jiao Wu drove to the Qiao Mansion.

Gu Jiao Wu parked near the Qiao Mansion's front gate. But another car parked in front of the Qiao Mansion before him. It was Shen Cheng. Shen Cheng carried gifts to the front door and a Qiao assistant opened the door for Shen Cheng. His brows creased and he decided to come back another day.

Three days later, Gu Jiao Wu was busy with work meetings and didn't have time to think about whether he was the father of Qiao Tan Yuan's baby.

Gu Jiao Wu took the subway to meetings to avoid speculation about his status. It was crowded and noisy on the train.

'Gu Jiao Wu?' Li Lam asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't know how long Li Lam was standing next to him on the train.

'I didn't expect you to ride the subway,' Li Lam said.

'Hello,' Gu Jiao Wu greeted politely.

'Why aren't you driving?' Li Lam asked.

'Inconvenient,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'True,' Li Lam said. 'It's busy in the city. Many cars and hard to find parking.'

'Um,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

The train stopped at a station and a group of passengers entered the train. Li Lam used the opportunity to fall onto Gu Jiao Wu's chest.

'I'm sorry,' Li Lam said.

'It's nothing,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu held her arms to steady her.

'Thank you,' Li Lam said. 'It's crowded in this carriage.'

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Li Lam and she held onto a pole. Li Lam's fragrance was familiar and she looked like Chu Da. But Li Lam and Chu Da had different surnames, they couldn't be twin sisters. How could there be two unrelated people who looked alike?

Gu Jiao Wu didn't know why Li Lam wore the same fragrance as Chu Da. Chu Da wasn't physically beautiful, but he loved Chu Da's soothing fragrance on Chu

Da's body. He remembered his last day with Chu Da. He and Chu Da slept together at the hotel. Afterward he drove to the Gu Mansion to prepare his family to meet Chu Da at dinner. But when he returned to the hotel, he only saw Qiao Tan Yuan and couldn't see Chu Da.

Gu Jiao Wu creased his brows, closed his eyes and thought deeply. Where was Chu Da? Why didn't he hear any news of Chu Da after four years?

'Gu Jiao Wu?' Li Lam asked.

Gu Jiao Wu opened his eyes. 'Chu Da...'

'Yes,' Li Lam said. 'I'm Chu Da.'

'Chu Da,' Gu Jiao Wu called.

Gu Jiao Wu mistook Li Lam for Chu Da while he was reminiscing about Chu Da. But he regained his senses and let go of Li Lam after he realised his mistake.

Passengers were accustomed to young couples embracing on trains so no one noticed Gu Jiao Wu hugged Li Lam.

'I'm sorry,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'It's nothing,' Li Lam said and coughed awkwardly.

It was the first time Gu Jiao Wu thought about Chu Da and substituted another person as Chu Da.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't believe there could be two people who looked alike and wore the same fragrance.

After Gu Jiao Wu got off the train, him hugging Li Lam was passed off as a dream.

Gu Jiao Wu called an assistant. 'Help me investigate a person.'

A while later, Gu Jiao Wu hung up the phone. He was determined to find out who was Li Lam.

When Gu Jiao Wu returned to the Gu Mansion, Gu Jiao Wen was leaving with Tan Pan Ting to take a stroll. Gu Jiao Wu looked at Tan Pan Ting's stomach, and he immediately thought about Qiao Tan Yuan's baby. Why did Qiao Tan Yuan lie to him about being six months pregnant instead of eight months pregnant? He

took out his car key and drove to the Qiao Mansion.

It was a hot summer day, at the Qiao Mansion, Shen Cheng was taking a stroll around the front garden with Qiao Tan Yuan.

Gu Jiao Wu stood nearby. He was surprised to see Shen Cheng holding Qiao Tan Yuan's hand, and she was smiling gently at Shen Cheng. He frowned, he had never seen Qiao Tan Yuan's gentleness. He looked at Qiao Tan Yuan's big stomach, and clenched his hands.

If Qiao Tan Yuan was eight months pregnant then she was pregnant before the divorce. But Gu Jiao Wu asked her to take the day after pill that morning to prevent pregnancy. How was it possible he was the father? But she lied to him about being six months pregnant instead of eight months pregnant so she could have lied to him about taking the pill. If he was the father, why didn't she use his baby to hold onto him instead of choosing to divorce him? Didn't she say she loved him the most?

It was the first time Gu Jiao Wu was confused, he didn't expect it would be Qiao Tan Yuan who made him feel confused. The gentleness on Qiao Tan Yuan's face wasn't the same face in his memories. He laughed at himself, he must have been seeing things. What was he doing at the Qiao Mansion? Qiao Tan Yuan's pregnancy had nothing to do with him. But if he was the father of Qiao Tan Yuan's baby... the baby was a legitimate first born of the Gu Household.

End of Chapter Eight

Related

Nine



Chapter Nine

Gu Jiao didn't care about having an heir.

But Wang Tu Ya always nagged him to remarry and have a child. A legitimate first born? He scrunched his cold face and watched Qiao Tan Yuan and Shen Cheng walk together for a while.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked for a shady spot to rest. Since she was pregnant, she easily felt hot. There was a shady bench in front of a water fountain.

'Are you tired?' Shen Cheng asked. 'We can sit over there and rest.'

'Um,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan's body weight was heavy past the eighth month of pregnancy. Shen Cheng supported her back and he helped her walk to the bench.

Qian Tan Yuan sat next to Shen Cheng, she shielded her eyes with her hands and looked up at the bright sky.

'Today is a beautiful day,' Qian Tan Yuan said.

'Not a bad day,' Shen Cheng said. 'But it's not as beautiful as you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan's cheeks turned pink and she looked away from Shen Cheng's gaze.

'Shen Cheng...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Shen Cheng was by Qiao Tan Yuan's side during the hardest period of her life, his love for her surpassed that of a friend. She was grateful toward him and deeply moved by his sincerity. She tried hard to return his love. But in her head

and heart were still shadows of Gu Jiao Wu. Especially the past several days since she saw Gu Jiao Wu at the cafe. She told herself to forget Gu Jiao Wu, but always dreamt of Gu Jiao Wu at night.

Qiao Tan Yuan could feel how deeply Shen Cheng loved her, but she couldn't find a way to accept his love. She remembered last New Year's Day, he reserved a table at a restaurant, knelt in front of her with everyone watching and proposed to her. She was deeply moved by his proposal, but she didn't accept his ring and her heart felt sorry toward him. She was selfish for wanting to keep him by her side as a friend during hard times.

'Shen Cheng, do you think I'm a selfish person?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan loved Gu Jiao Wu selfishly and didn't think of the consequences. It was her fault her baby wouldn't receive a father's love, and she selfishly kept Shen Cheng by her side.

'I'm really selfish,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Tan Yuan, don't say that,' Shen Cheng said. He held Qiao Tan Yuan's hand. 'I'm choosing to be with you.'

'I've caused you pain,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She bit her lips and her teary eyes looked at Shen Cheng. 'Shen Cheng, you don't have to treat me this good. I'm scared I'll...'

'Don't say anymore,' Shen Cheng said. 'Even now, don't you understand my heart?'

'I understand but I'm pregnant and my baby isn't...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was too stunned to say anything else, Gu Jiao Wu was walking toward her. She didn't know when Gu Jiao Wu arrived in the garden, he looked like a king walking toward his subjects. He wore a simple white shirt and black pants. The sunlight behind him made him appear taller, and his shadow longer.

Shen Cheng followed Qiao Tan Yuan's gaze. He was surprised to see Gu Jiao Wu, and immediately put his guard up to protect Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Big brother,' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng grew up together with Gu Jiao Wu and their friendship was

unaffected. He didn't think it was Gu Jiao Wu's fault that Gu Jiao Wu didn't love Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Um,' Gu Jiao Wu said while only looking at Qiao Tan Yuan's stomach. 'Shen Cheng, I want to speak privately with Qiao Tan Yuan.'

'I'll give you two privacy,' Shen Cheng said and stood.

Qiao Tan Yuan held onto Shen Cheng's hand, she didn't want him to leave her alone with Gu Jiao Wu.

Qiao Tan Yuan had to tilt her head back to look at Gu Jiao Wu, and she couldn't control her heart from beating fast. She held Shen Cheng's hand tighter.

'Gu Jiao Wu, if you want to say something to me, you can say it in front of Shen Cheng too,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'He and I don't keep secrets from each other. He doesn't need to leave.'

Gu Jiao Wu noticed the brief anxiety in Shen Cheng's eyes before Shen Cheng avoided eye contact with him.

Shen Cheng knew the city was big. But if Gu Jiao Wu came to the Qiao Mansion to find Qiao Tan Yuan then Gu Jiao Wu must have suspected Gu Jiao Wu was the father of Qiao Tan Yuan's baby. He didn't know what Gu Jiao Wu would do.

'Qiao Tan Yuan,' Gu Jiao Wu said in a low cold tone of voice.

Qiao Tan Yuan held Shen Cheng's hand, and forced herself to look bravely at Gu Jiao Wu's intimidating eyes.

'What is it?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'You're eight months pregnant,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'I...' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'So what if I'm eight months pregnant?'

'The baby is mine,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'The baby isn't yours,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'The baby belongs to Shen Cheng.'

'If the baby isn't mine then why did you lie to me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I wanted you to feel uncomfortable,' Qiao Tan Yuan said calmly. 'I admit after I filed to divorce you, I was depressed. That night I asked Shen Cheng to take me out drinking. We were drunk, you're an adult, you understand what can happen

in that kind of situation.'

'Really?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't believe Qiao Tan Yuan. He noticed the brief surprise in Shen Cheng's eyes, and knew the baby was his.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, you dare deceive me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'When did I deceive you?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Don't think so highly of yourself. If my baby is yours then why did I divorce you?'

Gu Jiao Wu was lost for words. He didn't know why Qiao Tan Yuan would divorce him if the baby was his.

'I lied to you because Shen Cheng and I were together before the divorce was finalised,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I didn't want the divorce delayed, and I didn't tell you I was pregnant because my baby isn't yours.'

Gu Jiao Wu narrowed his eyes. He looked at Shen Cheng who looked guilty.

'Big brother, I'm sorry,' Shen Cheng said. 'I truly loved Tan Yuan since long ago. I didn't expect she would marry you. That day, she looked heartbroken and I couldn't control myself. Big brother, I'm sorry.'

Gu Jiao Wu fisted his hands after hearing Shen Cheng's guilty tone of voice. Was he angry? He didn't love Qiao Tan Yuan, who she slept with had nothing to do with him so he didn't need to be angry.

'If you truly loved her then four years ago you should have stopped her,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

If Shen Cheng stopped Qiao Tan Yuan from marrying Gu Jiao Wu then Gu Jiao Wu wouldn't be troubled by Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Big brother...' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng did think about stopping Qiao Tan Yuan marrying Gu Jiao Wu, but Qiao Tan Yuan's heart and eyes were blindly in love four years ago and didn't see anyone else except Gu Jiao Wu.

Since Qiao Tan Yuan was a young student, many males pursued her but she didn't pay them any attention. If she didn't stubbornly love Gu Jiao Wu then she

wouldn't have suffered.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't understand if Shen Cheng was the father then why didn't Shen Cheng marry Qiao Tan Yuan months ago? It occurred to him that Shen Cheng's family must have opposed Shen Cheng marrying Qiao Tan Yuan.

Gu Jiao Wu patted Shen Cheng's shoulder. 'If uncle and aunty Shen won't give their blessing, I'll go speak to them in person.'

'Big brother...' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng couldn't believe Gu Jiao Wu would think that far. 'Big brother, it's OK. My parents have given their blessing. Tan Yuan are waiting to get married after our baby is born.'

'Um,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to interfere in Qiao Tan Yuan and Shen Cheng's private business. But he thought it was a pity such a decent man like Shen Cheng was marrying someone like Qiao Tan Yuan. It was Shen Cheng's life to ruin, he wasn't going to dissuade Shen Cheng's decision.

'Take care of yourself,' Gu Jiao Wu said coldly to Qiao Tan Yuan.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't wait for Qiao Tan Yuan's reply, he turned around and walked to the car.

Qiao Tan Yuan slumped her shoulders after Gu Jiao Wu was out of sight. Her back and hands were sweaty. She couldn't believe Gu Jiao Wu believed her lies.

'Shen Cheng, thank you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said and let go of Shen Cheng's hand.

If Qiao Tan Yuan didn't have Shen Cheng's support then Gu Jiao Wu would have seen through her lies. Gu Jiao Wu hated her, if Gu Jiao Wu knew the truth... she didn't want to think about what would happen.

End of Chapter Nine

Related

Ten



Chapter Ten

‘Tan Yuan, what do you want to do?’ Shen Cheng asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan bit her lips. She only thought about safely delivering her baby and didn’t think too far into the future.

‘Shen Cheng, let’s get married,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Shen Cheng saw sunlight shining on Qiao Tan Yuan’s small face, but he remembered her cold sweaty hand and understood.

‘If this is what you want, let’s get married,’ Shen Cheng said.

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded. ‘Shen Cheng, let’s get married. I promise in the future I’ll give birth to your children.’

‘Tan Yuan, do you think I care about who’s the father?’ Shen Cheng asked. He patted Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand. ‘Don’t overthink things. The most important thing is you having a healthy pregnancy. I want you to be happy. We’ll wait until the baby is born then we’ll get married.’

‘Um,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Shen Cheng, I promise I’ll be a good daughter-in-law and a good wife.’

‘Dummy, I love you for who you are, I don’t need you to give me anything,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘No matter what you look like, I’ll still love you.’

‘Shen Cheng...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She was deeply moved and hugged Shen Cheng. ‘Shen Cheng, thank you.’

Shen Cheng's existence showed Qiao Tan Yuan how blessed she was. She had someone who loved her and was sad to see her sad.

In the distance, Gu Jiao Wu turned on the engine. He looked out the window and saw Shen Cheng hugging Qiao Tan Yuan. His eyes darkened and he calmly drove off.

Later at the Shen Mansion, Shen Cheng discussed marriage plans with Mrs Shen in the living room.

'I don't approve,' Mrs Shen said. 'Xiao Cheng, I'll never give you my blessing to marry Giao Tan Yuan.'

'Mum...' Shen Cheng said. 'I want to marry Giao Tan Yuan.'

'There are many women for you to choose from,' Mrs Shen said. 'Why can't you choose a decent woman, why must you want to marry Giao Tan Yuan? You know about her and Gu Jiao Wu...'

'They're divorced,' Shen Cheng said. 'Giao Tan Yuan divorced Gu Jiao Wu. Why can't I be with Giao Tan Yuan?'

'What about her baby?' Mrs Shen asked. 'Why is she carrying the Gu Household's baby into the Shen Household?'

'Mum, it's my baby...' Shen Cheng said.

'Don't think you can deceive me,' Mrs Shen said. 'Xiao Cheng, we both know the baby belongs to Gu Jiao Wu.'

'Mum... you agreed as long as I get married, you'll give your blessing,' Shen Cheng said.

'Yes, I did agree,' Mrs Shen said. 'You can marry a former mistress if you wanted to, and I'll give you my blessing. But Xiao Cheng, I've known Qiao Tan Yuan since she was a little girl. In her heart there is only Gu Jiao Wu. If you two marry each other, neither of you will be happy.'

'In the past there's no room in her heart, but it doesn't mean in the future she won't love me,' Shen Cheng said.

'I'm telling you, in the future she still won't love you,' Mrs Shen said.

Mrs Shen saw Shen Cheng's stubbornness and sighed. 'Xiao Cheng, you know I love Qiao Tan Yuan. On paper, both of you look compatible. If you truly want to marry her, I won't oppose. But the truth is the person she loves and will always love is Gu Jiao Wu. If you marry someone who doesn't love you, you'll only suffer for the rest of your life.'

'It's enough there's only her in my heart,' Shen Cheng said. 'Mum, I loved her for a long time. Mum, give me your blessing.'

'If she wasn't pregnant, perhaps I would have given you my blessing,' Mrs Shen said. 'But she is pregnant, and the baby belongs to the Gu Household. I suspect the Gu Household doesn't know she is having Gu Jiao Wu's baby. But in the future the Gu Household will find out the truth, and we both know the Gu Household won't let you keep the baby.'

'I...' Shen Cheng said.

'Xiao Shen, I can't give you my blessing to marry her,' Mrs Shen said.

'Mum, if you don't give me your blessing then I'll ask dad,' Shen Cheng said.

Mr Shen loved Shen Cheng the most, he believed Mr Shen would approve.

'Don't look for your dad,' Mrs Shen said. 'As long as I don't give my blessing, there is no door for her to walk into the Shen Household.'

'Then I'll move out,' Shen Cheng said. 'I truly want to marry Tan Yuan.'

'OK, go ahead and marry her, but after you marry her, I'm no longer your mum,' Mrs Shen said.

'Mum...' Shen Cheng said. 'Don't force me. OK, I'll no longer be your son.'

Shen Cheng stood and left the Shen Mansion. Mrs Shen felt cornered. If she couldn't reason with Shen Cheng, she could only make a trip to see the elders of the Gu Household.

In the evening, Shen Cheng drove to the Qiao Mansion and picked up Qiao Tan Yuan to go to dinner.

At a restaurant near the Qiao Mansion, Qiao Tan Yuan picked up a piece of beef into Shen Cheng's bowl.

‘What’s wrong?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Did something happen at work?’

Shen Cheng shook his head and smiled. ‘Nothing. The beef here is delicious.’

‘The beef is delicious, it’s a pity I can’t drink wine,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘After you give birth, you can drink wine,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘Where do you want to go for our honeymoon?’

‘Honeymoon?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She thought it was too early to think about honeymoon destinations. But she saw the anticipation in Shen Cheng’s eyes. ‘I want to go to Denmark.’

‘Denmark?’ Shen Cheng asked. ‘I thought you would want to go to shopping destinations like Paris and Milan.’

‘You’re hateful, you make it sound like I only know how to go shopping,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Of course not,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘Right now, you’re uncle Qiao’s second in command. If we go somewhere like Paris and Milan, it can give you inspirations to help improve Qiao’s company’s goods and services.’

Qiao Tan Yuan remembered the first year being married to Gu Jiao Wu, she was too depressed to work. Instead she would go shopping. On the rare occasions Gu Jiao Wu was at the Gu Mansion, they would fight. Afterward she would go on another shopping spree. It was a nightmare.

Qiao Tan Yuan should thank Gu Jiao Wu, if it wasn’t for him, she wouldn’t be sick of shopping. Nor would she have focused her energy on working at Qiao’s company, and establishing her career.

‘What are you thinking?’ Shen Cheng asked. He could see Qiao Tan Yuan was lost in thought. ‘After you give birth, if you want to return to work and help Qiao’s company, I’ll support your decision.’

‘If you want me to focus on our family life, I don’t mind staying at home,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I don’t want to waste your potential,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘I truly mean it. In the future I’ll support any decision you make.’

‘Shen Cheng, thank you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was truly grateful toward Shen Cheng. She ate a piece of beef and promised herself she was going to give her baby a good life.

‘You don’t need to thank me,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘We’ll be husband and wife soon. You should hand over your workload to Qiao Jie. It’ll give you time to plan our wedding. We can get married after celebrating the baby’s one month milestone.’

‘Um,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

In the past Qiao Tan Yuan suffered in a one sided love, there was only Gu Jiao Wu in her heart. But in front of her was Shen Cheng who loved her deeply. She was determined not to disappoint Shen Cheng’s love. She would treat Shen Cheng well and build a happy family with Shen Cheng. She and Sheng Cheng would have more children together and hold hands for the rest of their lives. She was going to cherish their happy family.

At a shop nearby the restaurant, a six month pregnant Zheng Jia Ju was working as a shop assistant.

‘Executive Gu?’ Zheng Jia Ju asked.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Zheng Jia Ju’s stomach, and it made him think about his confrontation with Qiao Tan Yuan.

End of Chapter Ten

Related

Eleven



Chapter Eleven

‘I want to buy a dress for my mum,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Buy a dress? Zheng Jia Ju’s head spun. Why would someone rich like Gu Jiao Wu come to a small shop like hers to buy a dress for Wang Tu Ya? If customers were kings and queens, who was she to refuse kings and queens from buying a dress?

‘Executive Gu, do you know what style of dresses your mother likes and her dress size?’ Zheng Jia Ju asked.

‘Any style and a small dress size will do,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He didn’t know anything about dresses, they all look the same to him. ‘I’ll leave it up to you to decide.’

‘Yes Executive Gu,’ Zheng Jia Ju said.

Zheng Jia Ju selected two of her best dresses and showed them to Gu Jiao Wu. ‘Executive Gu, what do you think about these dresses?’

‘Good, wrap both of them up,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Zheng Jia Ju wished all her sales were as smooth.

Zheng Jia Ju wrapped the dresses in boxes and gave it to Gu Jiao Wu.

‘How much?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘The two dresses together is 1,500,’ Zheng Jia Ju said. ‘But I’ll give you a

discount. 1,200 is enough.'

'Um,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu gave the money to Zheng Jia Ju, but he didn't leave the shop immediately.

'Executive Gu, do you need something else?' Zheng Jia Ju asked.

Gu Jiao Wu looked awkwardly around the small shop then he looked at Zheng Jia Ju's stomach.

'Are you struggling?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'What?' Zheng Jia Ju asked. She was surprised about Gu Jiao Wu's sudden question. 'No, no, I'm not struggling.'

'If you're struggling, you can tell me and I'll help you,' Gu Jiao Wu said awkwardly.

Zheng Jia Ju thought about why Gu Jiao Wu would care about her welfare. Was he that free to run around and look for charity cases?

'I'm not struggling, Executive Gu, thank you for your concern,' Zheng Jia Ju said.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Zheng Jia Ju's stomach again. Zheng Jia Ju's stomach looked as big as Tan Pan Ting's stomach. He thought Gu Jiao Wen and the elders of the Gu Household served Tan Pan Ting like Tan Pan Ting was a goddess. In contrast, Zheng Jia Ju looked like she was a struggling pregnant woman on her own.

'I'm leaving,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He smiled politely and held out a business card in front of Zheng Jia Ju. 'If... you encounter any struggles, call this number.'

Zheng Jia Ju saw Gu Jiao Wu suddenly smile and thought he had ulterior motives. But she accepted the business card and understood.

'Oh... Executive Gu, did Tan Pan Ting asked you to come here?' Zheng Jia Ju asked.

Zheng Jia Ju recognised it was Tan Pan Ting's number. Tan Pan Ting worried about her and called her often, but she didn't talk to Tan Pan Ting about her

struggles.

Gu Jiao Wu nodded his head. 'Um, she sent me here to see if you're OK.'

'I'm OK,' Zheng Jia Ju said. She didn't want to involve Tan Pan Ting. 'Executive Gu, tell Tan Pan Ting not to worry about me.'

Gu Jiao Wu nodded and left the shop.

In the shop, Zheng Jia Ju sighed in relief. It was a shock to have someone like Gu Jiao Wu buy dresses from her small shop. Later she was going to call Tan Pan Ting, and ask Tan Pan Ting not to send scary rich people to check up on her.

The following day, Gu Jiao Wu was driving to a work meeting. He stopped the car after he saw someone familiar standing on the side of the road, the person's car was broken down.

'Gu Jiao Wu?' Li Lam asked. She pointed to her car. 'The engine's dead. I want to call road service, but my phone battery died too. It's good you're here. Can I borrow your phone?'

Gu Jiao Wu let Li Lam call road service. He was about to drive off when Li Lam ran to his car.

'Can you drive me to my work place?' Li Lam asked.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Li Lam's broken car and nodded.

'Thank you,' Li Lam said and sat in the front passenger seat.

'I'm sorry for inconveniencing you,' Li Lam said.

'It's nothing, what's the address?' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Li Lam told Gu Jiao Wu the address. 'Before many cars past by without helping. Thank you for stopping your car and helping me.'

'It's nothing,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu drove without looking at Li Lam. She popped a candy in her mouth and chewed. The chewing sound annoyed him.

'I eat candy when I'm nervous,' Li Lam said. 'Do you want a candy?'

Li Lam offered Gu Jiao Wu the candy, he glanced at it and thought of Chu Da,

four years ago...

‘Jiao Wu, I like eating candy when I’m feeling down,’ Chu Da said. ‘I feel better after eating candy. Do you want a candy?’

Gu Jiao Wu hated sweets. But he loved stealing candy from Chu Da’s mouth.

‘It’s sweet,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You’re hateful,’ Chu Da said.

Four years later, Gu Jiao Wu never got to steal candy from Chu Da’s mouth again.

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Li Lam called.

Gu Jiao Wu glanced at Li Lam. His heart knew Li Lam wasn’t Chu Da. Even after four years, Chu Da was still in his heart.

Gu Jiao Wu stopped the car in front of Li Lam’s work place. She got out of the car and he drove off without looking at her.

A while later, Gu Jiao Wu parked the car and noticed a candy on the passenger seat. Li Lam’s candy? What was her agenda?

Inside the building, Qiao Tan Yuan signed a contract and passed it to the secretary. She looked at the clock on the wall, it was nearly midday. No wonder she was hungry. She stood and walked to the elevator.

The elevator doors opened, Qiao Tan Yuan entered the elevator and thought she was seeing things. Gu Jiao Wu? He wore a cream shirt and black pants. She didn’t know if she should walk out of the elevator or endure.

Gu Jiao Wu looked calmly at Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘Level One?’

‘What?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Oh... yes.’

Gu Jiao Wu pressed the level one button and the elevator doors closed.

End of Chapter Eleven

Related

Twelve



Chapter Twelve

Qiao Tan Yuan stood next to Gu Jiao Wu inside the small elevator.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s heart pounded and she stole glances at Gu Jiao Wu. He looked stern as usual. The only times she had seen him sincerely smile was when he was with Chu Da. Her heart ached and she bit her bitter lips. She took a step away from him and told herself not to look at him anymore.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't notice Qiao Tan Yuan's secret glances. Qiao's company and Tong's company headquarters were in the same building. He had a meeting scheduled with Tong Shang Wen.

The elevator lights flickered, turned off and the emergency light turned on.

'Oh...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

The elevator shook and halted.

'Oh...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

One of Qiao Tan Yuan's hand protected her stomach and her other hand reached for something to hold onto to stop herself from falling. Gu Jiao Wu held onto her hand and braced her back.

'Thank you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan barely could see anything under the dim emergency light. But she heard her heart pounding and could smell Gu Jiao Wu's familiar body scent.

'What's wrong with the elevator?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Will it plummet?'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't hear Gu Jiao Wu's reply. She felt him let go of her hand, but she held his hand tighter. So his other hand let go of her back and reached for a phone in his suitcase.

'There's no reception here,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'It's useless to call for help.'

Qiao Tan Yuan hugged Gu Jiao Wu's waist and he looked at her stomach.

'Are you OK?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I'm scared,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

If Qiao Tan Yuan wasn't pregnant, she wouldn't be scared. But she was scared for her baby.

Qiao Tan Yuan wouldn't let go of Gu Jiao Wu's waist so he moved them a step back.

'Lean on the wall,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'I don't want to...' Qiao Tan Yuan said. Her baby kicked her stomach. 'I'm scared. Gu Jiao Wu, I'm begging you, don't let go of me.'

‘I’m not letting go,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He wasn’t that inhumane. ‘But it’s safer if we lean against a wall than standing in the middle of the elevator.’

‘Thank you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She moved to a wall with Gu Jiao Wu, but she didn’t let go of his waist. ‘How long do you think it’ll take security to know the elevator’s broken?’

‘I don’t know,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

The building had six elevators, but Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan were in a private elevator. She bit her lips, her forehead was sweaty and she felt too weak to even make a phone call.

‘Are you in pain?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I’m OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu suspected she was in pain, her heart was racing fast. He held the satellite phone above their heads and turned on the satellite phone. He could see her sweaty forehead reflected off the phone screen. She was looking at the elevator doors, she wrapped an arm around his waist and her other hand protected her stomach.

‘Does your stomach hurt?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded her head.

‘How many months are you pregnant?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Almost... nine months,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan winced, her stomach ached painfully. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, it hurts.’

‘Are you about to go into labour?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I think... I am,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. Her stomach pain hurt a lot more than usual. ‘It hurts... what am I going to do...’

Qiao Tan Yuan’s sweaty hair and face didn’t look like her usual beautiful self, and she held her stomach protectively. The sight disturbed Gu Jiao Wu’s heart. He noticed her bag and grabbed it.

‘What are you doing?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want Gu Jiao Wu to open her bag. But he opened it and

took out her phone.

‘Gu Jiao Wu,’ Qiao Tan Yuan called.

Gu Jiao Wu ignored Qiao Tan Yuan, swapped their phone sim cards and turned their phones on again.

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was embarrassed. The wallpaper on her phone was a photo of Gu Jiao Wu sleeping.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at the photo of himself, he didn’t know she took while he was sleeping.

‘Give back my phone,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu turned off their phones and swapped back their sim cards before turning their phones on again. Then he put Qiao Tan Yuan’s phone back in her bag.

Qiao Tan Yuan had watched Gu Jiao Wu sleep in the past. The photo on her phone was that night he slept peacefully. She tried to delete the photo many times, but her heart stopped her from deleting the photo.

She wondered if Gu Jiao Wu was mocking her. Her thoughts distracted her from her stomach pain. Then she heard his phone rang. How did he get reception in the elevator?

‘I’m stuck in the elevator,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Come get me out, and call an ambulance to come here. There’s a pregnant woman going into labour.’

Gu Jiao Wu hung up the satellite phone and looked at Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘Does it still hurt?’

‘Um, but not as painful,’ Qiao Tan Yuan lied. Her stomach pain intensified. ‘How did your phone get reception in here?’

‘There was reception before,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu carried a customized satellite phone in his suitcase. If he was in an emergency, after he switched sim cards with another phone, the Gu Household’s security would pinpoint his location and call the satellite phone.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't believe there would suddenly be reception in the elevator. If she wasn't in pain, she would get the truth out of him.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan holding her stomach tightly, and her forehead was sweatier. 'Can you hang in there?'

'I...' Qiao Tan Yuan said. Suddenly she felt stomach contractions, and one of her hands held onto Gu Jiao Wu's shirt. 'Gu Jiao Wu, what am I going to do? My stomach really hurts. I think I'm going into labour soon.'

Gu Jiao Wu panicked. What should he do? He never gave birth before. He thought about what he saw on TV. Then he held Qiao Tan Yuan's shoulders. 'Take deep breaths. Soon people will come here to rescue us.'

'I...' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Gu Jiao Wu, I'm really scared. What if something happens to my baby? I'm scared...'

'Calm down,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was never in a life and death situation before. He didn't know what to do. But he saw panic in Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes and forced himself to hide his own panic.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, calm down for the baby's sake,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'People will be here soon to help us, and we'll go straight to the hospital.'

'But...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan's face was pale under the dim emergency light. She hugged Gu Jiao Wu. 'My stomach really hurts. I'm scared. Gu Jiao Wu, tell me my baby is safe.'

End of Chapter Twelve

Related

Thirteen



Chapter Thirteen

‘You and the baby are safe,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s face whitened, she held Gu Jiao Wu’s hand tight. It was strange, he didn’t push her hand away. She leaned her body on his chest, he could feel her whole body shaking and her sweaty forehead. He wrapped an arm around her shoulder and looked at her panicked eyes.

‘Calm down, nothing will happen,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I... I’m tired,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She wasn’t tired, but in pain. The pain muddled her words. ‘What am I going to do...’

Qiao Tan Yuan’s body began to slump. She held a hand onto Gu Jiao Wu’s shirt, but her body slowly slipped down.

Gu Jiao Wu saw Qiao Tan Yuan falling onto the ground. He caught her before she fell. He helped her sit down next to him and propped her head on his shoulder.

‘Is this better?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t believe Gu Jiao Wu was holding her close to him. It wasn’t a dream, he didn’t let her fall and was holding onto to her.

Gu Jiao Wu was relieved Qiao Tan Yuan nodded her head. He wanted the emergency workers to come soon. Suddenly he felt something wet on his body. He looked down, it was a puddle of water and... blood between her legs. He was frightened and his eyes widened. He looked at her drained face, her hands held

onto his neck and she looked like she was in excruciating pain.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, are you OK?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to shake her head, but she felt another painful contraction and dug her nails into Gu Jiao Wu’s neck. But he couldn’t register any pain. He listened carefully for footsteps and was relieved to hear footsteps.

‘Wait a little longer,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘People are here to rescue us.’

‘My baby...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said weakly. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, I’m begging you to save my baby.’

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t say she was begging Gu Jiao Wu to save their baby.

‘Endure a little more,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu’s heart was racing fast too. He was frustrated the emergency workers didn’t open the elevator doors faster. He could hear anxious voices outside. He hugged Qiao Tan Yuan. Her usual arrogant self wasn’t visible, all he could see was a weak and helpless woman.

Gu Jiao Wu thought about how lately when he saw Qiao Tan Yuan, she looked like she changed into a different person. Was it a hallucination? Or didn’t he see her properly in the past? In his confused state, he didn’t hear what she said clearly until he felt her hands slip down from his neck.

‘Gu Jiao Wu,’ Qiao Tan Yuan called. ‘Promise me, you’ll save my baby.’

‘I promise,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt reassured and her body slumped down his chest.

Gu Jiao Wu panicked and held onto Qiao Tan Yuan’s shoulders. ‘Qiao Tan Yuan? Qiao Tan Yuan...’

The elevator doors opened slightly and someone shone a torch light into the elevator through the gap.

‘Is everyone OK in there?’ a paramedic asked.

‘There’s a pregnant woman in labour,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Quickly, take her to the hospital.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t care about what the emergency workers were doing to

rescue him and Qiao Tan Yuan. He only cared about Qiao Tan Yuan's weakened condition, but he appeared calm.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, wake up,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Can you hear the ambulance sirens? I'm taking you straight to the hospital.'

Gu Jiao Wu never met a pregnant woman who cared about their baby's welfare over themselves before. His heart was moved. His hand held Qiao Tan Yuan's hand tightly.

The elevator doors finally opened. Gu Jiao Wu carefully carried Qiao Tan Yuan outside the elevator and laid her down on the stretcher. He wanted to stand back to let the paramedics wheel her into the ambulance, but she grabbed his hand.

'Gu Jiao Wu, don't leave...' Qiao Tan Yuan mumbled.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't open her eyes, but she felt the moment she lost the warmth of Gu Jiao Wu's body. It was something she dreamt of, she didn't want to lose his warmth so soon and held onto his hand.

Tears flowed out of Qiao Tan Yuan's closed eyes and her whole body was in pain. She remembered the book she read in the cafe. She read giving birth was a level ten pain. But she thought giving birth wasn't as painful as her broken heart. Why didn't Gu Jiao Wu bother to glance at her once? They were divorced and she wasn't his wife anymore. But they were married for three years. Was she that insignificant in his eyes?

Gu Jiao Wu was confused. He looked at Qiao Tan Yuan's small whitened hand holding his hand tightly. Her palm was sweaty but he didn't let go of her. 'I'm not leaving. You have to endure a little longer. We'll be at the hospital soon.'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't say anything. Gu Jiao Wu didn't know how happy she was that he didn't leave her. He didn't know she was giving birth to their baby, but she knew.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't care what happened to her. She was reassured, Gu Jiao Wu wouldn't let anything happen to their baby. She felt another painful contraction and she clutched his hand.

Inside the ambulance, Gu Jiao Wu instructed the driver to drive faster. He

looked at Qiao Tan Yuan's hand clutching his hand and the sweat dripping down her forehead. It made his heart more confused.

In Gu Jiao Wu's memories, he had never seen Qiao Tan Yuan look weak and vulnerable. He remembered everything she said to him in the past, 'Gu Jiao Wu, I want you to love me... I love you, you need to love me... I'm your wife... I rather die than divorce you... I'll hold onto you for the rest of your life, you'll never escape me... I hate you... let's divorce...'

Gu Jiao Wu couldn't match the Qiao Tan Yuan he knew to the weak Qiao Tan Yuan lying on the stretcher in front of him. Her hand was colder by the moment and her complexion was paler. It made him worry about her.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, wake up,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Can you hear me?'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't respond and kept her eyes closed. She didn't know if she could survive the pain.

'Qiao Tan Yuan?' Gu Jiao Wu called.

Gu Jiao Wu saw Qiao Tan Yuan's lips moved slowly. He leaned closer to her lips and heard her faint mumble.

'My baby...' Qiao Tan Yuan mumbled.

Baby? Qiao Tan Yuan was worried about the baby? Gu Jiao Wu held onto her hand and reassured her.

'The baby is safe,' Gu Jiao Wu whispered in Qiao Tan Yuan's ear. 'You need to hang on.'

It wasn't peak traffic, but there were still many cars on the roads.

'How much long until we get to the hospital?' Gu Jiao Wu asked a paramedic.

'We're nearly there,' the paramedic said.

The ambulance driver was driving as fast as they could, but it was hard to navigate through the cars on the roads.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't say anything else. He looked at Qiao Tan Yuan's hand holding his hand. He used his free hand to call Shen Cheng on the emergency phone in the ambulance, but the ambulance suddenly braked and he dropped

the phone.

The paramedics wheeled Qiao Tan Yuan into the maternity ward where doctors and nurses were waiting for her. But she didn't let go of Gu Jiao Wu's hand so he had no choice but follow her to the delivery room.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to see Qiao Tan Yuan deliver the baby, but she wouldn't let go of his hand.

'Don't leave...' Qiao Tan Yuan mumbled.

Gu Jiao Wu couldn't leave after he heard Qiao Tan Yuan's weak plea. Although he had no obligations toward Qiao Tan Yuan. But he felt he had a duty to take care of her because she was a member of the Qiao Household and giving birth to his friend, Shen Cheng's baby.

Qiao Tan Yuan was carried onto the hospital bed in the delivery room. A female doctor examined her and turned to look at Gu Jiao Wu. 'Your wife's water broke and she's dilating. But your wife's bleeding too much.'

Gu Jiao Wu looked at his shirt, it was stained by Qiao Tan Yuan's blood.

The doctor looked down at Qiao Tan Yuan. 'Later you need to push when I say push.'

Qiao Tan Yuan heard the doctor's instruction, but she didn't have the strength to reply.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't have experience delivering babies. He kept his eyes on Qiao Tan Yuan's face. He didn't know if it was appropriate for a man to watch a woman give birth. He was about to let go of her hand, but she wouldn't let go. So he stepped closer to her and held onto her hand.

'I'm not leaving,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'You need to reserve your strengths to push when the doctor instructs you to push.'

'Push,' the doctor said.

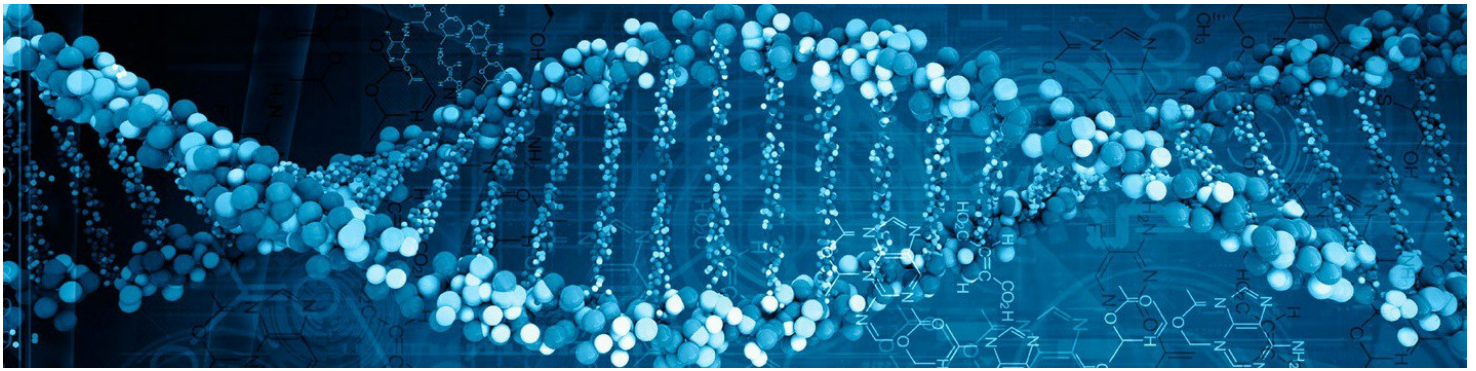
Qiao Tan Yuan pushed and felt like her body was being pried apart and her energy fading.

'The patient lost too much blood,' the doctor said.

End of Chapter Thirteen

Related

Fourteen



Chapter Fourteen

‘Do you want me to prioritise the patient or the baby?’ the doctor asked.

‘What?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan who was in so much pain that she couldn’t speak, and he made his choice.

‘Prioritise the patient,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan was still young, she and Shen Cheng could have another baby in the future.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t believe what she heard. She found reserved strengths to open her eyes.

‘Keep... the baby,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said firmly in a soft voice.

‘Make a final decision, the patient or the baby?’ the doctor asked.

‘The patient,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘The baby...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Doctor, I’m begging you to keep the baby.’

‘You’re crazy,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He hated to see her in a weak condition. ‘You’re still young. In the future you can have another baby.’

Didn’t Qiao Tan Yuan know she was in a life and death situation? Gu Jiao Wu thought she must be crazy if she wanted to keep the baby.

‘No...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted her baby. She was in immense pain. She held Gu Jiao

Wu's hand. 'Keep the baby.'

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted her baby, because the baby was Gu Jiao Wu's baby. It was her only chance to have Gu Jiao Wu's baby. She cried, she wanted to keep her baby.

Gu Jiao Wu was moved by Qiao Tan Yuan's determination to keep the baby. He saw her cry and held her hand. 'Qiao Tan Yuan...'

What was Qiao Tan Yuan thinking?

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to see the look in Gu Jiao Wu's eyes.

'Doctor, listen to me and keep the patient,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Prepare for a C-section,' the doctor said to the nurses.

Gu Jiao Wu would have wronged the Qiao Household and Shen Cheng if he let Qiao Tan Yuan risk her life.

The doctor was about to perform a C-section when Qiao Tan Yuan forced herself to keep her eyes open and look at Gu Jiao Wu.

'You don't have the right...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wouldn't allow Gu Jiao Wu to kill her baby. Her heart hurt too much. Gu Jiao Wu, how could he be so cruel? He hated her and he hated her baby. But he was the father, how could he kill her baby?

'I have the right,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If you want to keep the baby then you need to use all your strengths to give birth to the baby. Or...'

Qiao Tan Yuan knew what the alternative Gu Jiao Wu wanted to say was.

Gu Jiao Wu thought it would be meaningless if Qiao Tan Yuan died and the baby lived. If Shen Cheng was in the delivery room, he was certain Shen Cheng would make the same choice.

'You...' Qiao Tan Yuan said. Suddenly she felt the most painful contraction. 'Ah...'

Qiao Tan Yuan used her leftover strengths to push.

'That's right, push,' the doctor said.

Qiao Tan Yuan had one desire, she wanted her baby to live.

‘I can see the baby’s head,’ the doctor said. ‘One more push.’

‘Ah...’ Qiao Tan Yuan cried out and bit Gu Jiao Wu’s hand.

‘That’s right, push like the doctor instructed,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘One last push and you can see your baby.’

‘Ah...’ Qiao Tan Yuan cried out and bit Gu Jiao Wu’s hand harder.

Gu Jiao Wu’s hand bled, but he could only see the pain on Qiao Tan Yuan’s face.

Qiao Tan Yuan pushed again and felt her body completely drained.

‘Waah, waah...’ the baby cried.

Qiao Tan Yuan delivered her baby and fell unconscious.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan...’ Gu Jiao Wu called.

‘Congratulations, you have a daughter,’ the doctor said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t look at the baby or the doctor. He lost all feeling in his hand, Qiao Tan Yuan was unconscious.

‘Doctor, how is the patient?’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘The patient will be OK after resting,’ the doctor said and passed the baby to a nurse.

Gu Jiao Wu sighed in relief. After he regained his senses, he laughed at himself. What was he thinking? Why was he worried about Qiao Tan Yuan’s survival? Was it because he didn’t want to be the one to tell Shen Cheng, Qiao Tan Yuan died under his watch? He didn’t want to think about why anymore. He grabbed a tissue and wipe the blood off his hand. Then he turned around to leave, but the nurse carrying the baby stood in front of him.

‘Sir, look at your daughter,’ the nurse said. ‘She looks exactly like you.’

Gu Jiao Wu froze. He wanted to say he wasn’t the baby’s father. But he looked at the baby’s face and swallowed his words. The baby in the nurse’s arms had pink cheeks and had their eyes closed. He stared at the baby’s small pink face, the baby’s small hand was in her mouth.

‘Sir, you should hold your daughter and bond with her.’ the nurse said.

The nurse didn’t wait for Gu Jiao Wu’s reply and carefully laid the baby in his arms. He felt an electric shock. He thought the baby was a loveable small pink lump. The baby’s eyes were closed, her small head turned to the side and she pouted her small lips.

‘Your daughter is a little greedy kitten,’ the nurse said affectionately. ‘She wants to drink milk the moment she’s born.’

The nurse carefully picked up the baby from Gu Jiao Wu’s arms. He was startled to lose the warmth in his arms. He didn’t know what he should do. The baby wasn’t his daughter. Why did he want to hold the baby? He shook his head and walked out of the delivery room.

Outside the delivery room, one of Gu Jiao Wu’s assistants passed him a bag.

‘Executive Gu, this is your wife’s bag,’ the assistant said and he coughed awkwardly because he forgot Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan were divorced.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t hear his assistant’s mistake and accepted Qiao Tan Yuan’s bag. He looked at the bag and thought about the little baby’s loveable pink face.

Qiao Tan Yuan was wheeled to a private hospital room and the doctor asked Gu Jiao Wu to follow her to Qiao Tan Yuan’s room.

Gu Jiao Wu followed the doctor. Inside the room, the nurse laid the baby in a baby’s bed next to Qiao Tan Yuan’s bed.

Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t hear anything the doctor said.

‘It’s your first time being a father,’ the doctor said. ‘It’s normal to be anxious. But you’ll get used to being a father soon. Take care of your wife. She risked her life to give birth to your daughter.’

During the delivery, the doctor didn’t hear what Gu Jiao Wu said to Qiao Tan Yuan. But she thought Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan was a loving husband and wife to support each other during a life and death situation.

‘Your daughter is waiting for your wife to wake up to drink milk,’ the doctor said. ‘But you need to take good care of your wife.’

The doctor gave pamphlets for Gu Jiao Wu to read and left the room with the

nurse.

Gu Jiao Wu held the pamphlets and looked at Qiao Tan Yuan and the baby for a while. Afterward he flicked through the pamphlets. It was a guide for new parents to take care of their newborn. Why did he need to take of Qiao Tan Yuan and the baby? He put the pamphlets and Qiao Tan Yuan's bag on the bedside table, turned around and walked toward the door. But he turned around and looked at the baby who still had their eyes closed. He instinctively walked to the baby's bed. He looked at the baby's small wrinkled face, eyelids, naturally red lips, small hands against pink cheeks and ebony hair. The baby looked really loveable.

Gu Jiao Wu's confused heart suddenly rejoiced. He felt the baby was a mysterious miracle. One moment the baby was in a mother's stomach and the next moment the baby entered the world and appeared in front of his eyes. The baby's face did look familiar to him and he remembered the nurse's observation, 'Sir, look at your daughter, she looks exactly like you.'

Gu Jiao Wu turned around to look at Qiao Tan Yuan who was sleeping deeply. On the bedside table were the pamphlets and Qiao Tan Yuan's bag. He stepped to the bedside table, picked up the bag, took out the phone and stood in front of the baby's bed. He compared the photo of himself sleeping next to the baby's face. His whole body tensed. His sleeping face and the baby's small face looked exactly the same. Even the way they were sleeping was the same. The baby...

Gu Jiao Wu's head was flooded with Qiao Tan Yuan's contradicting lies... 'I'm six months pregnant... the baby belongs to Shen Cheng... we're divorced and the baby isn't yours...'

Not Gu Jiao Wu's daughter? He didn't believe the lies. Even if Shen Cheng stood in front of him and said Shen Chen was the father, he wouldn't believe the lies. He took out his phone and called his assistant. He plucked a strand of his daughter's hair and a strand of his hair and bagged their hair strands.

Gu Jiao Wu's assistant quickly arrived in the private hospital room.

'Use this for a DNA test,' Gu Jiao Wu instructed.

End of Chapter Fourteen

Related

Fifteen



Chapter Fifteen

‘DNA test?’ the assistant asked.

Gu Jiao Wu nodded. ‘Go and follow my instructions.’

The assistant left and Gu Jiao Wu wanted to leave too, but he looked at Qiao Tan Yuan’s face. She looked pained in her sleep and decided to stay. He sat on a chair next to her bed. Her cheeks had a little pink coloring and wasn’t as pale as in the delivery room.

‘Keep the baby...’ Qiao Tan Yuan mumbled in her sleep.

Gu Jiao Wu heard Qiao Tan Yuan’s weak voice. He realised he didn’t understand women, he especially didn’t understand Qiao Tan Yuan.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t need a DNA test. He knew the small pink lump sleeping on the baby bed was his daughter. His daughter looked nothing like Shen Cheng. His daughter slept like him and looked like him except she had Qiao Tan Yuan’s red lips.

Qiao Tan Yuan gave birth to Gu Jiao Wu’s daughter. He didn’t understand the chaotic feelings in his heart. He should be angry because Qiao Tan Yuan deceived him. She didn’t take the pill and kept her pregnancy a secret from him. But he wasn’t angry. He could only remember how weak she looked on the delivery bed, how she held onto his hand and begged him to save their daughter.

The desperate look to save their daughter in Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes had moved Gu Jiao Yuan's heart. He didn't understand why at the critical moment he couldn't kill their daughter to save Qiao Tan Yuan. Instead he threatened Qiao Tan Yuan to try one last time to give birth to the daughter, luckily Qiao Tan Yuan and their daughter survived.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan's deep teeth mark on his hand. He wasn't used to injuries like Gu Jiao Wen, but Qiao Tan Yuan's deep bite didn't hurt him. When he looked at the teeth mark on his hand, he would remember Qiao Tan Yuan unexpectedly begged him to save their daughter.

Gu Jiao Wu knew Qiao Tan Yuan loved him. He didn't remember when the little Qiao Tan Yuan tied her hair in a ponytail and loved to follow behind him. Apart from being annoyed, he didn't have any other feelings toward her following him around. She grew up spoiled by her family, she was arrogant and selfish. So he never acknowledged or wanted her troublesome love. If the past Qiao Tan Yuan gave birth to his daughter, he would have scolded her for deceiving him. But the Qiao Tan Yuan in delivery room was a different person.

Gu Jiao Wu only needed to look at Qiao Tan Yuan's pale face and he couldn't be angry. How could he be angry at someone holding his hand and begging him to save their daughter? His feelings confused him. He stood to leave, but suddenly Qiao Tan Yuan stirred on the bed and woke up.

Qiao Tan Yuan opened her eyes. She was scared to see Gu Jiao Wu still standing next to her bed and the vacant feeling in her stomach. She panicked and grabbed Gu Jiao Wu's hand. 'Where's my baby?'

'The baby is healthy,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was surprised how Qiao Tan Yuan found the strength to hold his hand tightly after having a painful childbirth. He pulled his hand out, stepped to the baby bed and carefully picked up their daughter. The small pink lump in his arms was soft and light. He wasn't used to holding a fragile newborn baby and held their daughter awkwardly. Then he gently put their daughter on the bed next to Qiao Tan Yuan and took a step away from the bed.

Qiao Tan Yuan saw how Gu Jiao Wu couldn't stand holding their baby and her heart hurt. He hated her and hated their baby. Her eyes stung and she wanted to

cry. She looked down at their sleeping baby beside her on the bed. Their baby looked exactly like Gu Jiao Wu.

Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes widened and she panicked. It made Gu Jiao Wu certain he was the father.

'A baby girl,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He looked gently at their daughter sleeping. 'The doctor said she's 3.6 kg and a healthy baby girl.'

'Thank you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan believed Gu Jiao Wu could see their daughter looked exactly like him and she didn't know how angry he was. She remembered how he didn't want to hold their daughter. He hated her and hated their daughter. She pitied their daughter. Since their daughter was conceived to the moment their daughter was born, he hated their daughter.

'The baby...' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Gu Jiao Wu, thank you for taking me to the hospital,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Can you call Shen Cheng to let him know? You can leave straight after.'

Gu Jiao Wu was shocked. He didn't expect Qiao Tan Yuan would ask him to leave. He didn't know what to do, but she gave birth to his daughter yet her attitude toward him was hate. He was the father. Why was she in a rush to get rid of him? Did she want to monopolise their daughter? That thought made his heart unhappy. He was about to say something, but her phone rang.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked for her phone. It was on a bedside table. She picked up her phone, it was Shen Cheng.

'Tan Yuan, where are you?' Shen Cheng asked. 'I came to pick you up at work. But I couldn't find you. Where are you?'

'Shen Cheng, I'm at the hospital,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan glanced at Gu Jiao Wu, he stood there without any intentions of leaving.

'The hospital?' Shen Cheng asked. 'What happened? Are you OK? Are you hurt anywhere?'

'I'm OK,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She could feel Gu Jiao Wu's glare like needles

pricking. She forced herself to sound happy. 'I gave birth to your daughter. You're a father. Hurry and come here to see your daughter.'

'Yes, yes, yes,' Shen Cheng said happily. 'I'll be there immediately. What's the hospital's address?'

'The address...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know what the hospital's address was. She looked around the hospital room and Gu Jiao Wu took the phone from her hand.

Shen Cheng was shocked to hear Gu Jiao Wu's voice giving him the hospital's address. But he thanked Gu Jiao Wu, hung up and quickly drove to the hospital.

Gu Jiao Wu put the phone on the bedside table and sat on the chair next to the bed.

'I'm sorry I wasted your day,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You can leave.'

Gu Jiao Wu silently looked at Qiao Tan Yuan then he looked at the small pink lump sleeping next to Qiao Tan Yuan. He remembered about how warm his arms and hands felt holding their daughter. He couldn't resist gently stroking their daughter's pink cheek.

Their daughter's soft pink cheek gave back the warm feeling in Gu Jiao Wu's hand. He looked at their daughter's loveable face. Their daughter could feel his fingers touching her cheek and disturbing her sleep. She creased her brows, moved her small face to the side and pouted her small red lips. Her loveable gestures made him smile.

Qiao Tan Yuan was shocked to see Gu Jiao Wu smile. Why was he smiling gently at their daughter if he hated their daughter? What did he want?

'The doctor said you can breast feed the baby when you wake up,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was frightened to hear Gu Jiao Wu's words. She was still in pain after giving birth. How could she recover that fast to breast feed?

Qiao Tan Yuan hid her body pain. She looked at Gu Jiao Wu's gentle face looking at their daughter and she realised she didn't understand who Gu Jiao Wu was.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, are you sick?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan suspected Gu Jiao Wu’s brain must have lacked oxygen in the elevator and altered his behavior.

Gu Jiao Wu heard Qiao Tan Yuan’s insult, frowned and looked at her.

‘The baby looks exactly like me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘What?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She played dumb and laughed. ‘You’re seeing things.’

Gu Jiao Wu saw Qiao Tan Yuan play dumb and his eyes narrowed. ‘The nurse said the baby looks exactly like me too.’

‘The nurse must have been mistaken,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t sit up to hide their daughter from Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, the baby is Shen Cheng and my daughter,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Don’t delude yourself thinking you’re the father.’

‘Delude myself?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Are you still saying Shen Cheng is the father?’

‘Of course,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She couldn’t take back a shot arrow when cornered on a mountain peak. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, the baby is Shen Cheng and my daughter. You’re not the father. Shen Cheng and I will be marrying each other soon. As for you, you can leave.’

End of Chapter Fifteen

Related

Sixteen



Chapter Sixteen

‘If you believe Shen Cheng’s the father then you won’t mind if my daughter and I have a DNA test?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu stretched his arms to hold their daughter.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat up frantically and felt pain below her waist, but she ignored the pain and grabbed Gu Jiao Wu’s arm.

‘She is Shen Cheng and my daughter,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You don’t have the right to perform a DNA test.’

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t going to allow Gu Jiao Wu to take their daughter away from her.

‘Who’s the father?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu knew he was the father, but he wanted to hear Qiao Tan Yuan acknowledge the truth.

‘Shen Cheng is the father,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She bit her lips to stop herself from crying. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, she is Shen Cheng and my daughter.’

‘She’s my daughter,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Qiao Tan Yuan, you deceived me.’

Qiao Tan Yuan shook her head. ‘I didn’t deceive you. We’re divorced. My baby has nothing to do with you. You can leave.’

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan’s stubborn face. She refused to let go of his arm, he tried pulling her hand away.

Qiao Tan Yuan held onto Gu Jiao Wu’s arm tighter to stop him from taking

their daughter away. Suddenly she noticed the teeth mark on his hand, and vaguely remembered she bit his hand in the delivery room.

Gu Jiao Wu saw Qiao Tan Yuan staring at the teeth mark on his hand. He pulled her hand away and sat on the chair next to the bed. He looked at Qiao Tan Yuan calmly then he looked at their daughter pouting beautiful lips.

‘She’s my daughter,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t deluded. He was certain he was the father. Qiao Tan Yuan’s reactions exposed her secret.

‘No, no...’ Qiao Tan Yuan denied.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to cry. She couldn’t make Gu Jiao Wu believe her lies because their daughter looked exactly like Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Why didn’t you take the pill?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I... I did take the pill,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘She really isn’t your daughter.’

Qiao Tan Yuan would rather die than admit the truth in front of Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu pursed his lips. He was about to ask Qiao Tan Yuan to tell him the truth, but Shen Cheng entered the room.

‘Tan Yuan, are you Ok?’ Shen Cheng asked.

Shen Cheng noticed Gu Jiao Wu was sitting next to Qiao Tan Yuan’s bed and was startled.

‘Big brother?’ Shen Cheng called.

Gu Jiao Wu stood, he noticed the sweat on Shen Cheng’s forehead and nodded his head.

Shen Cheng ignored Gu Jiao Wu and stood in front of Qiao Tan Yuan and saw her pale face.

‘Tan Yuan, are you in pain?’ Shen Cheng asked.

‘I’m OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Shen Cheng, meet our healthy baby daughter.’

Shen Cheng looked at the baby girl and compared her to Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘Our daughter is beautiful. She looks exactly like you.’

‘She does look like me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She smiled, Shen Cheng understood her and Gu Jiao Wu. ‘That’s right. She’s beautiful like me.’

‘You’ve endured a lot,’ Shen Cheng said. He kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s forehead. ‘Thank you.’

‘You don’t have to thank me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She held Shen Cheng’s hand and wanted to cry. ‘Shen Cheng, I love you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan glanced at Gu Jiao Wu, but she didn’t know what he was thinking

‘Tan Yuan, I love you too,’ Shen Cheng said. He could feel Qiao Tan Yuan’s cold sweaty palm and put her arm and hand under the bedsheet. ‘I know you’re happy to see me. But you need to take good care of yourself. You gave birth today and should stay warm so you don’t get sick.’

‘I’m OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m happy to see you. I was really scared today. I only wanted to call you and see you.’

‘You must have been scared,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘When I received your call, I was scared too.’

‘I’m sorry I worried you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘It’s nothing,’ Shen Cheng said. He looked at Gu Jiao Wu. ‘Big brother, thank you for taking Tan Yuan to the hospital. You can leave. I’ll stay here and take care of Tan Yuan and our daughter.’

Gu Jiao Wu creased his brows while watching Qiao Tan Yuan and Shen Cheng being lovey dovey. How could Shen Cheng lie and say his daughter looked exactly like Qiao Tan yuan?

Gu Jiao Wu scoffed. He would have told Shen Cheng he shouldn’t lie with eyes wide opened if his phone didn’t ring. He answered the phone, gave instructions and hung up.

‘Big brother, thank you again for today,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘We won’t inconvenience you any longer, you can leave.’

‘Um,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and walked to the door. At the door, he turned around and looked at Qiao Tan Yuan. She looked like she regretted she couldn’t make

him leave faster and inwardly laughed at the backward situation. In his memories, she used to follow him everywhere and told him he needed to be with her. He wondered if a woman's heart could change. He closed the door and left.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt depleted of energy after Gu Jiao Wu left, and she looked at Shen Cheng with regret for using Shen Cheng to protect her daughter.

'Shen Cheng, I'm sorry...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to mislead Shen Cheng that she did love him that way.

'Tan Yuan, you don't have to explain, I understand,' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng's heart was bitter sweet. He knew he was playing the part of loved boyfriend, but he couldn't escape the desire to wish Qiao Tan Yuan did love him.

'Have you thought of a name for your daughter?' Shen Cheng asked.

'Not yet,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I want call her Xiao Bao, because she's my little treasure.'

'Xiao Bao can be her nickname,' Shen Cheng said. 'In the future you can give her a formal name.' He loved the nickname Xiao Bao. 'Why were you with big brother?'

'Don't mention him anymore,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. It was a scary and tiring day. 'Today I was scared to death. At midday I wanted to go downstairs to eat something. I didn't expect Gu Jiao Wu would be in the same elevator as me. When the elevator descended halfway, it stopped. There was no reception. Lucky he took me to the hospital otherwise...'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to think about what would have happened if Gu Jiao Wu wasn't there to take her to the hospital. She didn't know if she could have survived on her own. She couldn't believe Gu Jiao Wu could still easily affect her moods.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt she was a weakling. She and Gu Jiao Wu were divorced, she didn't need to be scared of him. But she was scared he would take Xiao Bao away.

Shen Cheng could see Qiao Tan Yuan's fears and his heart saddened.

‘What do you want to eat?’ Shen Cheng asked. ‘I’ll go buy it for you.’

‘I don’t know what I want to eat,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Right now I’m more tired than hungry.’

‘You gave birth today,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘You need to eat nutritious food to recover quicker. There’s a restaurant opposite the hospital. Stay here and wait for me. I’ll go buy you food.’

‘Thank you Shen Cheng,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan held Shen Cheng’s hand. She was grateful he was by her side during her pregnancy.

‘Dummy,’ Shen Cheng said. He rubbed Qiao Tan Yuan’s sweaty head. ‘We’ll be married soon. You don’t need to thank me.’

‘Um,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Before Xiao Bao was born, Qiao Tan Yuan did want to marry Shen Cheng. But she had second thoughts. She knew Xiao Bao wouldn’t look like Shen Cheng. She thought Xiao Bao would look like her, she didn’t expect Xiao Bao would look exactly like Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Wait for me, I’ll be back soon,’ Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng left before he could see Qiao Tan Yuan’s doubts on her face.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked down at her daughter sleeping beside her. ‘Xiao Bao, what should mummy do?’

Qiao Tan Yuan remembered Gu Jiao Wu’s intense look before he left the room. He knew Xiao Bao was his daughter. What did he want? In the past, he told her if she was pregnant, she should abort the baby. But Xiao Bao was born. Would he kill Xiao Bao?

Qiao Tan Yuan wouldn’t allow anyone to hurt Xiao Bao. Then she remembered Gu Jiao Wu looking tenderly at Xiao Bao. It meant he wasn’t angry she gave birth to Xiao Bao. But she wouldn’t let him take Xiao Bao away.

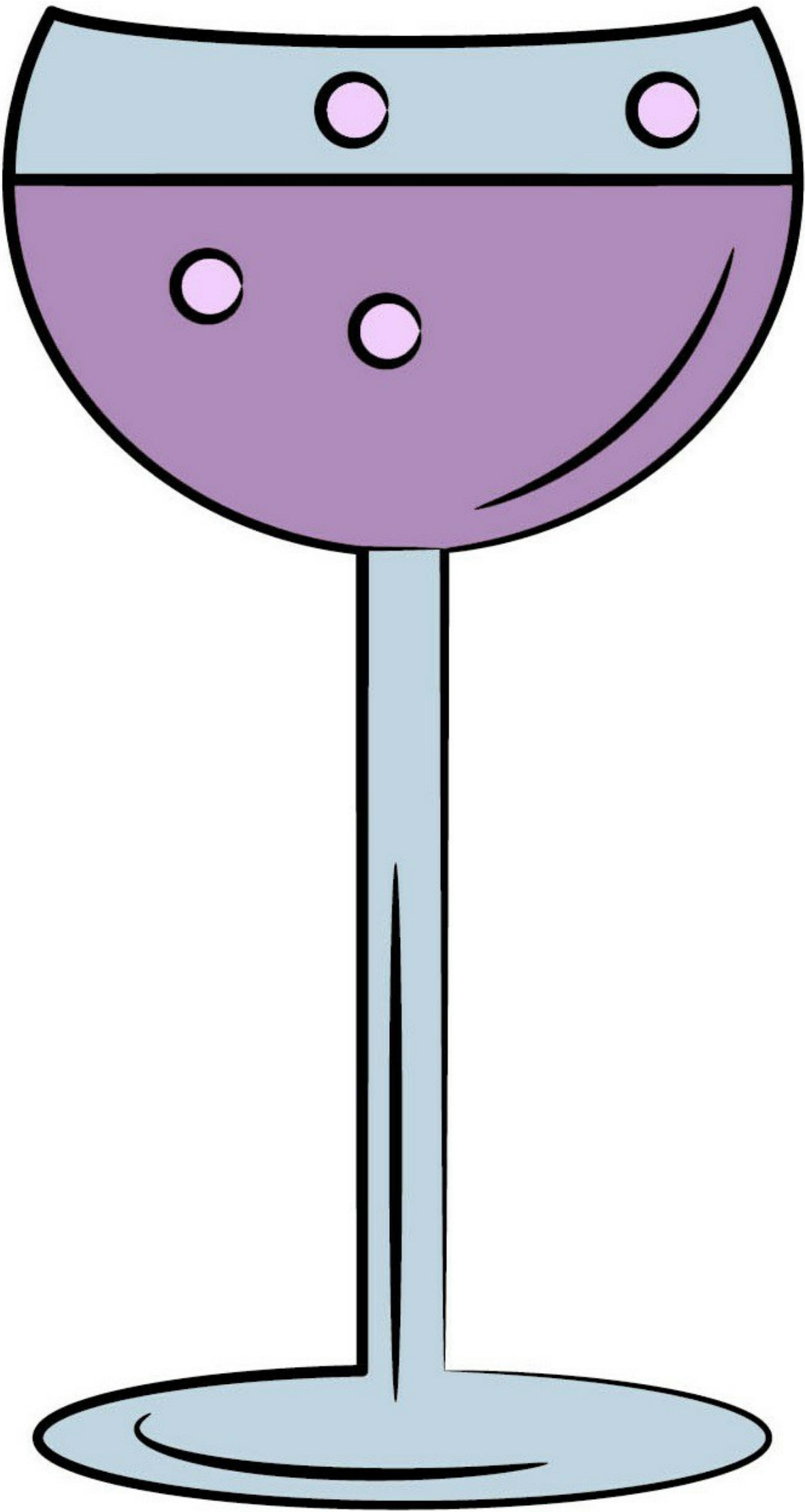
Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know why Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t let her live in peace. Gu Jiao Wu reunited with Chu Da. He and Chu Da could have their own children through surrogacy. Why did he need to steal Xiao Bao? She hated thinking about

Chu Da. She had to be strong and protect Xiao Bao, no one was going to steal Xiao Bao.

End of Chapter Sixteen

Related

Seventeen



Chapter Seventeen

‘I promise no one will take you away,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wouldn’t let Xiao Bao call another woman mother and no one could steal Xiao Bao including Gu Jiao Wu.

Shen Cheng returned to the room and put food on the bedside table.

‘Tan Yuan, I bought you congee,’ Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng sat on the chair in front of the bed and smiled at Qiao Tan Yuan who was looking protectively at Xiao Bao.

‘Did Xiao Bao learn to run while I was out?’ Shen Cheng teased. ‘Xiao Bao isn’t going to run away.’

‘Shen Cheng, I want to change hospitals,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘What?’ Shen Cheng asked. He was confused why Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to transfer to a different hospital. ‘Why?’

‘I’m scared... Gu Jiao Wu looks like he wants to steal Xiao Bao,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘No, big brother wouldn’t steal Xiao Bao,’ Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng thought Qiao Tan Yuan was just being overprotective of Xiao Bao.

‘He could steal Xiao Bao,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She had never seen Gu Jiao Wu smile like he did at Xiao Bao except when he was in front of Chu Da. ‘Before he was smiling at Xiao Bao. I was married to him for three years, he never once smiled at me during our marriage. I can feel he loves Xiao Bao, he could steal Xiao Bao.’

‘Tan Yuan,’ Shen Cheng called. He held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand. ‘Relax. You’re worrying too much. Believe me, big brother won’t steal Xiao Bao.’

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t feel at ease staying at the hospital. ‘Shen Cheng, I want to go home. Can you call my family to escort me and Xiao Bao home? Can we get married after I recover?’

‘OK,’ Shen Cheng agreed.

Shen Cheng didn't know what else to do to calm Qiao Tan Yuan's worried state.

Shen Cheng believed why people say a person in love was blind. He knew in Qiao Tan Yuan's heart there was only Gu Jiao Wu and he was being a buffer to protect Xiao Bao's birth secret. But he chose to blind and pretend he was in loving relationship with Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Shen Cheng, thank you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt like a weakling who couldn't chase away the shadows in her heart. Gu Jiao Wu was the biggest shadow in her heart. Gu Jiao Wu could do nothing and still make her anxious and suffer. She wanted to run far away with Xiao Bao.

'Tan Yuan,' Shen Cheng called. 'Eat the bowl of congee.'

Shen Cheng watched Qiao Tan Yuan eat the bowl of congee, but he could see she was still worried.

'You don't need to be scared of big brother,' Shen Cheng said. 'You and big brother are divorced.'

Shen Cheng wondered where the confident Qiao Tan Yuan disappeared to. In the past Qiao Tan Yuan could confidently sing live on TV.

'I...' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She put the bowl of congee on the bedside table. 'Shen Cheng, am I a weakling?'

'You're not a weakling,' Shen Cheng said. 'You want to lie to yourself you don't care about Gu Jiao Wu. But in your heart you know you still love Gu Jiao Wu deeply.'

'I don't love him...' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I...'

'Tan Yuan if you want to escape Gu Jiao Wu then you need to be stronger,' Shen Cheng said. 'Forget about him. Don't think about him and don't let him affect you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know what to say.

'Tan Yuan, we'll be married soon,' Shen Cheng said. 'I'll be a loving father to Xiao Bao. I'll give you and Xiao Bao a happy family. I'll protect you and Xiao Bao

and not let anyone hurt you and Xiao Bao. But I want you to be stronger. Forget Gu Jiao Wu exist and he won't have the power to haunt you. Why are you doubting yourself? Do you believe you won't do whatever it takes to make sure Gu Jiao Wu can't steal Xiao Bao?'

'No...' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I won't let anyone carry Xiao Bao away. I won't give Gu Jiao Wu the opportunity to take Xiao Bao.'

'If that's true then you need to calm down,' Shen Cheng said. 'You need to believe Xiao Bao isn't big brother's daughter. Don't worry about what he's doing and raise a happy Xiao Bao.'

Shen Cheng looked at the sleeping Xiao Bao and smiled. 'Honestly, you can say newborn babies look the same. Be confident you can protect Xiao Bao and don't let big brother affect you.'

'Um,' Qiao Tan Yuan said and nodded. 'I'm not going to be scared of him and I won't let him steal Xiao Bao.' She thought about her marriage with Gu Jiao Wu and felt determined. 'I won't let him hurt me anymore.'

Shen Cheng understood if Qiao Tan Yuan didn't give Gu Jiao Wu the opportunity to make her suffer then Gu Jiao Wu had no power over her. Besides, they all grew up together and their families had good relations. He didn't believe Gu Jiao Wu would want to steal Xiao Bao.

'Tan Yuan, be strong and confident,' Shen Cheng said. 'Don't give Gu Jiao Wu the opportunity to hurt you.'

'Um,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew she was a blind fool in the past to give Gu Jiao Wu opportunities to hurt her. She was determined not to let Gu Jiao Wu hurt her anymore.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't just think about herself. She was a mother, she needed to be strong for Xiao Bao. She remembered the day Xiao Bao was conceived. Gu Jiao Wu told her how much he hated her and she should have an abortion if she was pregnant. If he hated her and didn't want Xiao Bao to be born then he had no right to be Xiao Bao's father.

'Shen Cheng, believe me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'll be strong and confident. I

won't give anyone an opportunity to hurt me and Xiao Bao.'

'That's right,' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng knew it would be hard for Qiao Tan Yuan to forget Gu Jiao Wu completely. But if she took one step at a time, perhaps she could escape Gu Jiao Wu. He was willing to wait how long it would take for her to let Gu Jiao Wu go.

At Gu Jiao Wu's office, Gu Jiao Wu put the investigation report on the table and looked at an assistant.

'Why couldn't you find any other news about her family background?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I honestly couldn't find any news about her having siblings,' the assistant said.

Gu Jiao Wu suspected the assistant was hiding news from him.

'It's like someone powerful is protecting news about her,' the assistant said. 'I could only find out Li Lam went to college in the U.S. But I couldn't find any childhood photos or news about her having siblings.'

'U.S.?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

An unlikely possibility of who was protecting Li Lam's identity entered Gu Jiao Wu's head.

'You can leave,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Yes Executive Gu,' the assistant said. 'Wait, I forgot to tell you one more news.'

The assistant informed Gu Jiao Wu news about Fei Yan Niao.

Gu Jiao Wu thought about what Fei Yan Niao wanted. Last time to rescue Tan Pan Ting, Gu Jiao Wen agreed to give Fei Yan Niao control over eastern districts. What more did Fei Yan Niao want?

'For now, silently follow Fei Yan Niao's movements,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Yes, Executive Gu,' the assistant said and left Gu Jiao Wu's office.

Gu Jiao Wu glanced at the report on the table. Li Lam was twenty-two years

old and a graduate of a U.S. college. Li Lam looked like a happy person in her graduation photo. If Li Lam was an only child then she lied about having an older twin sister. If Li Lam wasn't Chu Da's twin sister, was Li Lam a friend of Chu Da? It wasn't possible. Chu Da graduated before Li Lam, and Chu Da was twenty-six years old. But how did Li Lam own an old photo of Chu Da?

Gu Jiao Wu didn't know what Li Lam wanted. He still couldn't find Chu Da after four years of looking for Chu Da. Why did Chu Da leave? Where did Chu Da go? What were Li Lam's motives to create coincidental opportunities to meet him?

Gu Jiao Wu stood, walked to his car and drove to Li Lam's work place to get answers out of Li Lam.

At the carpark in front of Li Lam's work building, she acted surprised to see Gu Jiao Wu.

'Gu Jiao Wu, thank you for helping me last time,' Li Lam said. 'I want to treat you a meal to say thank you.'

'It's nothing, I'm here to ask you about something else,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Um,' Li Lam said. She pointed at the cafe across the road. 'We can sit at the cafe and chat.'

Gu Jiao Wu nodded. He didn't wait for Li Lam to follow him and walked straight to the cafe.

Li Lam didn't know how anyone could love someone like Gu Jiao Wu who wasn't charming.

At the cafe, Li Lam ordered two drinks and congratulated Gu Jiao Wu.

'I heard about your promotion,' Li Lam said. 'Congratulations.'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't know how Li Lam knew about his new position that wasn't publicly announced yet.

'Thank you,' Gu Jiao Wu said politely.

A waiter put two drinks on the table and left. Gu Jiao Wu sipped his drink and he glanced at the drink Li Lam was drinking. It was the same drink Chu Da loved to drink in the past, but Li Lam wasn't Chu Da.

‘Last time you said you have an older twin sister,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

End of Chapter Seventeen

Related

Eighteen



Chapter Eighteen

‘Yes,’ Li Lam said.

Li Lam couldn’t see through Gu Jiao Wu’s thoughts.

‘Did you look for me to ask about my older twin sister?’ Li Lam asked.

‘No,’ Gu Jiao Wu said coldly. ‘Aunty Li gave birth to one daughter, you. You don’t have an older twin sister.’

‘Oh, you investigated me?’ Li Lam asked.

‘Why do I need to investigate you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘I only need to ask aunty Li, and she would tell me the truth.’

‘Did you ask about me because you’re curious about me?’ Li Lam asked.

‘You sound conceited,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘No, I’m just happy you’re curious about me,’ Li Lam said. ‘I love you and I’m really happy you’re attracted to me.’

‘I’m not attracted to you nor do I love you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Chu Da was an orphan and lived her whole life in the southern district. Gu Jiao Wu was certain Li Lam wasn’t Chu Da.

‘What about Chu Da?’ Li Lam asked. ‘You don’t love Chu Da?’

‘You...’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I’m Chu Da,’ Li Lam said. She grabbed Gu Jiao Wu’s hand. ‘Jiao Wu, can’t you see it’s me? I’m your Chu Da. You love me the most.’

Gu Jiao Wu pulled his hand away. 'What did you say?'

'I'm Chu Da,' Li Lam said. 'Jiao Wu, I'm back.'

Chu Da? Gu Jiao Wu looked at the hurt in Li Lam's eyes that looked like Chu Da and he didn't know what to do. Li Lam grabbed his hand again, she fell onto his chest and hugged him.

'Jiao Wu, I'm back,' Li Lam said. 'I've always missed you. I've waited for you to look for me. But you never came. I've suffered without you. Since you didn't come look for me, I couldn't wait any longer and I looked for you. I thought you would miss me. But I didn't expect you wouldn't recognise me. How can you forget about me?'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't know what to do. He couldn't push away the woman hugging him that had Chu Da's face.

'Chu Da, Chu Da...' Gu Jiao Wu called and tucked Li Lam's hair behind her ears.

'Yes, I'm Chu Da,' Li Lam said. 'Your Chu Da is back.'

'Chu Da...' Gu Jiao Wu called.

Gu Jiao Wu had dreamt of Chu Da's return for four years.

'Jiao Wu, I really missed you,' Li Lam said. 'I've thought about you all these years.'

'I...' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu would have said he missed Chu Da too if the waiter didn't bring two cups of coffee to the table.

'Sir, Miss, your coffee,' the waiter said.

Gu Jiao Wu regained his senses. He realised he was hugging Li Lam, not Chu Da. He let go of Li Lam and waited for the waiter to leave.

'Who are you?' Gu Jiao Wu asked and gripped Li Lam's arm.

'I'm Chu Da,' Li Lam said. 'Jiao Wu, don't you recognise me?'

'Who are you?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu admitted he missed Chu Da enough to forget who was in front of

him. But he wasn't foolish enough to be deceived. Li Lam wasn't Chu Da.

'Li Lam, why do you look like Chu Da?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Where is Chu Da?'

'I'm Chu Da,' Li Lam said. Gu Jiao Wu gripped her hand painfully. 'Before you hugged me. Can't you feel I'm Chu Da?'

Gu Jiao Wu glared at Li Lam. Li Lam didn't cry out in pain or try to pull her arm away. If Li Lam wasn't Chu Da, Li Lam wanted to act convincing in front of him that Li Lam was Chu Da.

'Li Lam,' Gu Jiao Wu called. His heart was certain Li Lam wasn't Chu Da. 'What's your agenda?'

'I don't know what you mean,' Li Lam said.

Li Lam looked at Gu Jiao Wu's eyes and knew he didn't believe her.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't believe there could be two unrelated people that had the same face and wore the same fragrance existed in the world. He was certain Li Lam sought him out with ulterior motives.

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Li Lam's arm and he didn't care about the bruise on Li Lam's arm.

'Li Lam, I don't care who you are,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Why did you seek me out? What's your agenda? If you keep pretending you're Chu Da, you won't be able to cope with the consequences.'

Li Lam looked at Gu Jiao Wu smiling at her threateningly, but she acted like she wasn't scared.

'Jiao Wu, I'm really Chu Da,' Li Lam said. 'I left you four years ago. Now I'm back and sitting in front of you. I came back to be with you. I want to go back to our beautiful days living together. Is that wrong?'

'You're not Chu Da,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu admitted Li Lam looked like Chu Da, but Li Lam's looks couldn't deceive his heart. He didn't care why Li Lam sought him out. If Li Lam knew about Chu Da then it meant Li Lam met Chu Da and knew where Chu Da was.

'Where is Chu Da?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I’m Chu Da,’ Li Lam said. ‘I’m the Li Household’s long lost daughter. I was injured four years ago. I worked hard to recover because I wanted to see you again.’

Gu Jiao Wu stood and looked at Li Lam coldly. ‘Is that so? I’ll wait until you transform into Chu Da then we’ll talk again.’

Gu Jiao Wu took a step away from the table and turned around to face Li Lam. ‘I admit you’re good at imitating Chu Da. But there’s something you can’t imitate Chu Da that gave away your real self away...’

Li Lam was curious what mistake she made to expose herself.

‘Behind Chu Da’s ear there is a mole,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

In the past Gu Jiao Wu slept with Chu Da many times. He was familiar with every freckle and mole on Chu Da’s body.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t look at Li Lam’s widened eyes, he walked to the door and left the cafe. Li Lam wasn’t Chu Da, but he believed Li Lam knew where Chu Da was. If Li Lam didn’t want to tell him where Chu Da was, he could wait until Li Lam wanted to tell him. He waited four years for Chu Da, he was willing to wait a little longer to reunite with Chu Da.

Li Lam watched Gu Jiao Wu leave and knew she failed. She rubbed her sore arm. Didn’t Gu Jiao Wu know how to be gentle? Why didn’t Gu Jiao Wu react the way she expected he would react when he saw she looked like Chu Da? She smiled, she was interested to get to know more about Gu Jiao Wu.

Outside the cafe, Gu Jiao Wu sat in his car and drove toward the hospital. Half way to the hospital, he remembered about the shop Wang Tu Ya dragged him into that sold maternity and children’s clothes. He turned the car and drove to the shopping mall.

At the maternity and children’s shop, a shop assistant greeted Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Sir, welcome,’ the shop assistant greeted. ‘What are you looking for?’

Gu Jiao Wu thought about his daughter’s small pink lump body and loveable small face.

‘What do newborn baby girls need?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Newborn baby girls?’ the shop assistant asked.

The shop assistant looked at the anticipation on Gu Jiao Wu’s face and understood Gu Jiao Wu was a first time father, and led Gu Jiao Wu to the children’s section in the shop.

Gu Jiao Wu bought everything he thought his daughter would like.

‘Sir, do you want me to deliver your purchases to your home?’ the shop assistant asked.

‘No, I’ll carry them to my car,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu carried eight bags of clothes and toys for his daughter to his car while happily laughing at himself.

A while later, at the hospital, Qiao Tan Yuan and Mrs Qiao were shocked to see Gu Jiao Wu appear in front of them with eight large bags of children’s clothes and toys.

Mr Qiao and Shen Cheng were at work and Xiao Bao was sleeping soundly in the baby bed.

‘Jiao... Jiao Wu?’ Mrs Qiao called.

Mrs Qiao was shocked to see her former son-in-law. Didn’t Gu Jiao Wu divorce Qiao Tan Yuan?

‘Aunty,’ Gu Jiao Wu greeted.

Although Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan were divorced, he still treated the elders of the Qiao Household respectfully. He put the bags of items for his daughter on the sofa.

‘You...’ Mrs Qiao said.

Mrs Qiao was curious why Gu Jiao Wu brought eight large bags of children’s clothes and toys to Qiao Tan Yuan’s hospital room. What did Gu Jiao Wu want?

‘I’m here to see your granddaughter,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t look at Qiao Tan Yuan, he stepped straight to the baby bed. He looked down at their sleeping daughter. Their loveable daughter was sucking her thumb while sleeping soundly with her eyes closed. He stretched his arm

down to touch their daughter's pink cheek, but Qiao Tan Yuan jumped out of the bed and grabbed his arm.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, what do you want?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

End of Chapter Eighteen

Related

Nineteen



Chapter Nineteen

Mrs Qiao couldn't stop Qiao Tan Yuan leaving the bed.

Gu Jiao Wu glanced at Qiao Tan Yuan's hand that was holding his arm. Then he looked over Qiao Tan Yuan's shoulder at Mrs Qiao.

'Is it OK for her to leave the bed?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu thought about how much pain Qiao Tan Yuan experienced during childbirth and didn't think she should leave the bed that soon.

Mrs Qiao stood and wanted to take Qiao Tan Yuan back to the bed.

'Tan Yuan, you should rest in bed,' Mrs Qiao said. 'You're still recovering.'

'Gu Jiao Wu,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Shen Cheng's lecture helped Qiao Tan Yuan to conquer her weakness. She wasted her spring years on Gu Jiao Wu, but she was going to protect Xiao Bao.

'You can leave,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'She's my daughter,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu would receive the DNA results in the afternoon. But he didn't need to look at the DNA results, he knew he was the father.

'She's not your daughter,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘You’re positive?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I’m positive she’s not your daughter,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She had a difficult nine month pregnancy to give birth to Xiao Bao. Gu Jiao Wu shouldn’t dream about stealing Xiao Bao. ‘She’s Shen Cheng and my daughter. You can leave.’

Gu Jiao Wu looked down at their daughter. He hadn’t seen their daughter for a day, but he thought she grew a little bigger and smiled at the way she slept adorably.

‘If she’s not my daughter then you don’t need to be defensive,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He turned his head to the side to look at Qiao Tan Yuan’s anxious eyes. ‘Shen Cheng and I are close like brothers.’

Gu Jiao Wu thought it was normal for him see their daughter.

Mrs Qiao couldn’t pull the stubborn Qiao Tan Yuan’s back to the bed. ‘Tan Yuan, you should stay in bed. You shouldn’t leave the bed unless necessary.’

Qiao Tan Yuan bit her lips and glared at Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu looked closely at Qiao Tan Yuan’s face. He thought after a night’s sleep, some coloring returned to Qiao Tan Yuan’s face. It wasn’t warm in the room, she should stay in bed. But she glared at him like she didn’t want to stay peacefully in bed as long as he was in the room.

Gu Jiao Wu was surprised to see Qiao Tan Yuan’s guarded eyes. If she was going to be stubborn, he could be stubborn too. He smiled, stood in front of her and carried her to the bed.

‘Ah... Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

What right did Gu Jiao Wu had to carry Qiao Tan Yuan? She was embarrassed, shocked and angry Gu Jiao Wu laid her in bed. He gave her a warning look like if she dared to get out of bed, he would carry her back to bed again. She didn’t know why she never realised what a shameless man Gu Jiao Wu was.

Gu Jiao Wu laid Qiao Tan Yuan in bed then he looked down at their daughter again. Their daughter was still sleeping, he was worried why he hadn’t seen their daughter opening her eyes. He turned around and looked anxiously at Mrs Qiao.

‘Is it normal for a newborn baby to sleep this much?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Mrs Qiao was still shocked Gu Jiao Wu carried Qiao Tan Yuan to bed. Why did her former son-in-law come to Qiao Tan Yuan's hospital room?

'Aunty?' Gu Jiao Wu called. He didn't know why Mrs Qiao was standing in a daze. 'Why is she still sleeping?'

'It's normal for newborn babies to sleep this much,' Mrs Qiao said.

Mrs Qiao looked at her granddaughter. She didn't know who to believe was her granddaughter's father. Why did Gu Jiao Wu claim he was the father? While Qiao Tan Yuan said Shen Cheng was the father.

'Um,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Mrs Qiao was shocked Gu Jiao Wu's anxious eyes relaxed. What did Gu Jiao Wu want?

Mrs Qiao opened her mouth to ask Gu Jiao Wu why he was in Qiao Tan Yuan's hospital room, but her granddaughter suddenly cried with eyes closed.

Gu Jiao Wu was anxious again after hearing his daughter cry. He instinctively picked up his daughter's small pink lump body. He held her close to his chest. He was curious why she didn't stop crying. He looked at Qiao Tan Yuan for an answer, but Qiao Tan Yuan was still glaring at him.

Mrs Qiao carefully picked up her granddaughter from Gu Jiao Wu's arms.

'I think she soiled her nappy,' Mrs Qiao said.

Gu Jiao Wu looked dumbfound at Mrs Qiao opening his daughter's nappy. He could see his daughter peed in her nappy.

Mrs Qiao smiled. 'She did soil her nappy. No wonder she's crying.'

Mrs Qiao carefully laid her granddaughter on the bed and changed her granddaughter's nappy. But her granddaughter didn't stop crying.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't know why his daughter was still crying. He picked up his daughter and held her close to his chest again, but she cried louder. He was embarrassed. Did she hate him?

Mrs Qiao pitied Gu Jiao Wu who didn't know whether to put her granddaughter down or not. She carefully picked up her granddaughter and

passed her granddaughter to Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘It’s almost lunch time,’ Mrs Qiao said. She stroked her granddaughter’s cheek. ‘If you’re hungry, drink your mummy’s milk.’

Qiao Tan Yuan held Xiao Bao to her chest and Xiao Bao stopped crying.

Xiao Bao rubbed her small face on Qiao Tan Yuan’s chest and looked for Qiao Tan Yuan’s nipple. She couldn’t find Qiao Tan Yuan’s nipple and cried again.

‘Look at her, she’s hungry,’ Mrs Qiao said.

Mrs Qiao looked at Qiao Tan Yuan confusedly. She taught Qiao Tan Yuan how to breast feed and didn’t know why Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t feeding her granddaughter.

Of course Qiao Tan Yuan knew Xiao Bao was hungry. How was she supposed to breast feed in front of Gu Jiao Wu... pull down her gown and breast feed Xiao Bao?

‘Go outside,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said to Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu creased his brows and refused to leave.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, go outside,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to feed Xiao Bao and stop Xiao Bao crying.

If Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t holding Xiao Bao, she would kick the shameless Gu Jiao Wu outside. Xiao Bao was still looking for her nipple and cried even louder. She glared at Gu Jiao Wu for half a day, but he refused to leave. She had no choice but to pull down her gown and let Xiao Bao drink breast milk.

Xiao Bao found Qiao Tan Yuan’s nipple, sucked her nipple and stopped crying. Xiao Bao’s small hands held onto her breast and drank breast milk. Qiao Tan Yuan could also feel Gu Jiao Wu’s gaze on her chest.

Qiao Tan Yuan raised her head to curse the shameless Gu Jiao Wu. But his eyes were looking in awe at Xiao Bao drinking breast milk with eyes closed, he wasn’t perving at her chest.

Gu Jiao Wu watched in awe at his daughter drinking breast milk and he smiled tenderly.

Qiao Tan Yuan laughed at herself for being shocked to see Gu Jiao Wu's tender smile even though she saw him smile at Xiao Bao after Xiao Bao was born.

Qiao Tan Yuan was used to seeing Gu Jiao Wu's cold face. She wasn't used to Gu Jiao Wu's gentleness and the look of awe in his eyes... he loved Xiao Bao. But she remembered he once said he would hate to father her child. Why did he behave differently to his usual self?

'Gu Jiao Wu, you shameless man,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She held Xiao Bao closer to her chest protectively. 'Get out.'

'Tan Yuan...' Mrs Qiao called.

Mrs Qiao didn't know what Qiao Tan Yuan was doing. She couldn't deny her granddaughter looked exactly like Gu Jiao Wu. She didn't know why Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want Gu Jiao Wu to acknowledge her granddaughter. Wasn't it Qiao Tan Yuan's dream to reunite with Gu Jiao Wu?

'Mum, make him leave,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I don't want to see him.'

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn't being irrational, she honestly didn't want to see Gu Jiao Wu. She especially didn't want to see him steal Xiao Bao. Thinking about him stealing Xiao Bao made her hate him more.

'Tan Yuan...' Mrs Qiao said.

Mrs Qiao didn't know why Qiao Tan Yuan divorced Gu Jiao Wu, but she pitied Gu Jiao Wu.

'Jiao Wu, don't take it to heart,' Mrs Qiao said. 'My husband and I spoiled Tan Yuan rotten since she was a little girl.'

'Mum...' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'm not being rude to him. But if he thinks I'm being rude then he can leave.'

Qiao Tan Yuan glared resentfully at Gu Jiao Wu, he hated her then he should leave and be with the person he loved.

Gu Jiao Wu looked away from Qiao Tan Yuan's glare and looked down at their daughter. Their daughter was full, she turned her small head to the side and he could see her scrunch her satisfied face and went back to sleep.

Gu Jiao Wu couldn't resist stretching his arms down to hold their daughter,

but Qiao Tan Yuan moved back on the bed.

‘What do you want?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu kept his arms still in mid-air, he wasn’t angry and looked at their sleeping daughter.

‘I want to hold my daughter,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If you hold her, she’ll cry.’

Gu Jiao Wu frowned. He didn’t believe their daughter would cry if he held her.

‘She won’t cry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I want to hold her.’

End of Chapter Nineteen

Related

Twenty



Chapter Twenty

‘She’ll cry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t think Xiao Bao wouldn’t cry just because Gu Jiao Wu said Xiao Bao wouldn’t cry.

‘She’s my daughter,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Not your daughter. She doesn’t need you to hold her.’

Gu Jiao Wu’s hands were supporting Xiao Bao’s back. Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want Xiao Bao to be hurt so she conceded and let Gu Jiao Wu hold Xiao Bao.

‘Waah, waah...’ Xiao Bao cried.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew Xiao Bao would cry if Gu Jiao Wu held her.

Gu Jiao Wu was embarrassed their daughter was crying in his arms. He softly patted her back like he saw other parents pat their newborn babies to stop their babies crying.

‘Waah, waah, waah...’ Xiao Bao cried louder.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s heart ached to hear Xiao Bao cry. She glared at Gu Jiao Wu and picked up Xiao Bao from his arms. She softly patted Xiao Bao’s back and Xiao Bao stopped crying.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at their daughter, he couldn’t believe she favored Qiao Tan Yuan over him. He wanted to hold her again, but Qiao Tan Yuan held her away from him.

‘You can’t hold my daughter,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu pursed his lips and supported Xiao Bao’s back.

‘What are you doing...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt a sharp pain below her waist. The doctor instructed her not to over exert herself straight after giving birth. She looked down and saw a spot of blood on her gown. She loosened her hold on Xiao Bao, and Gu Jiao Wu held Xiao Bao.

‘Waah, waah, waah, waah,’ Xiao Bao cried.

Xiao Bao cried loudly the moment her small pink lump body touched Gu Jiao Wu’s chest.

Qiao Tan Yuan was happy to see Gu Jiao Wu looking lost and clueless while Xiao Bao cried in his arms. She thought he deserved it, it was his fault he didn’t want Xiao Bao to be born so Xiao Bao didn’t want to be his daughter either.

Mrs Qiao picked up her granddaughter from Gu Jiao Wu’s arms and looked at the smug Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘You should nap,’ Mrs Qiao said to Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘I’ll look after her while you nap.’

‘Mum...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She pointed at Gu Jiao Wu. ‘How can I nap while he’s here? Mum, get him to leave.’

‘Tan Yuan...’ Mrs Qiao said.

Mrs Qiao thought Qiao Tan Yuan would soften after becoming a mother. She looked helplessly at Gu Jiao Wu and her eyes silently asked him to leave. She didn’t understand Qiao Tan Yuan, everyone could see Qiao Tan Yuan loved Gu Jiao Wu but Qiao Tan Yuan was chasing him away.

Mrs Qiao didn’t blame Gu Jiao Wu for not loving Qiao Tan Yuan. She and her husband spoiled Qiao Tan Yuan, they gave Qiao Tan Yuan everything and turned Qiao Tan Yuan into an arrogant and selfish woman. In contrast Gu Jiao Wu was humble since he was a boy. Of course he couldn’t stand being married to Qiao Tan Yuan. While they were married, she saw how Qiao Tan Yuan rarely smiled and wanted to advise Qiao Tan Yuan to let Gu Jiao Wu go and divorce him. She hated seeing Qiao Tan Yuan suffer loving Gu Jiao Wu who would never love Qiao Tan Yuan. But it was Qiao Tan Yuan’s life, not hers. So when Qiao Tan Yuan finally divorced Gu Jiao Wu, she was relieved but didn’t expect Qiao Tan Yuan to

be pregnant. Although Qiao Tan Yuan and Shen Cheng said Shen Cheng was the father, in her heart she knew Qiao Tan Yuan wouldn't be with Shen Cheng when Qiao Tan Yuan still loved Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't hear what Qiao Tan Yuan and Mrs Qiao said. His eyes were focused on his daughter who stopped crying and was sleeping soundly in Mrs Qiao's arms. Mrs Qiao was softly patting his daughter's back and his daughter pouted her small red lips.

Mrs Qiao carefully laid her granddaughter on the baby bed and smiled lovingly. 'What a little demoness. She's exactly like her mum.'

Mrs Qiao remembered Qiao Tan Yuan cried and sulked unless someone familiar was holding Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Of course she's exactly like me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She looked proudly at Xiao Bao. Xiao Bao knew who loved Xiao Bao before Xiao Bao was born. 'My daughter knows she belongs to the Qiao Household. She doesn't like outsiders.'

Gu Jiao Wu heard Qiao Tan Yuan emphasized outsiders and he frowned. Did Qiao Tan Yuan call him an outsider? Their daughter had half of his genes. He wasn't an outsider, he was the father. He watched his little treasure sleep with her eyes closed. She wasn't loveable, she was really loveable.

Gu Jiao Wu wanted to say he was the father of his loveable little treasure, but he heard Shen Cheng's voice.

'Tan Yuan, I brought food,' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng carried two bags of food for Qiao Tan Yuan into the room. He was surprised to see Gu Jiao Wu standing in front of Xiao Bao's bed.

'Big brother?' Shen Cheng called.

What was Gu Jiao Wu doing in Qiao Tan Yuan's hospital room? Shen Cheng looked at Qiao Tan Yuan, she only smiled sweetly at him.

'Honey, your kind big brother came here to see your Xiao Bao,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Big brother brought many gifts for Xiao Bao too.'

Shen Cheng heard Qiao Tan Yuan emphasized kind big brother and he understood. He put the bags of food on the bedside table, sat on the bed and

wrapped an arm around Qiao Tan Yuan's shoulder.

'Are you tired?' Shen Cheng asked. 'Was Xiao Bao good today?'

'I'm not tired,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She smiled happily. 'Xiao Bao is a good daughter. She's obedient like me.'

'It's good you're not tired,' Shen Cheng said. He turned to look at Gu Jiao Wu. 'Big brother, thank you for visiting Xiao Bao. I'm here now to take care of Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao.'

Gu Jiao Wu ignored Shen Cheng and Qiao Tan Yuan being lovey dovey in front of him. He didn't want to leave his daughter.

'Jiao Wu, thank you for visiting my granddaughter,' Mrs Qiao said.

Gu Jiao Wu couldn't be disrespectful toward Mrs Qiao and nodded his head.

Gu Jiao Wu walked to the door and stood still at the door when he heard Qiao Tan Yuan's voice.

'Shen Cheng, I think Xiao Bao won't like those things on the sofa,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Can you throw them away? You won't be here before. When your big brother held Xiao Bao, she was scared and cried. So I don't think she would like your big brother's gifts.'

Shen Cheng thought it would be a waste to throw away the new clothes and toys on the sofa.

'It's a waste to throw the gifts away,' Shen Cheng said. 'I'll put them in the hospital's charity box.'

'Thank you Shen Cheng,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You're the best,'

Qiao Tan Yuan kissed Shen Cheng's cheek in front of Mrs Qiao.

'You're so cheeky,' Shen Cheng said.

'I'm hungry,' Qiao Tan Yun said. She looked at the food on the bedside table. 'I want to eat the food you brought.'

'Um,' Shen Cheng said. 'I brought you all your favorite dishes. I also hired a nurse maid to help you take care of Xiao Bao. It was last minute so she can't come here until tomorrow.'

‘It’s OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘It’s the thought that counts. Xiao Bao is blessed to have a good father like you.’

‘Of course I’m good to Xiao Bao,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘Xiao Bao’s my daughter.’

‘Does that mean you don’t need to treat me well?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Of course I’m good to you too,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘Xiao Bao is my little princess and you’re my queen. Your Majesty, what do you want to eat first?’

Qiao Tan Yuan laughed. She didn’t look at Gu Jiao Wu and only joked with Shen Cheng.

Qiao Tan Yuan ate the food Shen Cheng brought. She was blessed to have Shen Cheng by her side.

‘Shen Cheng, I love you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and kissed Shen Cheng’s cheek.

‘I love you too,’ Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng knew Qiao Tan Yuan and he were putting on an act, but he couldn’t help being lost in the act.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t stay to hear any more of the lovey dovey talk. He walked outside the room and closed the door like the people inside the room had nothing to do with him.

Outside the room, Gu Jiao Wu clenched his hands and frowned.

Qiao Tan Yuan stopped the lovey dovey act the moment Gu Jiao Wu left the room.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt ashamed of herself for using Shen Cheng as a buffer. But she didn’t want her parents to find out Gu Jiao Wu was Xiao Bao’s father. She looked at Mrs Qiao’s shocked face and she lost her appetite.

‘Mum, now you know who the father is,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Shen Cheng is the father, not Gu Jiao Wu. Shen Cheng and I will be married soon.’

‘Tan Yuan...’ Mrs Qiao said.

Shen Cheng’s the father? If Mrs Qiao didn’t see her granddaughter’s face, she would have believed Shen Cheng was the father. But her granddaughter’s face looked exactly like Gu Jiao Wu’s face. Why was Qiao Tan Yuan putting on an act

in front of her?

Shen Cheng could see Mrs Qiao didn't believe he was Xiao Bao's father.

'Aunty, you don't need to worry,' Shen Cheng said. 'In the future I'll take good care of Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao.'

End of Chapter Twenty

Related

Twenty-One



Chapter Twenty-One

Side Story

Summary of Side Story:

Fei Yan Niao (he's an antagonist in TRB I, Gu Jiao Wen's enemy) saved Li Dan Qi (aka Yuki) from being raped after her parents' were murdered. Li Dan Qi's dad was a chauffeur and her mum was a house maid. Li Dan Qi didn't know who killed her parents, but she remembered the killer had a scar on his face.

Li Dan Qi wanted to repay Fei Yan Niao for saving her by being his house maid and asked him to help her find her parents' killer. Fei Yan Niao agreed and trained Li Dan Qi to be an assassin so she could avenge her parents' deaths.

Fei Yan Niao made a plan to take revenge on Gu Jiao Wen.

Note: This side story about Fei Yan Niao and Li Dan Qi doesn't affect any of the main characters in TRB II, which is why this side story is summarized instead of detailed.

Chapter Twenty-One

Three days after Xiao Bao's birth, Qiao Tan Yuan breast fed Xiao Bao in the hospital.

After Xiao Bao was full, Qiao Tan Yuan sat upright on the bed when suddenly she saw two long familiar arms.

‘Big sister, let me hold my beautiful niece,’ Qiao Jie said.

‘Be careful,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt uneasy to let the usual rough Qiao Jie hold Xiao Bao.

‘Big sister, don’t underestimate me,’ Qiao Jie protested. ‘I’m your daughter’s uncle. Of course I’ll be careful. I would never hurt my precious niece.’

‘I’ll believe it when I see it,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t wait until tomorrow, she and Xiao Bao would be discharged from the hospital. Mrs Qiao and Mrs Chu who was the nurse maid Shen Cheng hired, were out shopping for a crib, stroller and other baby essentials for Xiao Bao. So she was left with the rough Qiao Jie in the hospital room.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t believe how quickly Xiao Bao grew after only three days.

‘Big sister, have you thought of a name for my precious niece?’ Qiao Jie asked.

Qiao Jie smiled at his beautiful niece, he loved his niece who grew more adorable by the day.

‘Her nickname is Xiao Bao,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I still haven’t thought of a formal name for Xiao Bao. I’ll let our dad choose a name for Xiao Bao.’

‘Don’t let dad choose an old traditional name for Xiao Bao,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘Look how adorable Xiao Bao is. Why don’t we name her Qiao Chou Lam?’

‘Qiao Chou Lam?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked and frowned. ‘Doesn’t roll off the tongue.’

‘What do you mean it doesn’t roll off the tongue?’ Qiao Jie asked. ‘Big sister, we both know dad’s bad at choosing names. Look how common my name is. Don’t let dad choose.’

‘Qiao Jie...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Suddenly Qiao Tan Yuan and Qiao Jie turned to look at the door, because they heard familiar footsteps. They were shocked to see Wang Tu Ya carrying a large bag of baby gifts and a bouquet of roses.

‘Tan Yuan, I came to visit you,’ Wang Tu Ya said sincerely.

‘Aunt... aunty,’ Qiao Tan Yun said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know what to say to Wang Tu Ya.

‘I heard you gave birth and came here as soon as I could,’ Wang Tu Ya said.

Wang Tu Ya put the bag and roses on the bedside table. Then she sat on the chair in front of the bed.

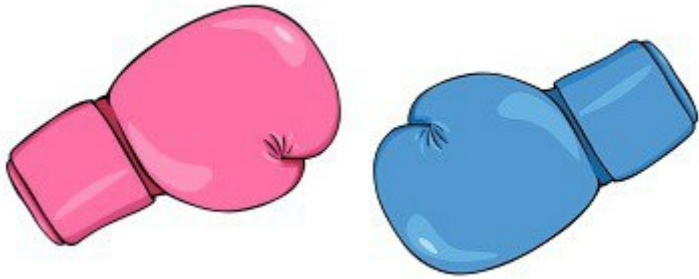
‘Thank you aunty,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan bit her lips and put her guard up. Did Gu Jiao Wu send Wang Tu Ya to steal Xiao Bao because he couldn’t steal Xiao Bao?

End of Chapter Twenty-One

Related

Twenty-Two



Chapter Twenty-Two

‘You’re like a daughter to me,’ Wang Tu Ya said. ‘It’s Jiao Wu’s lost.’

‘Aunty, you’re too kind,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

During the three years of marriage, Wang Tu Ya loved Qiao Tan Yuan and treated Qiao Tan Yuan as a daughter. But it didn’t matter how good Wang Tu Ya was to Qiao Tan Yuan if Gu Jiao Wu hated and mistreated Qiao Tan Yuan.

Wang Ta Ya was overwhelmed to see Xiao Bao in Qiao Jie’s arms.

Qiao Tan Yuan saw Wang Tu Ya’s gaze on Xiao Bao, and signalled Qiao Jie to lay Xiao Bao on the bed.

‘Tan Yuan, are you in any pain?’ Wang Tu Ya asked. ‘Did you have a natural birth or a C-section?’

‘Natural birth,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Good, good, a natural birth is good,’ Wang Tu Ya said. ‘You’ll recover faster.’

‘I can get out of bed on my own after three days,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If I had a C-section, I’ll need to rest for a week.’

‘Tan Yuan, promise me you’ll stay in bed and rest,’ Wang Tu Ya said. ‘I don’t want you to get sick.’

‘Aunty, I’m OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Um, can I hold your daughter?’ Wang Tu Ya asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded her head. She would let Wang Tu Ya hold Xiao Bao but Wang Tu Ya couldn’t steal Xiao Bao.

Wang Tu Ya stepped closer to Xiao Bao and her heart had a revelation. She watched Qiao Tan Yuan grow up. She didn't know if Gu Jiao Wu loved Qiao Tan Yuan even a little, but she and everyone knew Qiao Tan Yuan loved Gu Jiao Wu. No one could deny the sleeping Xiao Bao was Gu Jiao Wu's daughter, her granddaughter.

'She's beautiful,' Wang Tu Ya said.

Wang Tu Ya wanted to touch her granddaughter's adorable small face, but Qiao Jie looked at her like she was a thief.

'Qiao Jie, let me hold her,' Wang Tu Ya said.

'No,' Qiao Jie said coldly.

Qiao Jie wasn't going to let anyone from the Gu Household steal Xiao Bao.

'She's belongs to the Qiao Household not the Gu Household,' Qiao Jie said.

'Qiao Jie...' Wang Tu Ya said. She turned to look at Qiao Tan Yuan. 'Tan Yuan, you were part of the Gu Household for three years. I've always seen you as my daughter. You and Gu Jiao Wu are divorced. But I see your daughter as my granddaughter. Don't I have the right to hold her even once?'

'Aunty, if you want to hold her once, you can,' Qiao Tan Yuan said firmly. 'I hope aunty understands she's my life.'

Wang Tu Ya understood Qiao Tan Yuan's undertone. 'But she's Gu Jiao Wu's...'

'She's Shen Cheng's daughter,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Aunty, do you know how much Gu Jiao Wu hates me? We were married for three years, he never slept with me. So it's impossible he's the father.'

Wang Tu Ya knew Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan's relationship was bad, but she didn't expect Gu Jiao Wu hated Qiao Tan Yuan that much. She looked at her granddaughter's small face that looked exactly like Gu Jiao Wu's face. How could Gu Jiao Wu not be the father?'

'Tan Yuan...' Wang Tu Ya said. She knew Qiao Tan Yuan loved Gu Jiao Wu deeply, and wouldn't move on with another man that quickly. 'Honestly, I wanted you and Gu Jiao Wu to have a happy marriage.'

'Aunty, he and I are divorced,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I understand,’ Wang Tu Ya said.

Wang Tu Ya dismissed Qiao Jie’s hostile glare and held her granddaughter. Her granddaughter curled into her chest and slept sucking a thumb. She wanted to cry happy tears. Her dream came true, she finally had a granddaughter.

‘Tan Yuan...’ Wang Tu Ya said. ‘You’re still young. I heard you’re dating Shen Cheng. In the future you and Shen Cheng can have other children. Can you give this baby to the Gu Household?’

‘Aunty, what right do you have to take Xiao Bao?’ Qiao Jie asked coldly. ‘Aunty, where’s your conscience. Everyone knows clearly how Gu Jiao Wu mistreated my big sister. Now that big sister gave birth, aunty and everyone from the Gu Household are jumping up and down to take Xiao Bao. What about my big sister? The Gu Household rejected big sister, but wants to steal big sister’s daughter.’

‘Qiao Jie, how can you be disrespectful toward aunty?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Jie scoffed. He picked up Xiao Bao from Wang Tu Ya’s arms, carefully put Xiao Bao on the baby bed and confronted Wang Tu Ya.

‘What aunty?’ Qiao Jie asked. ‘If aunty truly loved big sister, why didn’t aunty stop Gu Jiao Wu divorcing big sister? Why didn’t aunty persuade Gu Jiao Wu to treat big sister with respect? Why didn’t aunty intervene and scold Gu Jiao Wu for mistreating big sister? Now big sister gave birth to Xiao Bao, aunty wants to talk about rights. What right does aunty have to steal big sister’s daughter? Aunty isn’t human.’

Wang Tu Ya admitted she loved Qiao Tan Yuan, but she loved Gu Jiao Wu more. She didn’t want to see Gu Jiao Wu stay in an unhappy marriage. Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t be Gu Jiao Wu if he valued other people’s opinions over his own. Gu Jiao Wu chose to marry Qiao Tan Yuan on his own and divorce Qiao Tan Yuan without consulting her and Gu Qi Jiang. She was embarrassed at Gu Jiao Wu’s behavior. She had no control over Gu Jiao Wu, but she never let anyone else from the Gu Household mistreat Qiao Tan Yuan. In the end, she couldn’t protect Qiao Tan Yuan from suffering in a cold marriage to Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Qiao Jie, what happened between Gu Jiao Wu and I wasn’t aunty’s fault,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Aunty, thank you for visiting me and my daughter. But I’m not

giving my daughter to you. My daughter belongs to the Qiao Household, not the Gu Household. I'm going to marry Shen Cheng soon, I hope we'll receive aunty's blessing.'

'Tan Yuan...' Wang Tu Ya said.

Wang Tu Ya didn't believe Qiao Tan Yuan loved Shen Cheng. She looked at her granddaughter, and finally understood why Mrs Shen visited her in the Gu Mansion and told her how Mrs Shen disapproved of Qiao Tan Yuan when she knew Mrs Shen loved Qiao Tan Yuan as a daughter too.

'Aunty, you can leave,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to see anyone from the Gu Household anymore.

Wang Tu Ya sighed. 'I'll leave.'

The messy situation was made by Gu Jiao Wu, Wang Tu Ya would let Gu Jiao Wu clean up his own mess.

'Tan Yuan, I admit you suffered while being married to Jiao Wu,' Wang Tu Ya said. 'If you want to marry Shen Cheng, of course I can give you my blessing. But I want you to ask your heart, who is the person you love? Do you love Shen Cheng or Jiao Wu? If you don't love Shen Cheng, why do you want to marry Shen Cheng? If you're marrying Shen Cheng as a buffer against Jiao Wu then you're being cruel to Shen Cheng. Do you think there's a difference between how you're treating Shen Cheng and how Jiao Wu treated you?'

Qiao Tan Yuan's complexion paled.

'Tan Yuan, you know how much I love you,' Wang Tu Ya said. 'I watched you and Sheng Cheng grow up with Jiao Wu. I truly hope you'll all find happiness.'

Wang Tu Ya's eyes lingered on her granddaughter then she reluctantly left the room.

'Big sister...' Qiao Jie called. He was worried to see Qiao Tan Yuan's pale complexion. 'Big sister, don't listen to her nonsense. Big brother Shen Cheng loves you. Big sister and big brother will be happy together.'

'Will we be happy together?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked weakly.

Qiao Tan Yuan loved Gu Jiao Wu, but they weren't happy together.

‘Qiao Jie, do you think I’m a selfish person?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan could see how selfish she was. She never stopped to consider Gu Jiao Wu and Shen Cheng’s happiness. As long as she thought she could be happy, she one-sidedly forced Gu Jiao Wu to marry her and took advantage of Shen Cheng’s love to use him as a buffer.

Qiao Tan Yuan asked her heart if she could love Shen Cheng in the future. Could she truly forget Gu Jiao Wu and love Shen Cheng?

‘Big sister, who said you’re selfish?’ Qiao Jie asked. ‘Big sister, you said if you love someone, scheming a little isn’t a crime.’

‘I did say that...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan paid a heavy price for scheming to get Gu Jiao Wu to marry her. She sighed at her foolishness and pulled the bedsheet over her face.

‘Big sister...’ Qiao Jie called. He hated seeing Qiao Tan Yuan act defeated. ‘Big sister, don’t be like this. You’re stronger than this. Don’t you know her ulterior motives? She said nonsense to force big sister to hand over Xiao Bao to the Gu Household. Big sister don’t take her bait.’

‘Don’t say anything else,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She was physically and mentally tired. ‘I want to nap. Look after Xiao Bao while I nap.’

‘Big sister...’ Qiao Jie said.

Qiao Jie was disappointed Qiao Tan Yuan let Gu Jiao Wu stomp all over her, and he didn’t want her to let Wang Tu Ya dictate her life.

Qiao Tan Yuan hid under the bedsheet. She wasn’t scared of Wang Tu Da and she had no plans to hand over Xiao Bao to anyone. What she was doubted was hers and Shen Cheng’s relationship. Shen Cheng loved her and truly wanted to marry her. Could she marry Shen Cheng knowing she didn’t love him? Would Shen Cheng be happy married to her?

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know when she fell asleep. After she woke up, it was dark outside the window. She panicked and sat up on the bed to call Qiao Jie to bring Xiao Bao to her... she couldn’t see Qiao Jie, but she saw Gu Jiao Wu sitting on the chair in front of the bed.

End of Chapter Twenty-Two

Related

Twenty-Three



Chapter Twenty-Three

Gu Jiao Wu watched Xiao Bao sleep.

Qiao Tan Yuan silently looked at Gu Jiao Wu watching Xiao Bao sleep. She never thought she would have Gu Jiao Wu's daughter. She believed him when he said he would never sleep with her even if she was his wife. She had many former classmates who were married and had children. She used to envy them, because she wanted to have children with Gu Jiao Wu.

Qiao Tan Yuan remembered when she lived together with Gu Jiao Wu, she wore sexy lingerie to entice Gu Jiao Wu. He told her if she was starving for a man, he wouldn't care if she looked for a lover then they would argue and he would leave. It happened countless times before she accepted how much he hated her.

The Gu Jiao Wu in front of her was the same Gu Jiao Wu, he didn't come to the hospital because he cared about her. He only came to hospital to see Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan understood Gu Jiao Wu reserved his love for Chu Da and Xiao Bao, but he would never love her.

Gu Jiao Wu sensed Qiao Tan Yuan was awake. He turned around and looked at her. 'You're awake. Are you hungry?'

'Where's my mum?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was certain Mrs Qiao wouldn't let Gu Jiao Wu inside the room if she was asleep.

'Your mum's attending Tong Shang Wen's birthday banquet,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Where's the nurse maid?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'I don't know,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'What are you doing here?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'You said you didn't want to see me. You can leave.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was busy at work for two days and he couldn't see Xiao Bao. When he received the DNA results, he was happy his heart was right. Xiao Bao was his daughter. The DNA results were 99% positive he was the father.

'She's my daughter,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'She's not your daughter,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu put the DNA results in front of Qiao Tan Yuan's face.

'Why did you lie to me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Gu Jiao Wu, who gave you the right to perform a DNA test?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'She's my daughter,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Why are you still denying the truth?'

'Your daughter?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked and smiled mockingly.

Qiao Tan Yuan pointed at Xiao Bao. 'Gu Jiao Wu, you claim she's your daughter. What do you want to do about it?'

‘She’s my daughter,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘She belongs to the Gu Household.’

Gu Household? Qiao Tan Yuan thought it was a laughable notion.

‘What Gu Household?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, what right do you have to take Xiao Bao? If the Gu Household raises Xiao Bao, what happens when Xiao Bao grows up? She’ll ask you how she was born. What will you tell her? Will you tell her you slept with her mum when you were drugged? Will you tell her you were forced to be married to her mum for three years? Will you tell her after she was born you decided her fate?’

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know why Gu Jiao Wu hated her, but wanted to force himself to act like a good man and raise the daughter of the woman he hated.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan...’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you’ve forgotten but I haven’t,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Nine months ago at the hotel, what did you say to me? You said if I was pregnant, I should abort the baby. You never wanted Xiao Bao to be born. What right do you have to act like a good father in front of Xiao Bao? Will you tell Xiao Bao how much you hated her existence in her mum’s stomach?’

Gu Jiao Wu heard the conviction in Qiao Tan Yuan’s voice. Everything Qiao Tan Yuan said was true. He didn’t want Xiao Bao to know how he felt about Xiao Bao before she was born.

‘You don’t have the right to be Xiao Bao’s father,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘But I have the right to be Xiao Bao’s mother. I can proudly tell Xiao Bao I love her. I can tell her I waited a long time to become her mother. I can tell her I love her more than my own life. I can tell her I’ve always protected her from the moment she existed. I can tell her I want her to grow up like the happiest princess in the world.’

Although Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t have the strength to run around, her body was recovering after childbirth because Mrs Qiao and Shen Cheng brought nutritious meals to her every day.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s hair was messy and her gown was wrinkled. She didn’t look immaculate like her usual self. But Gu Jiao Wu was intimidated by the messy Qiao Tan Yuan who was being a protective mother hen guarding a chick.

‘You can’t deny she’s my daughter,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You can’t deny you never wanted Xiao Bao,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t forget how Gu Jiao Wu treated her cruelly.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, can you honestly say before Xiao Bao was born, if I told you I was pregnant with your child that you wouldn’t have dragged me to the hospital and forced me to have an abortion?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, ask your conscience if you have the right to take Xiao Bao.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was tired and thirsty. She looked at the glass on the bedside table but it was empty. Gu Jiao Wu silently poured warm water into the glass and passed her the glass of water. The warm water didn’t alleviate her cold dry throat.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you can leave,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to love or hate Gu Jiao Wu, she wished he was a stranger. Then she could call security to escort him outside the hospital for disturbing patients.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t leave. He poured Qiao Tan Yuan another glass of warm water, sat on the chair and looked at the sleeping Xiao Bao.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, she’s my daughter,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

End of Chapter Twenty-Three

Related

Twenty-Four



Chapter Twenty-Four

‘The daughter you didn’t want,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s maternal instincts gave her the strength to stand her ground. After giving birth, Xiao Bao occupied the biggest part of her heart. Xiao Bao was her treasure, her life.

‘I didn’t know my daughter existed before but now I do and I want my daughter,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu had no attachments to embryos. He couldn’t correlate embryos to living babies. But he bonded with Xiao Bao the moment she was born.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you can take my daughter only after you kill me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Xiao Bao is a baby but she’s a smart baby. She knows who has always loved her and who didn’t love her. She doesn’t want a father like you.’

‘Waah, waah...’ Xiao Bao cried.

Gu Jiao Wu stood in front of Xiao Bao’s baby bed and picked her up. He imitated Mrs Qiao and checked her nappy, she did pee in her nappy. But he didn’t know how to change her nappy.

Qiao Tan Yuan saw Gu Jiao Wu's clueless face and scoffed. She got out of bed, picked up Xiao Bao from him and changed Xiao Bao's nappy in a flash.

Gu Jiao Wu was shocked to see how smoothly Qiao Tan Yuan changed Xiao Bao's nappy. He didn't expected Qiao Tan Yuan would ever do anything that would dirty her hands.

'What's so strange about me changing a nappy?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'It's called a mother's maternal instinct. It's natural I can learn quickly how to feed and take care of Xiao Bao.'

Xiao Bao stopped crying and went back to sleep in Qiao Tan Yuan's arms. Gu Jiao Wu suddenly felt jealous and he wanted to hold Xiao Bao. But Qiao Tan Yuan held Xiao Bao close to her chest and wouldn't let him hold Xiao Bao.

'I'll let you hold Xiao Bao if you promise to leave us alone if Xiao Bao cries after you hold her,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu pursed his lips. Xiao Bao was his daughter, he had the right to hold Xiao Bao. He didn't believe Xiao Bao hated him holding her. Qiao Tan Yuan passed Xiao Bao to him and he held Xiao Bao in his arms.

'Waah, waah, waah...' Xiao Bao cried.

Gu Jiao Wu was speechless. Why did Xiao Bao cry every time he held her?

'Xiao Bao be good,' Gu Jiao Wu coaxed.

'Waah, waah, waah, waah...' Xiao Bao cried.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought she was hearing things, because Gu Jiao Wu was coaxing Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't believe Gu Jiao Wu was standing in front of her. Did a monster take over his body? She was too shocked to hold Xiao Bao and stop Xiao Bao crying.

Mrs Chu the nurse maid entered the room carrying two bags of nappies and clothes for Xiao Bao. She heard Xiao Bao cry pitifully, put the bags on the sofa and quickly held Xiao Bao and coaxed her.

'Xiao Bao why are you crying?' Mrs Chu asked. 'Did you pee in your nappy?'

Gu Jiao Wu shook his head. 'Her nappy was changed before.'

Gu Jiao Wu was embarrassed he made Xiao Bao cry, because he was holding her.

Mrs Chu gently patted Xiao Bao's back. 'Xiao Bao be good and don't cry anymore.'

Xiao Bao stopped crying and Gu Jiao Wu was upset Xiao Bao favored Mrs Chu over him, her own father.

Mrs Chu laid Xiao Bao on the baby bed and patted Xiao Bao's back. Xiao Bao yawned and fell asleep.

'Aunty, where did you go?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'I went to get baby essentials for Xiao Bao because Xiao Bao's father was here to watch over Xiao Bao while you were sleeping,' Mrs Chu explained.

'Xiao Bao's father?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked and pointed at Gu Jiao Wu. 'Aunty, Xiao Bao and I have no relation to this man. He isn't Xiao Bao's father.'

Mrs Chu looked back and forth at Gu Jiao Wu and Xiao Bao. She didn't understand why Qiao Tan Yuan said Gu Jiao Wu wasn't Xiao Bao's father.

'Aunty, get this man to leave,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'If he refuses to leave, aunty can call security and tell them he's disturbing patients.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan...' Gu Jiao Wu warned.

If Qiao Tan Yuan was going to play dirty, Gu Jiao Wu didn't mind his hands getting dirty.

'Mr Gu,' Qiao Tan Yuan called. 'Have you forgotten we're divorced?'

Qiao Tan Yuan yawned. She was tired too and laid on the bed. 'Aunty, in the future don't let anyone apart from my family and Shen Cheng come near Xiao Bao and me.'

Mrs Chu felt embarrassed to ask Gu Jiao Wu to leave. But Shen Cheng hired her to take care of Xiao Bao and Qiao Tan Yuan while Shen Cheng was at work. Shen Cheng paid her generously, and she didn't want to be fired if she didn't follow Qiao Tan Yuan's instructions.

‘Mr Gu, I’ll escort you to the door,’ Mrs Chu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t believe Qiao Tan Yuan could fall asleep that quickly. He stepped to the bed, but Mrs Chu didn’t let him near Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I’m not going to give up Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Xiao Bao one last time before leaving the room.

Qiao Tan Yuan opened her eyes the moment she heard the door closed. She couldn’t wait until Xiao Bao and she were discharged in the morning. After they returned to the Qiao Mansion, she wouldn’t let Gu Jiao Wu step foot into the Qiao Mansion.

The following morning, Gu Jiao Wen and Tan Pan Ting walked out of the doctor’s office at the hospital.

Tan Pan Ting rubbed her stomach. ‘Did you hear the doctor? The doctor said the twins are healthy.’

‘Um,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

Gu Jiao Wen was relieved Tan Pan Ting and the twins were healthy. He worried constantly while Tan Pan Ting was at work. He asked Tan Pan Ting to take maternity leave, but she refused. She told him she wanted to wait until after the twins were born to take maternity leave and working helped keep her mind busy. He could only keep a closer eye on her and the twins. Her stomach was bigger by the day, at seven months pregnant her stomach was huge.

‘Jiao Wen, I can’t wait to see the twins,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

Tan Pan Ting was excited to see the twins, and looked forward to the day she could stop carrying around a heavy stomach.

‘Um, are you tired?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked. ‘Do you want to take a rest?’

‘I’m OK,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

‘Um,’ Gu Jiao Wen said and led Tan Pan Ting to the maternity ward front entrance.

At the entrance Gu Jiao Wen and Tan Pan Ting bumped into Qiao Jie.

‘Pan Ting, are you here for a doctor’s appointment?’ Qiao Jie asked.

‘Yes,’ Tan Ping Ting said. ‘But why are you heading to the maternity ward?’

‘I’m here to escort my big sister home,’ Qiao Jie said.

‘Your big sister gave birth?’ Tan Pan Ting asked.

‘Um, she gave birth to a daughter four days ago,’ Qiao Jie said proudly.

‘I hope I’ll have a daughter too,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Where’s your big sister’s hospital room? I want to see her and the baby.’

‘Pan Ting...’ Gu Jiao Wen called.

Gu Jiao Wen disliked Qiao Tan Yuan. He thought there was no need for Tan Pan Ting to be excited about Qiao Tan Yuan giving birth, Qiao Tan Yuan had nothing to do with them.

‘Don’t tell to go home,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘I want to see Qiao Tan Yuan and the baby.’

Gu Jiao Wen sighed and reluctantly followed Tan Pan Ting and Qiao Jie to Qiao Tan Yuan’s hospital room.

End of Chapter Twenty-Four

Related

Twenty-Five



Chapter Twenty-Five

‘Can I see the baby?’ Tan Pan Ting asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded and Mrs Chu laid Xiao Bao on the bed.

‘She’s adorable,’ Tan Pan Ting said and smiled at Xiao Bao.

Tan Pan Ting wanted to hold Xiao Bao but Gu Jiao Wen gave her a warning look so she settled for sitting on the bed next to Xiao Bao.

‘Look at your huge stomach,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You look like you’re about to pop.’

‘Is giving birth painful?’ Tan Pan Ting asked.

‘It’s painful,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She looked at Xiao Bao and smiled. ‘But the pain is worth it after seeing your baby.’

Tan Pan Ting rubbed her stomach. 'I have another two months to go. I'm scared I'll have a painful childbirth.'

'Two months?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'My stomach is this huge because I'm having twins,' Tan Pan Ting said.

'Twins?' Mrs Qiao asked. 'Jiao Wen, your mum must be really pleased.'

'Yes aunty,' Gu Jiao Wen said.

'Perhaps Pan Ting will have a boy and a girl like Jiao Wen's mum,' Mrs Qiao said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was envious Tan Pan Ting had a doting husband and expecting twins.

'Pan Ting, you have a good fate,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Thanks big sister,' Tan Pan Ting said. 'I am a blessed woman.'

Tan Pan Ting saw Xiao Bao opened big beautiful eyes.

'She's beautiful,' Tan Pan Ting praised.

'Thank you,' Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew Xiao Bao was a beautiful baby girl, but she was still happy to hear people praise Xiao Bao.

'She looks exactly like Gu Jiao Wu,' Tan Pan Ting said.

The room suddenly turned silent.

Gu Jiao Wen looked at Xiao Bao's face and couldn't deny Xiao Bao's face looked exactly like Gu Jiao Wu's face.

'Everyone else say she looks exactly like me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want Mrs Qiao to doubt Shen Cheng was Xiao Bao's father.

Gu Jiao Wen saw Mrs Qiao frowned and he held Tan Pan Ting's hand.

'Big sister is heading home soon,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'We should leave to let big sister pack.'

Tan Pan Ting frowned. She only stated the obvious, but she stood and prepared to leave.

‘Big sister, I’ll leave first,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Take good care of yourself.’

‘You too,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘After you give birth, I’ll visit you and the twins.’

‘You won’t have to visit me,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘I’ll be visiting big sister often to listen to big sister’s advice about how to take care of a baby.’

After Tan Pan Ting and Gu Jiao Wen left, Mrs Chu finished packing while Mrs Qiao played with Xiao Bao.

‘Tan Yuan...’ Mrs Qiao called.

Mrs Qiao wasn’t blind, Xiao Bao wasn’t Shen Cheng’s daughter.

‘Mum...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She knew what Mrs Qiao wanted to say. ‘Aunty has packed everything. Let’s go home.’

In that moment Shen Cheng entered the room and was relieved everyone didn’t leave to go to the Qiao Mansion yet. He greeted Mrs Qiao and put a bag on the bedside table.

‘Tan Yuan, didn’t I suggest you stay here and rest for several more days?’ Shen Cheng asked.

‘I’m feeling good,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Besides I think Xiao Bao is like me and doesn’t like staying at the hospital.’

Shen Cheng pulled out a hat from the bag and passed it to Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘It’s sunny outside. I bought the hat for you.’

‘I don’t need to wear a hat,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘We’ll be sitting in the car and going straight home.’

Shen Cheng didn’t listen to Qiao Tan Yuan and put the hat on her head.

‘Let’s go,’ Shen Cheng said.

Qiao Tan Yuan got out of bed, she glanced at Mrs Qiao and held Shen Cheng’s hand.

‘Thank you Shen Cheng,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Shen Cheng smiled at Qiao Tan Yuan. Then he instructed Mrs Chu to change Xiao Bao's clothes and carry Xiao Bao to the car.

A while later at the hospital carpark, Qiao Tan Yuan turned around to look at Qiao Jie.

'Qiao Jie, drive aunty, mum and Xiao Bao home,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Shen Cheng will drive me home.'

In Shen Cheng's car, Qiao Tan Yuan made up her mind.

'Shen Chen...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'What is it?' Shen Cheng asked while looking at the road and driving.

Shen Cheng knew Qiao Tan Yuan wouldn't sit in his car while Xiao Bao was in a different car unless she had something important to discuss with him privately.

'Let's cancel our wedding plans,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

What Wang Tu Ya said to Qiao Tan Yuan was right. She and Gu Jiao Wu had an unhappy marriage. A marriage where only one person loved their spouse wouldn't work. She couldn't be selfish and marry Shen Cheng, she didn't want Shen Cheng to suffer because she couldn't return his love.

Shen Cheng kept his eyes on the road and hid his shock.

'Xiao Bao needs a father,' Shen Cheng said.

'I thought deeply about what Xiao Bao needs,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I think Xiao Bao is a blessed baby girl. She has my unconditional love. Her grandparents and uncle love and adore her. Xiao Bao will still be loved and happy without a father.'

'But I want to be Xiao Bao's father,' Shen Cheng said. 'I want to be your husband too.'

'But Shen Cheng, I can't keep lying to myself and being unfair to you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You're a good man. I'm blessed to have you in my life. But I don't love you...'

'I love you,' Shen Cheng said. 'You know how much I love you. My love is enough for both of us to be happy.'

'Shen Cheng...' Qiao Tan Yuan said in a choked voice.

Shen Cheng passed Qiao Tan Yuan a tissue. ‘Don’t cry. Do you want to break my heart?’

Qiao Tan Yuan accepted the tissue and shook her head. She wasn’t Gu Jiao Wu, she didn’t want to make someone who loved her suffer. She couldn’t forget the cold hatred in Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes every time he looked at her during their marriage. She couldn’t lie to herself anymore. If she wasn’t scared of losing Xiao Bao to Gu Jiao Wu, she wouldn’t have accepted Shen Cheng’s proposal.

At the red lights, Shen Cheng turned to Qiao Tan Yuan. He wiped the tears flowing down her cheeks, her tears burned his hands.

‘Tan Yuan, don’t cry...’ Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng’s heart broke to see Qiao Tan Yuan cry. He wasn’t going to force her to change her mind if it would make her unhappy.

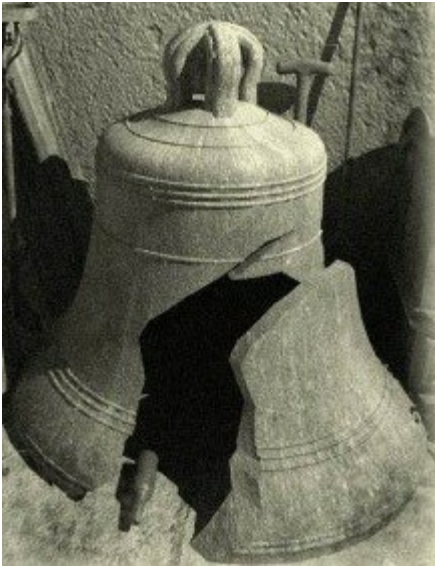
The lights turned green and the cars behind Shen Cheng’s car honked. Shen Cheng looked back at the road and drove.

‘Tan Yuan, is it that hard for you to forget Gu Jiao Wu?’ Shen Cheng asked.

End of Chapter Twenty-Five

Related

Twenty-Six



Chapter Twenty-Six

‘How can I forget him if he wants to steal Xiao Bao?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to forget Gu Jiao Wu. How could she forget him if he kept appearing in front of her? Each time she saw him, it reminded how foolish she was to love someone who didn’t love her. She didn’t want Shen Cheng to suffer like her.

‘Are you going to let him steal Xiao Bao?’ Shen Cheng asked.

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and shook her head. ‘I would never give Xiao Bao to him.’

‘Tan Yuan, I want you to be happy,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘If you marry me, I’ll make you happy. I’ll give you everything and I won’t expect you to love me. Letting me love you is enough.’

Shen Cheng witnessed how Qiao Tan Yuan used to love blindly and abandoned her self-respect. Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan were divorced. He wished Gu Jiao Wu would let go of Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao. Gu Jiao Wu rejected Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao, but he wanted to make Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao happy. He wanted to give Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao a happy family.

‘Tan Yuan, let’s get married as planned,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘I truly love you and I’ll love you forever.’

‘Shen Cheng...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know what she should say. In her heart there was only gratefulness toward Shen Cheng, she didn’t love Shen Cheng but she didn’t want him to suffer because she couldn’t reciprocate his love.

‘We’ll get married as planned,’ Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng turned on the radio to avoid an awkward silence.

Qiao Tan Yuan silently listened to the sad love song played on the radio and thought about Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu used to be her everything. Her deep love broke her. It tore her to step away from Gu Jiao Wu, but it was the right choice. After they divorced she saw clearly Gu Jiao Wu would never love her. She didn’t want to make the same mistake and enter a marriage where there was no mutual love, she wasn’t selfish enough to make Shen Cheng unhappy.

Qiao Tan Yuan and Shen Chen listened to the sad love song. They both understood forgetting someone and loving someone were two different things.

Shen Cheng parked in front of the Qiao Mansion. He and Qiao Tan Yuan got out of the car and they saw Qiao Jie and Mrs Chu carry bags into the mansion while Mrs Qiao carried Xiao Bao.

During Qiao Tan Yuan’s pregnancy, the mansion was renovated to include a nursery next to Qiao Tan Yuan’s room on the second level.

Shen Cheng carried Qiao Tan Yuan upstairs into her room. Their conversation in the car made both of them awkward with each other.

Shen Cheng laid Qiao Tan Yuan on the bed. ‘Tan Yuan, you should rest.’

‘Um,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t think saying thank you to Shen Cheng was enough. She owed Shen Cheng too much for everything he did for her.

‘I’ll leaving now,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘Make sure you rest. I’ll come see you and Xiao Bao tomorrow.’

‘Um,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan watched Shen Cheng leave and regretted she couldn't love him.

Mrs Qiao escorted Shen Cheng outside and walked to Qiao Tan Yuan's room.

'Xiao Bao's sleeping,' Mrs Qiao said. 'I let aunty take a break.'

'Yes mum,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was grateful Shen Cheng hired a good nurse maid like Mrs Chu to take care of Xiao Bao.

Mrs Qiao sat on the bed next to Qiao Tan Yuan. 'Tan Yuan, before I asked Shen Cheng to stay for a meal. But he looked sad, declined my invitation and left. Did you and Shen Cheng have a fight?'

'We're not fighting,' Qiao Tan Yuan said and sighed. 'Mum, don't nag me. I'm tired, let me rest.'

Mrs Qiao scoffed. 'If you're not my daughter, I wouldn't care about you and nag you.'

'Mum...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Tan Yuan... Xiao Bao is Jiao Wu's daughter,' Mrs Qiao said.

'Mum!' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Can you not talk about him?'

'Not talk about Jiao Wu?' Mrs Qiao asked. 'Why did you divorce Jiao Wu if Xiao Bao is his daughter? Or did he divorce you because he didn't want you to give birth to Xiao Bao? What did the elders of the Gu Household teach Jiao Wu? How can they let him abandon his responsibilities and divorce you while you're pregnant?'

'Mum, why we're divorced is our own business,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Xiao Bao has no relation to him.'

'Not related to Jiao Wu?' Mrs Qiao asked. 'At least tell me if he knew you were pregnant. If he knew, how could he abandon you while you're pregnant? Seeing Shen Cheng by your side the whole time you were pregnant, I believed Shen Cheng was Xiao Bao's father. So I didn't go to the Gu Mansion and give Jiao Wu an earful for getting you pregnant and abandoning you. Tell me, did you divorce Jiao Wu because he has a mistress?'

‘Mum...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘He doesn’t have a mistress. We’re divorced, don’t involve him in Xiao Bao’s life.’

‘If Jiao Wu isn’t Xiao Bao’s father, I wouldn’t involve him,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘The Gu Household is in the wrong. How can they turn their backs on you like this? I’m going to find Wang Tu Ya and tell her what an irresponsible son she has.’

‘Mum... stop making a racket,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Do you want to make me more embarrassed than I already am? Mum, if you go to the Gu Household and make a commotion, Gu Jiao Wu’s grandfather will force Gu Jiao Wu to marry me again. Mum... I’m begging you not to interfere. If you can’t stand seeing me live here, I’ll move out with Xiao Bao.’

‘This little girl, do you want to me to be angry to death?’ Mrs Qiao asked. She rubbed her chest. ‘How can you say I don’t want see you and Xiao Bao? What are you thinking? Why do you want to bring Xiao Bao into the Shen Household? Do you think the Shen Household are blind? They’ll take one look at Xiao Bao and know she’s Jiao Wu’s daughter, not Shen Cheng’s daughter. Do you think you and Xiao Bao will be happy if you marry Shen Cheng and be looked down on by Shen Cheng’s family?’

‘Mum, we won’t be living with Shen Cheng’s family,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She didn’t want to be lectured anymore. ‘Besides I’ll be marrying Shen Cheng, not his family.’

‘What about Shen Cheng?’ Mrs Qiao asked. ‘Do you think it’s fair on Shen Cheng if you marry him? Is it fair on Shen Cheng if he’s taking responsibility for Xiao Bao who is Jiao Wu’s daughter?’

Fair? Gu Jiao Wu never treated Qiao Tan Yuan fairly. But she didn’t want to treat Shen Cheng unfairly.

‘Tan Yuan...’ Mrs Qiao said.

Mrs Qiao regretted she and her husband spoiled their only daughter. But they hated seeing their daughter miserable while married to Gu Jiao Wu. She didn’t want Qiao Tan Yuan to make the same mistake and be unhappy by marrying Shen Cheng.

‘Tan Yuan... if you and Shen Cheng loved each other it wouldn’t matter if Shen

Cheng isn't Xiao Bao's father,' Mrs Qiao said. 'But you don't love Shen Cheng. Your heart knows you and Shen Cheng won't be happy together. Tan Yuan... Xiao Bao is Jiao Wu's daughter. I think you should take time to think things over. Think about if you want to marry Jiao Wu again...'

'Mum!' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Do you think I'll die if I don't have a man? Mum, don't nag me anymore. I'm not going to marry Shen Cheng or Gu Jiao Wu. For the rest of my life I'm going to raise Xiao Bao on my own, I don't need a man. Are you satisfied now?'

'Fine, I'm not going to interfere in your business,' Mrs Qiao said. 'Did I raise you for you to make me angry to death? Your love life is yours to deal with. But you're divorced and now you're a mother. If you don't think about what's best for you and Xiao Bao, you'll regret making another irreversible mistake for the rest of your life.'

Mrs Qiao stood and strode out of the room.

Qiao Tan Yuan laid on the bed in her quiet room. She didn't know what Mrs Qiao was thinking. Wasn't it enough she was miserable in a cold marriage for three years? Marry Gu Jiao Wu again? Even if there were no other men left in the world, she would rather die of loneliness than marry Gu Jiao Wu again. She was tired of their fights and cold silent wars. She closed her eyes and wanted to forget Gu Jiao Wu existed.

The following two days, Mrs Qiao didn't mention to Qiao Tan Yuan about marrying Gu Jiao Wu again, and Shen Cheng visited Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao at the Qiao Mansion. But since Xiao Bao and Qiao Tan Yuan was discharged from the hospital, it was awkward between Qiao Tan Yuan and Shen Cheng.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to give Shen Cheng hope if she knew she couldn't love him. When Shen Cheng visited her and Xiao Bao, they exchanged pleasantries, Shen Cheng would play with Xiao Bao for a while and leave.

In the evening, Qiao Tan Yuan breast fed Xiao Bao, and Mrs Chu carried Xiao Bao to the nursery.

Qiao Tan Yuan laid in bed and tried to sleep. Her phone rang, it was a former classmate who invited her to an engagement party. She said she was recovering from childbirth and declined. But the truth was she didn't want to be envious

when she saw how her former classmates were happily married with children.

Love? Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know what it felt like to be loved by someone she loved. For more than twenty years she pursued Gu Jiao Wu and his shadow imprinted in her heart. She felt restless, got out of bed and walked to the window. She wanted to open the window for fresh air to clear her head, but a familiar hand grabbed her wrist.

'What are you doing?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

End of Chapter Twenty-Six

Related

Twenty-Seven



Chapter Twenty-Seven

Gu Jiao Wu?

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at the owner of the hand, it was Gu Jiao Wu.

‘What are you doing here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan’s face, she was unhappy to see him. She wore a thin floral night gown, and her long messy hair was tied back. He was a little dazed looking at her.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu was behaving strangely.

‘Are you sick?’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Did you forget how to speak?’

Although it was a summer’s day, it was windy. Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want Qiao Tan Yuan to catch a cold wearing a thin dress in front of a window.

Qiao Tan Yuan pulled her hand out of Gu Jiao Wu’s grip. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, do you know what you’re doing? Are you worrying about me?’

Was Gu Jiao Wu possessed?

‘You’re breast feeding Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If you’re sick, Xiao Bao will be sick too.’

Gu Jiao Wu had not seen Xiao Bao for two days. He was busy working, but during his breaks he read parenting books about taking care of babies. When he saw Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to open the window on a windy day, he wasn’t pleased with her behavior.

Qiao Tan Yuan expected too much. Gu Jiao Wu didn’t change, he wasn’t worried about her. He behaved strangely because he was worried about Xiao Bao. Inwardly she laughed at herself. Why was she still hoping he would care about her?

‘Thank you for your concern,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I care about Xiao Bao’s health more than you. I’m taking good care of myself so you can leave.’

Gu Jiao Wu could see the hostility in Qiao Tan Yuan’s eyes and he frowned.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, be reasonable,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu wanted to discuss about Xiao Bao with Qiao Tan Yuan. But Qiao Tan Yuan’s hostile attitude toward him wouldn’t help them reach an amicable agreement.

‘I’m being unreasonable?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Gu Jiao Wu if I’m being unreasonable I would call the cops and report you for breaking into the Qiao’s residence.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Reasonable? Qiao Tan Yuan’s hostile tone of voice didn’t sound reasonable. Gu Jiao Wu lifted her into his arms to get her away from the cold wind.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, what are you doing...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Put me down.’

Gu Jiao Wu laid Qiao Tan Yuan on the bed. She tried sitting up, but one of his hands was still bracing her neck and her lips brushed his lips.

Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu were startled even though their lips touched fleetingly. She moved her head back, but he didn’t let go of her neck otherwise she would have hit the back of her head on the bedhead. In that moment if someone walked into the room, it would have looked like they were hugging

each other on the bed.

Qiao Tan Yuan blushed. She was embarrassed and angry.

‘Let go of me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu was embarrassed too. He put a pillow behind Qiao Tan Yuan’s back and let her go.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked away from Gu Jiao Wu, her heart was leaping like a deer escaping a predator.

‘Leave, you’re not welcome here,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

The last two days Qiao Tan Yuan had decided to forget Gu Jiao Wu, and start a new life with Xiao Bao. As long as Gu Jiao Wu stopped appearing in front of her, she would forget him.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s hostile voice didn’t ease Gu Jiao Wu’s daze. He wasn’t used to seeing the shyness in her beautiful eyes and her embarrassed rosy cheeks. He coughed to compose himself.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, can you be reasonable?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Gu Jiao Wu,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and took a deep breath. ‘I’m being reasonable. It’s you who is being unreasonable. You’re here to take Xiao Bao. I’m letting you know I won’t let you take Xiao Bao.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, Xiao Bao is my daughter too,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You can’t decide Xiao Bao’s future on your own. Why won’t you acknowledge I’m Xiao Bao’s father?’

‘You’re the one who said you didn’t want Xiao Bao to exist,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was tired of stating painful truths. She pulled the bedsheet over her body and wanted to sleep.

‘I don’t want to take Xiao Bao away from you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘But I can’t forgive you for secretly having Xiao Bao without my consent.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and threw a pillow at Gu Jiao Wu. ‘Go to hell.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and caught the pillow. ‘If you had taken the

pill then we wouldn't be in this situation.'

'You're right,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'If I did take the pill then you wouldn't be here demanding me to give Xiao Bao to you. You didn't want Xiao Bao before she was born so you have no right to take Xiao Bao.'

'The reality is you didn't take the pill,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He wasn't angry at Qiao Tan Yuan. 'You gave birth to Xiao Bao. Do you think I'll let Xiao Bao run around outside the Gu Household and call another man father?'

'Gu Jiao Wu, why are you being selfish?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'I'm being selfish?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'You're being selfish. Why are you taking away Xiao Bao's right to receive her father's love?'

'Xiao Bao doesn't need her father's love,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Xiao Bao hates you holding her. Didn't you hear her cry when you hold her?'

Gu Jiao Wu was embarrassed Xiao Bao wouldn't let him hold her. But he thought Qiao Tan Yuan was being a difficult child throwing a tantrum.

'Xiao Bao is a baby,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu thought when Xiao Bao grew up, she would know how much he loved her.

'Do you think Xiao Bao's feelings toward you will change when she grows up?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She was too tired to argue with Gu Jiao Wu. She pointed to the door. 'Gu Jiao Wu, I'll never give Xiao Bao to you. You can leave.'

'If you don't want to compromise then I have no other choice but to use my own methods and deal with the situation,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Gu Jiao Wu, what do you want to do?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu saw fear in Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes, and for a moment he didn't have the heart to open his mouth.

'I want Xiao Bao,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu had the resources to forcibly take Xiao Bao back to the Gu Household, and prevent Qiao Tan Yuan ever seeing Xiao Bao again. But he remembered how Qiao Tan Yuan begged him to save Xiao Bao in the delivery

him. He didn't want to separate Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao. The last two days when he thought about Xiao Bao, he would also think about Qiao Tan Yuan. How Qiao Tan Yuan was willing to sacrifice her life for Xiao Bao, she did it out of love. It was hard for him to believe.

Gu Jiao Wu read about that kind of love in books. He didn't believe it existed, but Qiao Tan Yuan showed him it did exist, which was why he chose to discuss Xiao Bao's future with Qiao Tan Yuan. But if Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to compromise then he could only use dirty tactics.

'You don't have the right to be Xiao Bao's father,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to cry in front of the cold hearted Gu Jiao Wu.

'I do have the right to be Xiao Bao's father,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Xiao Bao is my daughter, you can't steal her,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to jump out of bed and give Gu Jiao Wu a beating.

'I came here to negotiate with you,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Qiao Tan Yuan, be reasonable. Deal with this situation like an adult, not a child throwing a tantrum.'

A child? Gu Jiao Wu pushed Qiao Tan Yuan's last button.

'Gu Jiao Wu, so what if I'm a child?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'A child who is unreasonable, impulsive and hateful. It's nothing new to you. We're divorced. Even if I'm a hateful child, it's none of your business.'

Qiao Tan Yuan took deep breaths and pointed at the door. 'Leave. You're not welcome at the Qiao's residence.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan's waist. His threatening gaze intimidated Qiao Tan Yuan.

'You...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

End of Chapter Twenty-Seven

Related

part 1



Chapter Twenty-Eight (Part 1)

Side Story

Summary of Fei Yan Niao and Li Dan Qi's Side Story Two: Fei Yan Niao received medical reports about Cheng Yi.

Cheng Yi's in a coma since the end of TRB I. Cheng Yi used Zheng Jia Ju to gain Tan Pan Ting's trust. Zheng Jia Ju's close to Tan Pan Ting. Cheng Yi's the father of Zheng Jia Ju's baby.

Fei Yan Niao personally trained Li Dan Qi how to fight. Fei Yan Niao fight his attraction to Li Dan Qi but kissed her during a training session. Li Dan Qi's the first woman Fei Yan Niao was attracted to since he met Tan Pan Ting.

Chapter Twenty-Eight (Part 1):

'You...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan had no room to move back on the bed. Gu Jiao Wu was too close to her, she could clearly see his eyelashes.

'Qiao Tan Yuan,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu saw discomfort in Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes and thought she hated him. He frowned and felt a little unhappy.

'I'm not going to give Xiao Bao to you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Let go of me.'

Qiao Tan Yuan did want to forget Gu Jiao Wu. But she loved him for many years, it wasn't easy to forget him especially if he's holding her close to him. Her traitorous heart was racing fast.

'Qiao Tan Yuan,' Gu Jiao Wu warned.

Gu Jiao Wu inched his face closer to Qiao Tan Yuan's face. There was less than ten centimetres separating their faces. She was uncomfortable to have their bodies that close.

'Gu Jiao Wu, leave,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan told herself not to forget if Xiao Bao wasn't born, Gu Jiao Wu would never look in her direction without looking at her contemptuously.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, I want Xiao Bao,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't notice Qiao Tan Yuan was behaving strangely. What he noticed was strange was why he spent half a day alone with Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Gu Jiao Wu, I won't let you have Xiao Bao,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan understood Gu Jiao Wu tolerated spending half a day with her because of Xiao Bao.

Gu Jiao Wu stared at Qiao Tan Yuan's angry face. She wore the angry mother hen protecting a chick look again.

'I understand,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He let go of Qiao Tan Yuan and stood. 'You should rest. I'll come back another time.'

'Gu Jiao Wu,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew Gu Jiao Wu wouldn't give up Xiao Bao that easily. What was he scheming?

'What will it take for you to let go of me and Xiao Bao?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. If Gu Jiao Wu promised to let her and Xiao Bao live a peaceful life, she would concede. 'Gu Jiao Wu, I'm willing to compromise with you. You can visit Xiao Bao once a week on the weekend.'

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan's hands that were slender and smooth like a model's hands. But her model hands were trembling. He thought about how

she held his hand tightly in the delivery room... and his heart asked him to let her go.

‘I won’t let go of Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I hope you’ll think carefully before you give me an answer.’

Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t inhumane enough to blackmail a woman who gave birth less than a week ago. He would wait for Qiao Tan Yuan to recover before making arrangements.

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan suspected Gu Jiao Wu wanted full custody of Xiao Bao.

‘You should rest,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was walking toward the door, but it didn’t ease Qiao Tan Yuan’s heart.

‘Tell me you won’t steal Xiao Bao,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I won’t steal Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He wasn’t going to steal Xiao Bao while Qiao Tan Yuan was recovering. ‘I’ll come back another time to visit Xiao Bao.’

Qiao Tan Yuan heard the door closed, but her heart was still racing. Gu Jiao Wu, did he know how much she hated seeing him? Whenever she saw him, it reminded her what a fool she was.

‘Miss Qiao, Xiao Bao’s hungry,’ Mrs Chu said.

Mrs Chu carried the crying Xiao Bao to Qiao Tan Yuan. Qiao Tan Yuan held Xiao Bao and looked at Xiao Bao’s crying face. Xiao Bao’s cheeks were rosy pink, her eyelashes were damp. Qiao Tan Yuan thought Xiao Bao looked adorable.

Qiao Tan Yuan pulled down her night gown and breast fed Xiao Bao. Xiao Bao grew bigger each day. How could she be separated from Xiao Bao? She felt something wet on her bare arms and realised she was crying.

The following afternoon Li Lam walked into Gu Jiao Wu’s office unannounced.

‘What do you want?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked coldly.

‘You’re not going to welcome me?’ Li Lam asked. ‘I’m here to see you.’

Gu Jiao Wu politely pointed at the sofa and Li Lam sat on the sofa.

Li Lam thought Gu Jiao Wu’s office was clinically spotless like his cold personality.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Li Lam’s face that resembled Chu Da, but Li Lam and Chu Da were two different people.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, it looks like you don’t want to see me,’ Li Lam said. ‘Why? Do you hate that much?’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t love or hate Li Lam. He was indifferent to Li Lam.

‘Even if I’m Chu Da, would you still hate?’ Li Lam asked.

‘You’re not Chu Da,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘If you don’t believe I’m Chu Da then I’ll leave,’ Li Lam said.

Suddenly Li Lam walked to Gu Jiao Wu’s table and put a box on his desk.

‘I can’t keep your gift if you don’t believe I’m Chu Da,’ Li Lam said.

Li Lam smiled, turned around and walked out of the office.

Gu Jiao Wu opened the box and was shocked. Who was Li Lam? Why did Li Lam possess the necklace he gave to Chu Da as a birthday gift?

End of Chapter Twenty-Eight (Part 1)

Related

part 2



Chapter Twenty-Eight (Part 2 of 2)

On the weekend, Tan Pan Ting's chauffeur drove her to the Qiao Mansion.

At the Qiao Mansion, Qiao Tan Yuan was surprised to see Tan Pan Ting.

'Pan Ting, why are you here?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Big sister, aren't you going to welcome me?' Tan Pan Ting asked.

'Of course you're welcome,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan had nothing to do except sleep while Xiao Bao slept. She was happy to have adult company.

'Big sister, how are you feeling?' Tan Pan Ting asked.

Tan Pan Ting was relieved to see Qiao Tan Yuan's complexion looked a healthy rosy pink instead of Qiao Tan Yuan's sickly pale complexion at the hospital.

'Um, my body's recovering,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Shen Cheng hired a chef to cook Qiao Tan Yuan healthy meals every day. So Qiao Tan Yuan wasn't surprised her body was recovering quickly.

Tan Pan Ting nodded her head and looked for Xiao Bao. 'Big sister, where's Xiao Bao?'

‘Xiao Bao’s nursery is next door,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Big sister, you look happy after you gave birth to Xiao Bao,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

Tan Pan Ting was envious Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t have to carry around a huge stomach anymore.

‘You’ll be happy after the twins are born too,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Big sister, I’m scared to give birth to twins,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

‘Don’t think bad thoughts,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Imagine you’re giving birth to two eggs.’

Tan Pan Ting laughed. ‘Big sister, I realised you have a unique sense of humor.’

Eggs? How could Qiao Tan Yuan compare two babies to two eggs? Tan Pan Ting laughed too much that the twins kicked her stomach.

Tan Pan Ting rubbed her stomach. ‘The twins kicked me. They’re protesting that they’re not eggs.’

‘How dare they kick their mum?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked affectionately. ‘The twins are restless eggs. But you’ll feel blessed after they’re born.’

‘Big sister, I can’t wait to see if it’ll be like giving birth to two eggs,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

Shen Cheng walked into Qiao Tan Yuan’s room and found two women laughing.

‘Hello Shen Cheng,’ Tan Pan Ting greeted. ‘You’re not working today?’

‘It’s the weekend,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘You’re not working this weekend?’

‘I’m free this weekend,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘I’ll leave and give you two privacy.’

‘Don’t go,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt awkward being left alone with Shen Cheng.

‘Pan Ting, you should stay for dinner,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘The chef I hired for Qiao Tan Yuan cooks delicious food.’

Shen Cheng felt Qiao Tan Yuan tensed after he held her hand. If Tan Pan Ting wasn’t in the room with them he knew Qiao Tan Yuan would let go of his hand.

He thought it was Gu Jiao Wu's reappearance in Qiao Tan Yuan's life that affected his and Qiao Tan Yuan's relationship.

'I'll stay because my huge stomach tells me to stay and eat the chef's food,' Tan Pan Ting said.

'Shen Cheng, can you carry Xiao Bao here to let Pan Ting see Xiao Bao?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Um,' Shen Cheng said and walked to the nursery.

'Big sister, Shen Cheng is good to you,' Tan Pan Ting said.

'Isn't Gu Jiao Wen good to you too?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to think about how much she owed Shen Cheng to repay his love and kindness.

Qiao Tan Yuan was confused. Mrs Qiao was right to lecture her. She wasn't certain if she should call off the wedding with Shen Cheng. It would be fair on Shen Cheng if she married him.

'It's not the same,' Tan Pan Ting said.

Tan Pan Ting was having Gu Jiao Wen's children and Gu Jiao Wen was her husband. It wasn't unusual if Gu Jiao Wen was good to her. But Qiao Tan Yuan gave birth to Gu Jiao Wu's daughter yet Shen Cheng took good care of Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao. Then she remembered when Gu Jiao Wen was misled to believe Fei Yan Niao was the father of her children, Gu Jiao Wen still loved her and was good to her. So Gu Jiao Wen was a good man too.

'What are you thinking about?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'What...' Tan Pan Ting said.

Suddenly Xiao Bao's cry was heard from the nursery. Qiao Tan Yuan and Tan Pan Ting immediately stood and walked to the nursery.

In the middle of the nursery, Shen Cheng was standing opposite Gu Jiao Wu who was holding a crying Xiao Bao.

End of Chapter Twenty-Eight (Part 2 of 2)

Related

part 1



Where's the Mute Button?

Chapter Twenty-Nine (Part 1)

Gu Jiao Wu held Chu Da's necklace.

Why did Li Lam have Chu Da's necklace? Gu Jiao Wu didn't believe Chu Da would give another person the birthday gift he gave Chu Da.

Gu Jiao Wu was frustrated he didn't know where Chu Da was. He called an assistant to secretly follow Li Lam. If Li Lam had Chu Da's necklace, it meant Li Lam would have seen Chu Da in the last four years.

Gu Jiao Wu hung up the phone and smiled at the beautiful photo on the phone. He took a photo of Xiao Bao sleeping at the hospital. At that time he thought Xiao Bao was a sleeping angel sent to him, and he took a photo of his little angel. He wasn't a sentimental person. But the moment Xiao Bao was born, he was in awe and wanted to give Xiao Bao the world.

Gu Jiao Wu put the necklace in the box, picked up his car key and drove to the Qiao Mansion. He missed his little angel.

At the Qiao Mansion, Gu Jiao Wu walked into the nursery and saw Mrs Chu

coaxing Xiao Bao to sleep.

‘Let me hold Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and carefully picked up Xiao Bao.

Mrs Chu felt uncomfortable letting Gu Jiao Wu hold Xiao Bao. Qiao Tan Yuan instructed her not to let Gu Jiao Wu near Xiao Bao and Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Waah, waah...’ Xiao Bao cried.

Gu Jiao Wu was embarrassed he made Xiao Bao cry again, but he didn’t want to let her go.

‘Mr Gu, give Xiao Bao to me,’ Mrs Chu said.

Mrs Chu didn’t want Qiao Tan Yuan to fire her if Qiao Tan Yuan saw Gu Jiao Wu holding Xiao Bao.

Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t used to holding Xiao Bao. He supported her head, neck and gently patted her back but she wouldn’t stop crying.

‘Mr Gu, you don’t need to hold Xiao Bao,’ Mrs Chu said. ‘You can put Xiao Bao on the bed.’

Mrs Chu was an old woman and had witnessed many different family situations. She suspected Gu Jiao Wu was an irresponsible man who regretted abandoning Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao.

Gu Jiao Wu’s head knew he should let Mrs Chu hold Xiao Bao or put Xiao Bao on the bed. But his heart didn’t want to lose the feeling of Xiao Bao’s warmth in his arms.

‘Big brother?’ Shen Cheng called. ‘What are you doing here?’

‘To see Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was preoccupied coaxing Xiao Bao to stop crying so he didn’t register the panic in Shen Cheng’s voice.

‘Tan Yuan asked me to carry Xiao Bao to her room,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘Big brother, give me Xiao Bao.’

Gu Jiao Wu held Xiao Bao closer to his chest. ‘Shen Cheng, Xiao Bao is my daughter.’

‘Big brother, Xiao Bao is Tan Yuan’s daughter,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘Xiao Bao has

no relation to you. Give me Xiao Bao.'

Gu Jiao Wu was taken back by Shen Cheng's disrespectful tone of voice. Then he quickly composed himself and gently patted Xiao Bao's back.

'Shen Cheng if you want to be with Tan Yuan, I'm not going to interfere,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'But you shouldn't interfere in my relationship with Xiao Bao.'

Shen Cheng didn't want Gu Jiao Wu to keep appearing in front of Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Big brother, I don't want to talk about how you treated Tan Yuan,' Shen Cheng said. 'But Xiao Bao is Tan Yuan's daughter. I hope you can let go of Xiao Bao and Tan Yuan.'

'What did I do to Tan Yuan?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'You mentally abused her,' Shen Cheng said. 'Now Xiao Bao's born, you think you're entitled to raise Xiao Bao. You're too much.'

Gu Jiao Wu thought what Shen Cheng said was laughable. He tried holding Xiao Bao in a different position and gently patted her shoulders but she cried louder.

'Big brother, give Xiao Bao to me,' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng's heart ached to hear Xiao Bao cry pitifully.

'What are you going to do if I don't?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Mrs Chu didn't care about the tension between Gu Jiao Wu and Shen Cheng. She was worried she would hurt Xiao Bao if she took Xiao Bao out of Gu Jiao Wu's arms. But if she did nothing, Xiao Bao wouldn't stop crying.

'Big brother?' Tan Pan Ting called.

Even though Tan Pan Ting knew Xiao Bao was Gu Jiao Wu's daughter, she didn't expect the cold hearted Gu Jiao Wu liked children and wanted to visit Xiao Bao. She looked at the crying Xiao Bao in his arms and gasped. Did he want to fight Qiao Tan Yuan for custody of Xiao Bao?

Gu Jiao Wu was surprised to see Tan Pan Ting too. Why was Tan Pan Ting standing next to Qiao Tan Yuan?

‘Big brother, Xiao Bao is crying,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Give Xiao Bao to aunty.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to let go of Xiao Bao.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, let my daughter go,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan stood in front of Gu Jiao Wu to hold Xiao Bao but he wouldn’t let go of Xiao Bao.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you said you won’t steal Xiao Bao,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I’m not stealing Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘My daughter belongs to me.’

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan had many unflattering names for Gu Jiao Wu. While Gu Jiao Wu was distracted she took Xiao Bao.

‘Xiao Bao is my daughter,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu was displeased to see Qiao Tan Yuan, Tan Pan Ting, Shen Cheng and Mrs Chu look at him like he was trafficking children.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to hurt Xiao Bao and let Qiao Tan Yuan hold Xiao Bao. He watched Qiao Tan Yuan gently coax Xiao Bao.

‘Xiao Bao, don’t cry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and patted Xiao Bao’s back.

Gu Jiao Wu thought it was strange Xiao Bao stopped crying after hearing Qiao Tan Yuan’s voice. Xiao Bao sniffed her nose adorably. Xiao Bao rubbed her head on Qiao Tan Yuan’s chest like she wanted to drink breast milk.

End of Chapter Twenty-Nine (Part 1)

Related

part 2



Chapter Twenty-Nine (Part 2 of 2)

Qiao Tan Yuan carried Xiao Bao to her room.

Next door in the nursery, Shen Cheng and Gu Jiao Wu exchanged glares.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I hope you’ll keep your distance from Tan Yuan,’ Shen Cheng said.

Gu Jiao Wu was shocked to hear Shen Cheng call his name directly.

‘I’ll stay away from Tan Yuan on the condition Xiao Bao is returned to the Gu Household,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Xiao Bao is Tan Yuan’s daughter,’ Shen Cheng said coldly. ‘You say Xiao Bao is your daughter. Do you know how much Tan Yuan suffered to give birth to Xiao Bao? During her first month of pregnancy she had severe morning sickness and threw up everything she ate. She was frail and bedridden for half a month. The doctor told her it was a high risk pregnancy and advised her to abort Xiao Bao. She refused, she loved Xiao Bao more than her life. Gu Jiao Wu, where were you when she was having a high risk pregnancy? Now Xiao Bao is born, what gives you the right to open your mouth and demand her to hand over Xiao Bao to you?’

Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t intimidated by Shen Cheng’s cold glare. He silently thought about Qiao Tan Yuan begging him to save Xiao Bao, it made his heart confused.

‘Even if she had a hard pregnancy, you can’t deny Xiao Bao is my daughter,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Tan Yuan gave birth to Xiao Bao,’ Shen Cheng said. He couldn’t believe how self-righteous and cold blooded Gu Jiao Wu could be. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, don’t be selfish and let go of Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao.’

Tan Pan Ting was silently fuming at Gu Jiao Wu. She could empathise with Qiao Tan Yuan, morning sickness, sleep deprivation and body aches were a mother’s price to pay to give birth to their child. She couldn’t believe Gu Jiao Wu was selfish enough to separate Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao.

What did a man like Gu Jiao Wu know about pregnancy pains? While Qiao Tan Yuan was carrying Xiao Bao for nine months, Gu Jiao Wu was carefree. If Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t her older brother-in-law, Tan Pan Ting would have cursed him many times.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, where’s your humanity?’ Tan Pan Ting asked. ‘I’ve seen how you mistreated big sister Tan Yuan when you were married to big sister. Now you and big sister are divorced, you still have the guts to come here and harass big sister. Are you human?’

Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t believe Tan Pan Ting was speaking disrespectfully in front of him.

‘Do you know what a child means to a mother?’ Tan Pan Ting asked. ‘A child is a mother’s life and who she cherishes the most. Even if you don’t need big sister and chose to divorce big sister, no one can fault you. But if you want to steal Xiao Bao then you’re not even on par with a wild animal.’

Gu Jiao Wu’s face darkened and fisted his hands.

‘If you and big sister are divorced then who Xiao Bao belongs to has nothing to do with you,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Why won’t you let go of big sister? Why are you harassing a woman in a weak condition? You’re an embarrassment.’

Tan Pan Ting tolerated Gu Jiao Wu because he was her older brother-in-law, but she wasn’t scared of him if he was in the wrong.

‘Pan Ting!’ Gu Jiao Wen called.

Tan Pan Ting's body tensed. She didn't know how long Gu Jiao Wen was standing behind her back.

'Don't you think insulting the twins' uncle is a bad influence on the twins?' Gu Jiao Wen asked.

Tan Pan Ting turned around and scoffed at Gu Jiao Wen. 'Bad influence, monkey fleece. Jiao Wen, you only know how to side with members of the Gu Household.'

'Mrs Gu, aren't you a member of the Gu Household too?' Gu Jiao Wen asked. 'How can you side with outsiders to insult big brother?'

'Go to hell,' Tan Pan Ting cursed Gu Jiao Wen. 'I know how to side with truth instead of blindly siding with family members.' She turned around and glared at Gu Jiao Wu. 'Jiao Wu, you need to live with a conscience. What would a man like you know about a pregnant woman's pains? You only know how to open your mouth demand Xiao Bao. How can you steal Xiao Bao, and not consider how much big sister suffered to bring Xiao Bao into the world? Can you be any more selfish and cold blooded?'

'Pan Ting!' Gu Jiao Wen called.

Gu Jiao Wen thought it wasn't Tan Pan Ting's place to interfere in Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan's business.

'Don't call me,' Tan Pan Ting said. She had no sympathy for the carefree Gu Jiao Wu. 'You're a rooster head.'

'Pan Ting!' Gu Jiao Wen called. He was surprised to see Gu Jiao Wu's speechless face. 'You shouldn't curse big brother.'

Tan Pan Ting scoffed. She only stated the truth, Gu Jiao Wu was a cock head.

Gu Jiao Wu was used to Tan Pan Ting's childish antics. He calmly looked at Gu Jiao Wen.

'Jiao Wen, why are you here?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I arrived home and couldn't see Pan Ting,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'I heard Pan Ting was at the Qiao Mansion so I came here to escort her home.'

Gu Jiao Wen didn't want Tan Pan Ting to be close to Qiao Tan Yuan. He wasn't

certain if Qiao Jie had given up on pursuing Tan Pan Ting.

Gu Jiao Wu nodded and looked at Shen Cheng. 'Shen Cheng, I won't interfere in your relationship with Tan Yuan, but you shouldn't interfere in my relationship with Xiao Bao.'

'You and Tan Yuan are divorced so you have no right to interfere in her life,' Shen Cheng said. 'Ask yourself if you have the right to take Xiao Bao when you never wanted Xiao Bao to exist.'

'Is that what you think?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'It's not just me, Tan Yuan thinks so too,' Shen Cheng said.

Gu Jiao Wu strode past Shen Cheng and left the nursery.

Shen Cheng turned to look at Mrs Chu. 'Aunty, why did you let him come into the nursery?'

'I... ' Mrs Chu said.

How could a woman like Mrs Chu stop Gu Jiao Wu coming into the nursery?

'Aunty, next time if he dares hold Xiao Bao, you can call the cops and report a kidnapping,' Tan Pan Ting said.

'Pan Ting!' Gu Jiao Wen called.

Gu Jiao Wen couldn't believe Tan Pan Ting would turn against Gu Jiao Wu to help outsiders.

'It is kidnapping,' Tan Pan Ting said. 'Didn't say you'll be back tomorrow? Why are you back today?'

'I miss you,' Gu Jiao Wen said.

Gu Jiao Wen couldn't stand being a day apart from Tan Pan Ting. He was worried sick about Tan Pan Ting and the twins while on a work trip.

'Look at you, I was gone for two days and you run around wild,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Run around wild where?' Tan Pan Ting asked. 'I came here to see my niece and listen to big sister's experiences about taking care of a newborn.'

‘Let’s go,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. He wrapped an arm around Tan Pan Ting’s waist. ‘If you want motherly advice you can ask my mum.’

‘It’s not the same,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

Tan Pan Ting thought Qiao Tan Yuan raising a newborn was different to Chen Ting Yu raising a newborn decades ago. But Gu Jiao Wen led her to the car before she could protest.

In Qiao Tan Yuan’s bedroom, she was breast feeding Xiao Bao. She didn’t close the door so she could hear the argument in the nursery. She heard Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t let go of Xiao Bao. What was she supposed to do to stop Gu Jiao Wu taking Xiao Bao?

Xiao Bao drank her full, her small hands let go of Qiao Tan Yuan’s breast, she yawned and fell asleep.

Qiao Tan Yuan opened her mouth to call Mrs Chu to carry Xiao Bao to the nursery, but Gu Jiao Wu entered her room.

‘You... what are you doing here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was embarrassed and quickly pulled up her night gown.

Gu Jiao Wu stood in Qiao Tan Yuan’s bedroom. He saw Qiao Tan Yuan’s night gown was pulled down to her waist and exposed her plump breast and nipple that was still damp from breast feeding Xiao Bao. He didn’t look away while she quickly pulled up her night gown. He didn’t know why he was unhappy to see her in a rush to dress.

‘What is there to hide?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘It’s not like I haven’t seen them before.’

Gu Jiao Wu remembered Qiao Tan Yuan used to parade in see through lingerie to entice him.

‘Leave!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She laid Xiao Bao on the bed and dressed properly. ‘What are you still doing here? You’re not welcome at the Qiao’s residence.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’m letting you know, I’ll never let go of Xiao Bao.’

‘I’m letting you know that I’m not letting go of Xiao Bao either,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Then there’s nothing left to say,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu turned around, walked to the door and on the way out he glared coldly at Shen Cheng.

Outside the Qiao Mansion, Gu Jiao Wu saw Gu Jiao Wen and Tan Pan Ting in the distance.

Gu Jiao Wen helped Tan Pan Ting into the car.

‘Be careful,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

Tan Pan Ting rubbed her stomach. ‘I know. The last two days the twins knew you were away and they’ve listened to me.’

‘Um, of course my sons would listen to their mum,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

Tan Pan Ting scoffed. ‘What sons? Didn’t you see how adorable Xiao Bao is? I want to have daughters.’

‘Yes, yes, yes, my daughters knows how to listen to their mum,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. He sat next to Tan Pan Ting in the car. ‘Of course I want daughters.’

‘Liar,’ Tan Pan Ting said and laughed with Gu Jiao Wen.

Gu Jiao Wu watched Tan Pan Ting and Gu Jiao Wen’s car leave. He thought about what Shen Cheng said. Tan Pan Ting had Gu Jiao Wen to take care of Tan Pan Ting’s every need. But Qiao Tan Yuan was on her own most of the time while she was pregnant. Was that why Qiao Tan Yuan was like strong mother hen protecting a chick?

End of Chapter Twenty-Nine (Part 2 of 2)

Related

Thirty & Thirty-One



Chapter Thirty & Chapter Thirty-One

Chapter Thirty Side Story

Summary of Fei Yan Niao and Li Dan Qi's Side Story: Li Dan Qi cleaned Fei Yan Niao's house and received her first house maid pay.

Fei Yan Niao and Li Dan Qi had another training session. Li Dan Qi tried to pay Fei Yan Niao a training fee. Fei Yan Niao didn't accept Li Dan Qi's training fee and asked her to dry his hair.

End of Chapter Thirty

Chapter Thirty-One Side Story

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju's Side Story: Cheng Yi's awake with amnesia. Fei Yan Niao brought Cheng Yi to Zheng Jia Ju's shop to help Cheng Yi regain his memories.

Zheng Jia Ju thought Fei Yan Niao killed Cheng Yi. When Zheng Jia Ju and Cheng Yi reunited, she touched the scar on Cheng Yi's face and believed he was alive.

Zheng Jia Ju asked Fei Yan Niao why Cheng Yi didn't know who she was. Fei Yan Niao told her about Cheng Yi's amnesia. Zheng Jia Ju begged Fei Yan Niao to let her take care of Cheng Yi. Fei Yan Niao hesitated and reasoned Zheng Jia Ju wasn't coping taking care of herself and Cheng Yi's baby so taking care of Cheng

Yi would be a burden.

Zheng Jia Ju insisted she could help Cheng Yi regain his memories. Fei Yan Niao agreed to let Cheng Yi stay with Zheng Jia Ju. Fei Yan Niao asked Cheng Yi to be Zheng Jia Ju's bodyguard. Cheng Yi lost his memories, but subconsciously retained his fighting skills from years of being an assassin.

Zheng Jia Ju asked Cheng Yi to hold her hand and walk her to her house. Cheng Yi hesitated, Zheng Jia Ju explained she was eight months pregnant and needed help to walk so she wouldn't fall on the ground.

End of Chapter Thirty-One Side Story

Chapter Thirty-One

Three weeks later, Gu Jiao Wu finished working overtime. He was overworked and skipped meals to spend time with Xiao Bao so lately he had stomach aches.

On the way to the Gu Mansion, Gu Jiao Wu had a stomach ache and stopped by a pharmacy shop near a hotel. He got out of his car and noticed a man was pulling a disorientated Li Lam into the hotel. He crossed the road and confronted the man.

'Where are you taking her?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Who are you?' the man asked. 'Why are you interfering in another's person's business?'

'I want to go home...' Li Lam mumbled in her drunken state.

'She's my friend,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'She's my wife,' the man said.

Gu Jiao Wu pulled Li Lam to his side.

'Do you know who I am?' the man asked.

'I don't care who you are, you can't take advantage of a drunk woman,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Do you want to die?’ the man asked.

The man aimed a punch at Gu Jiao Wu’s face, Gu Jiao Wu dodged the punch and kicked the man to the ground.

It was night time, Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t take Li Lam to the Gu Mansion. He didn’t want Wang Tu Da to misunderstand him and Li Lam were in a relationship. He had no choice but to book a hotel room for the drunk Li Lam.

Gu Jiao Wu dropped Li Lam on the bed in a hotel room. He turned around to leave, but Li Lam’s face looked too much like Chu Da. He heard Li Lam vomit and decided to stay until she woke up. He helped take off her soiled clothes and dropped her on the bed. Then he ordered dinner and ate. After dinner, Li Lam still didn’t wake up. He couldn’t stand the alcohol stench on his clothes, showered and was too tired to drive so he slept on the sofa.

In the morning, Li Lam woke up and saw Gu Jiao Wu sleeping on the sofa but she was naked on the bed.

‘Ah...’ Li Lam screamed and pulled the bedsheet over her body.

Gu Jiao Wu was awoken by Li Lam’s scream.

‘You... what did you do to me?’ Li Lam asked.

‘I didn’t do anything to you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He was still dressed in the same business suit since last night and wanted to go home to change before going back to work. ‘Last night you were drunk.’

‘I... I was drunk?’ Li Lam asked. Li Lam had a headache and she couldn’t remember clearly what happened last night. ‘I don’t remember meeting you last night... you took advantage of me.’

Gu Jiao Wu stood and looked at Li Lam coldly.

‘I took advantage of you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Didn’t you say you’re Chu Da? If you’re Chu Da then why would I need to take advantage of you?’

‘I... that’s right, I’m Chu Da,’ Li Lam said. ‘But you don’t believe me so you can’t sleep with me.’

‘Of course I don’t believe you’re Chu Da,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and towered over Li Lam.

‘You...’ Li Lam said.

Li Lam was about to slap Gu Jiao Wu’s face, but he grabbed her arm faster.

‘Where is Chu Da?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I am Chu Da,’ Li Lam said. She changed tactics and tossed the bedsheet aside. ‘So if you want to sleep with me, go ahead.’

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Li Lam’s arm, turned around and looked out the window.

‘Last night while you were drunk, a man was taking you into the hotel,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You kept saying you wanted to go home. I didn’t know where you live so I booked a hotel room for you. You should be grateful I intervened.’

Gu Jiao Wu adjusted his clothes, walked to the door and left the room without looking back.

Li Lam was embarrassed and frustrated she couldn’t remember clearly. She got out of bed and looked for her clothes. She found her clothes covered in vomit on the bathroom floor, and realised why Gu Jiao Wu took off her clothes.

Li Lam was embarrassed she wrongly accused Gu Jiao Wu. She walked to the phone to call room service to bring new clothes for her but a hotel maid walked into the room.

‘Miss, I brought your clothes,’ the maid said.

‘My clothes?’ Li Lam asked. She looked at the expensive white outfit and white underwear. ‘Who asked you to bring the clothes to me?’

‘A man,’ the maid said and passed the clothes to Li Lam.

‘Thank you,’ Li Lam said.

The maid left and Li Lam looked closely at the clothes.

‘Ah...’ Li Lam cried out.

How did Gu Jiao Wu know Li Lam’s small bra and underwear size? Why did he help her buy clothes and underwear? She dressed and couldn’t stop thinking about Gu Jiao Wu. If he believed she was Chu Da then why did he keep his distance from her? She was curious about him and wanted to be close to him.

At the Qiao Mansion, Qiao Tan Yuan woke up early. It was Xiao Bao's one month milestone. Mrs Qiao suggested to book a lavish restaurant for Xiao Bao, but she declined. She thought Xiao Bao was still young and wouldn't be comfortable being held by people Xiao Bao never met before. She was happy to have a small family meal with Xiao Bao.

Mrs Qiao didn't insist on a lavish celebration, because she didn't want people to look down on the divorced Qiao Tan Yuan and the fatherless Xiao Bao.

Mrs Chu bathed and dressed Xiao Bao in new clothes. She hooked the cute customized gold bracelets Mrs Qiao bought for Xiao Bao around Xiao Bao's small wrists.

A while later, Qiao Tan Yuan held Xiao Bao who was smiling and her big baby eyes looked in all directions.

'Tan Yuan,' Shen Cheng called.

Qiao Tan Yuan turned around and saw Shen Cheng.

Shen Cheng stood in front of Qiao Tan Yuan and looked at Xiao Bao's adorable small round face smiling.

'Xiao Bao looks really happy today,' Shen Cheng said. 'Uncle hopes Xiao Bao will always be happy and carefree.'

Qiao Tan Yuan accepted a small box from Shen Cheng. She didn't expect Shen Cheng would buy Xiao Bao... a set of keys.

'What is this?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

End of Chapter Thirty-One

Related

Thirty-Two



Chapter Thirty-Two

Qiao Tan Yuan unlocked a box.

Inside the box was a pair of diamond earrings.

‘This is too valuable,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and returned the box of earrings to Shen Cheng.

‘Xiao Bao is too young to wear earrings,’ Shen Cheng said. He passed the box to Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘You can keep the box locked for Xiao Bao and give it to her when she’s older.’

‘Shen Cheng, Xiao Bao’s only one month old,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You don’t need to give her something this valuable.’

Shen Cheng looked at the smiling Xiao Bao. ‘Xiao Bao, do you think your earrings are too valuable? If you don’t think it is then don’t say anything. If you think it’s too valuable say something.’

‘Shen Cheng...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Xiao Bao was too young to speak. She looked at Shen Cheng, blinked and opened her small mouth.

Shen Cheng smiled at Xiao Bao. ‘Tan Yuan, look at how happy Xiao Bao is. She said she likes her earrings.’

Qiao Tan Yuan reluctantly accepted the earrings on Xiao Bao’s behalf.

Shen Cheng gave Qiao Tan Yuan another box. ‘Tan Yuan, the earrings are for

Xiao Bao. This is for you.'

'Shen Cheng...' Qiao Tan Yuan said and looked at the familiar diamond ring.

'Tan Yuan, will you marry me?' Shen Cheng asked. 'I'll love you for the rest of my life. I'll give Xiao Bao a happy family. I want to make you happy.'

'Shen Cheng...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan's heart wouldn't let her accept Shen Cheng's diamond ring. She didn't love Shen Cheng.

'Shen Cheng, it wouldn't be fair on you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'I don't need fairness,' Shen Cheng said. 'This weekend my house renovations will be done. I added a nursery for Xiao Bao. You can marry me and bring Xiao Bao to my house.'

Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes stung. She was overwhelmed with conflicting emotions, but she couldn't open her mouth to say yes. Shen Cheng didn't force her, he sat on the bed and waited for her answer.

Qiao Tan Yuan heard footsteps, she wiped her eyes and looked out the door. Hu Zui Ren, Du Lei Xin and Tong Shang Wen were holding gifts at the door.

Shen Cheng took back the ring, Qiao Tan Yuan was sad to see him look sad.

Shen Cheng's friends played with Xiao Bao and said she looked like a beautiful little princess. A while later, lively sounds were heard from downstairs.

Mrs Qiao walked downstairs and welcomed Gu Jiao Wen, Tan Pan Ting and Gu Jiao Mai. Gu Jiao Mai still refused to have a leg surgery and was sitting in a wheelchair.

'Aunty, this is for Xiao Bao,' Gu Jiao Wen said.

'Thank you,' Mrs Qiao said. 'Everyone should sit in the living room. I'll ask aunty to carry Xiao Bao downstairs.'

Mrs Qiao turned around and saw Shen Cheng and his friends walking downstairs.

'Big brother Jiao Wen,' Shen Cheng greeted.

Gu Jiao Wen nodded. 'I didn't expect you guys to arrive before me.'

‘Shen Cheng used the contracts in the southern district to blackmail us so of course we had to come,’ Tong Shang Wen joked.

‘Shen Cheng, you’re an honorable man,’ Gu Jiao Wen teased.

No one doubted Shen Cheng truly loved Qiao Tan Yuan, but they all knew Xiao Bao was Gu Jiao Wu’s daughter.

‘What honorable man?’ Shen Cheng asked. ‘I’m not the first man to treat his future wife well.’

Gu Jiao Wen nodded and turned to Tan Pan Ting. ‘Pan Ting, are you tired?’

‘I’m not tired,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

If Gu Jiao Wen didn’t let Tan Pan Ting go upstairs, she would have ran upstairs before.

Qiao Tan Yuan carried Xiao Bao downstairs and greeted everyone.

‘Xiao Bao, congratulations,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘I hope Xiao Bao will always be happy and healthy.’

‘Xiao Bao said thank you aunty,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Pan Ting, what are you doing running around in your condition?’

‘I’m OK,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘The doctor said I can go for walks.’

‘Pan Ting, you should sit,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Tan Pan Ting gave a box to Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘It’s for Xiao Bao,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

Qiao Tan Yuan opened the box, inside was an expensive jade pendant.

‘Xiao Bao is still little,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘This is too valuable.’

‘Nothing is too valuable for Xiao Bao,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

‘Thank you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Let’s sit.’

‘Tan Yuan, congratulations,’ Gu Jiao Mai said.

Gu Jiao Mai wheeled her wheelchair to Qiao Tan Yuan and gave a gift.

‘Thank you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Wang Tu Ya, Gu Qi Jiang and Chen Ting Yu arrived shortly after Gu Jiao Mai gave the gift to Qiao Tan Yuan.

Everyone gathered in the living room. They chatted and played with Xiao Bao.

Shen Cheng smiled and thought about why Gu Jiao Wu didn't show up to Xiao Bao's one month celebration. He was relieved and disappointed. He was relieved perhaps Gu Jiao Wu had given up on Xiao Bao, and disappointed Gu Jiao Wu was so cold hearted not to even attend Xiao Bao's one month celebration.

Later, Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to follow Shen Cheng and his friends to a smaller living room to give the elders privacy. But she stayed with the elders because Wang Tu Ya was holding Xiao Bao. She was weary Wang Tu Ya would take Xiao Bao away even though they were at the Qiao's residence.

At the airport, Gu Jiao Wu's plane landed and he turned on the phone. He received more than ten miss calls from his assistants. He quickly called one of the numbers.

'What did you say?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu hung up the phone and hailed a cab straight to the Qiao Mansion. Inside the cab, he couldn't believe he had marked the wrong day for Xiao Bao's one month milestone. What a pathetic father he was. He thought Xiao Bao's one month was tomorrow.

When Gu Jiao Wu arrived at the Qiao Mansion the guests were all gone and Mrs Qiao was supervising cleaners in the living room.

'Jiao Wu, your parents came to see Xiao Bao before,' Mrs Qiao said.

'Yes aunty,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'I don't know why you and Tan Yuan divorced,' Mrs Qiao said. 'But that was before Xiao Bao was born. Have you two considered getting back together?'

Mrs Qiao didn't want Qiao Tan Yuan and Shen Cheng to marry each other without their families' blessing. Mr and Mrs Shen loved Qiao Tan Yuan as their own daughter, but they didn't want Shen Cheng to be in an unhappy marriage and raise Gu Jiao Wu's daughter.

Get back together with Qiao Tan Yuan? Gu Jiao Wu didn't know how that

would be possible.

‘Jiao Wu, I watched you grow up,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘I know Tan Yuan can be selfish and arrogant. But we both know she truly loves you.’

Gu Jiao Wu could only nod his head and walked upstairs.

Mrs Qiao watched Gu Jiao Wu walk upstairs. Love? In the world, love couldn’t be forced. Why did Qiao Tan Yuan fall in love with a bitter melon and expect to sweeten it with love?

Upstairs, Gu Jiao Wu walked into the nursery. Xiao Bao was sleeping because she played the whole day. She wore a new cute pink outfit. Around her small wrists were gold bracelets. He was upset with himself he missed Xiao Bao’s one month celebration.

Mrs Chu saw Gu Jiao Wu was about to hold Xiao Bao so she opened her mouth.

‘Mr Gu, it’s hard for an old woman like me to find a good employer who pays me generously,’ Mrs Chu said. ‘I hope you won’t get me fired.’

Gu Jiao Wu dismissed Mrs Chu’s words. He gently touched Xiao Bao’s pink cheeks. Xiao Bao frowned and turned her head to the side in her sleep. He couldn’t believe Xiao Bao hated him even in her sleep. He was sad and frustrated.

Mrs Chu sighed in relief after Gu Jiao Wu left the nursery.

Gu Jiao Wu entered Qiao Tan Yuan’s bedroom. She left it unlocked for Mrs Chu to carry Xiao Bao to her when Xiao Bao was hungry.

Gu Jiao Wu sat on the bed. He thought Qiao Tan Yuan must have been tired after hosting Xiao Bao’s one month celebration. It was the first time he looked closely at Qiao Tan Yuan’s face. He vaguely remembered she usually wore makeup.

Gu Jiao Wu watched Qiao Tan Yuan sleep soundly. He realised she had clear white skin. She was beautiful even without makeup. She had long curled eyelashes and she slept with a hand under a cheek. She scrunched her face like she was dreaming. Her lips were enticing him and made him remember how their

lips touched fleetingly on the same bed before... her lips were soft. He didn't know what was wrong with his hand. His hand hovered over her cheek.

Suddenly Qiao Tan Yuan opened her eyes wide and saw Gu Jiao Wu's hand in front of her face.

'Ah... you...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan had no room to move back on the bed. What was Gu Jiao Wu doing in her bedroom?

'Let's get back together,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

End of Chapter Thirty-Two

Related

Thirty-Three



Chapter Thirty-Three

Get back together?

Qiao Tan Yuan thought she was dreaming.

‘Am I dreaming...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s hands touched Gu Jiao Wu’s cheeks. His cheeks were warm, she wasn’t dreaming.

‘What are you doing here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Jiao Wu’s hands. He had only one thought, her lips. His lips captured her lips.

Qiao Tan Yuan was confused why Gu Jiao Wu’s face was coming closer to her face. Suddenly he kissed her, she was too tensed to react. Their soft lips mingled... Gu Jiao Wu was kissing her?

Qiao Tan Yuan opened her mouth to yell, but it gave Gu Jiao Wu’s tongue access to her mouth. His soft tongue licked her tongue. Her eyes widened. She could see his long eyelashes and eyes like deep pools.

Gu Jiao Wu’s tongue tangled with Qiao Tan Yuan’s tongue, and stopped her from crying out. Was he kissing her? In the past if their lips touched, it was

always an accident. Was it her first real kiss... it was a hot deep kiss.

Gu Jiao Wu sensed Qiao Tan Yuan was distracted. His hands braced her neck so their bodies could be closer together.

Qiao Tan Yuan had no kissing experience. Her cheeks blushed and she had trouble breathing. She opened her mouth to breathe, but Gu Jiao Wu's tongue entered deeper into her mouth.

A long time later, Gu Jiao Wu's lips let go of Qiao Tan Yuan's lips.

'Qiao Tan Yuan...' Gu Jiao Wu said in a husky voice. 'Let's get back together.'

Gu Jiao Wu's words broke Qiao Tan Yuan's dreamy haze. Her heart understood what he wanted and she slapped his cheek hard.

Gu Jiao Wu was startled and Qiao Tan Yuan pushed his chest away from her. She sat upright and took deep breaths.

'Gu Jiao Wu, you AH,' Qiao Tan Yuan cursed.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan's angry eyes, and he didn't understand why she was angry. He kissed her when she woke up so she didn't use full force to slap him and the slap on his face didn't hurt. Did his cheek hurt her palm? He held her wrist, her palm was red.

'Gu Jiao Wu, get out!' Qiao Tan Yuan said and tried pulling her hand out of Gu Jiao Wu's hold.

'Qiao Tan Yuan... are you angry?' Gu Jiao Wu asked in a confused voice.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at her flushed face. Why was Qiao Tan Yuan angry? Was she angry he kissed her?

Qiao Tan Yuan glared confusedly at Gu Jiao Wu. What was Gu Jiao Wu asking? Why wouldn't she be angry?

Qiao Tan Yuan scoffed coldly. 'Of course I'm angry. Gu Jiao Wu, do you think I'm useless? So useless that I need to rely on you to live?'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't think Qiao Tan Yuan was useless.

'Gu Jiao Wu, I will never hand over Xiao Bao to you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't expect Gu Jiao Wu would resort to marrying her again

because of Xiao Bao. Why did he underestimate her commitment and resourcefulness to provide for Xiao Bao to that extent?

‘Do you think I want to get back together with you because of Xiao Bao?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Why else would you want to marry me again?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t expect Gu Jiao Wu would live with a woman he hated because he wanted Xiao Bao.

Initially Gu Jiao Wu asked Qiao Tan Yuan to marry him again because of Xiao Bao. A part of his heart didn’t want to hurt Qiao Tan Yuan. After witnessing how she risked her life to save Xiao Bao, he saw her differently. When he was watching Qiao Tan Yuan sleep, he realised he no longer hated her. He kissed her to confirm his feelings, he didn’t hate her and he didn’t want to keep his distance from her. If he didn’t hate her, they could live peacefully together with Xiao Bao as a family. Wang Tu Ya would stop nagging him to marry someone else, and it would cement Xiao Bao’s status as his legitimate heir.

‘Isn’t living together with me again what you always wanted?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t understand why Qiao Tan Yuan was angry. Didn’t she say she loved him for many years? Didn’t she scheme to get him to marry her like drugging him? Didn’t she give birth to Xiao Bao to force him to marry her again?

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. If her palm didn’t hurt, she would have slapped Gu Jiao Wu again. ‘Leave right now!’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, why are you angry?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t know why Qiao Tan Yuan was angry. He was giving her what she wanted. He was marrying her again and they would give Xiao Bao a family.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to yell. Why did Gu Jiao Wu need to ask why she was angry? She took a deep breath and told herself to calm down. But thinking about Gu Jiao Wu wanting to marry her again because of Xiao Bao made it hard for her to calm down.

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She fisted her hands and she wanted to

punch Gu Jiao Wu. 'I, Qiao Tan Yuan vow even if all the other men in the world died, even if I have to marry a pig, I will never marry you again. If you heard me then you can leave.'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't know why Qiao Tan Yuan was so worked up.

'Qiao Tan Yuan?' Gu Jiao Wu called.

Qiao Tan Yuan picked up her phone. 'If you don't leave I'll call the cops. Gu Jiao Wu, I'm not joking.'

Qiao Tan Yuan pressed two buttons. Gu Jiao Wu didn't believe she would call the cops and stayed seated on the bed.

'The Gu Household has a reputation to maintain,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I don't think you want to be seen at a police station explaining why you broke into someone else's house.'

Qiao Tan Yuan pressed the last button and an operator's voice was heard. Gu Jiao Wu grabbed her phone, hung up and threw her phone across the room.

Gu Jiao Wu sat face to face with Qiao Tan Yuan. Her angry eyes were glaring at him. Her small straight nose was beautiful and her white teeth was biting her swollen lips. Looking at her lips made him think of their kiss. He remembered her lips were soft and she tasted sweet. He knew his senses were affected because of his long drought. But he didn't know why she was angry.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, can you use your brain before you speak?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Think about what's best for Xiao Bao.'

'Best for Xiao Bao?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know what Gu Jiao Wu was expecting from her. Did he expect her to thank him for making a sacrifice to be with her?

'Gu Jiao Wu, I'm impressed by your selflessness and willingness to sacrifice yourself,' Qiao Tan Yuan said sarcastically. 'I didn't expect you would want to marry someone you hate because of Xiao Bao.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan, calm down and be reasonable,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'I am calm,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was crazily calm. If four years ago she saw the real Gu Jiao Wu, she would have given him a different drug instead of a sleeping pill. For a moment she wondered if Xiao Bao was born three years ago if they would have been a happy family. But the reality was after being married to him for three years, she was only left with an empty broken heart.

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and took another deep breath.

Qiao Tan Yuan realised she didn’t understand Gu Jiao Wu all those years ago. She used to think he wouldn’t make any sacrifices or compromises to be with her. She was wrong, he would make sacrifices and compromises to be with her for the wrong reasons.

‘I am calm,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I have never been as reasonable as I am now. It’s you who should be reasonable. Do you know what a marriage means? Do you know how sacred a marriage is? If you don’t know then leave.’

End of Chapter Thirty-Three

Related

Thirty-Four



Chapter Thirty-Four

Side Story

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju's Side Story:

Fei Yan Niao paid for Cheng Yi's plastic surgery to remove Cheng Yi's scar.

Zheng Jia Ju's parents were scared to see Cheng Yi alive, because Zhen Jia Ju told them Cheng Yi died in an accident. Zheng Jia Ju explained to her parents Cheng Yi's friend rescued him and he had amnesia.

Zheng Jia Ju took Cheng Yi shopping to buy clothes.

Zheng Jia Ju worked at her shop and Cheng Yi worked as her bodyguard. Zheng Jia Ju's shop attracted more customers because of Cheng Yi's model looks. Cheng Yi couldn't remember he's rich from contract killings. Zheng Jia Ju didn't tell him, he didn't need to be her bodyguard to earn a living because she didn't want him to leave her.

Chapter Thirty-Four

Gu Jiao Wu was surprised to hear the conviction in Qiao Tan Yuan's voice. He didn't understand Qiao Tan Yuan and he didn't know what marriage meant.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to leave, but he knew if he stayed then he wouldn't get the result he wanted.

Gu Jiao Wu nodded, stood and walked to the door. At the door he turned around and looked at Qiao Tan Yuan.

'I don't know what a marriage mean,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'But I know what it

means to a young child to live with both their father and mother. I believe you know what I said is true.'

Qiao Tan Yuan laid on the bed after Gu Jiao Wu left. She felt like all her organs were ripped out of her body. She was tired of fighting with Gu Jiao Wu.

Qiao Tan Yuan admitted she waited a long time for Gu Jiao Wu to ask her to be with him. What else was she waiting for? Was she waiting to receive Gu Jiao Wu's love and gentleness? Why couldn't she make her heart stop waiting vainly? It didn't matter how long she waited, she would never receive Gu Jiao Wu's love and gentleness. Gu Jiao Wu always knew what to say to make her broken heart break a little more. In Gu Jiao Wu's heart, she was only Xiao Bao's mother. Gu Jiao Wu would never see her and desire her as a woman.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know why Gu Jiao Wu kissed her. In the past didn't he say he hated her and the sight of her made him vomit? Why did he kiss her if he hated her?

Qiao Tan Yuan's head kept replaying Gu Jiao Wu's words... let's get back together. What was there for her to be confused about? He only wanted to marry her again because of Xiao Bao. Her head cleared and she vowed to herself, she would never marry again. It was enough for her to live a peaceful life with Xiao Bao.

End of Chapter Thirty-Four

Related

Thirty-Five & Thirty-Six



Chapter Thirty-Five & Chapter Thirty-Six

Side Story

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju’s Side Story:

Zheng Jia Ju rejected a cheque from Fei Yan Niao. Zheng Jia Ju warned Cheng Yi to stay far away from Fei Yan Niao, because Fei Yan Niao was a bad person. Zheng Jia Ju didn’t want to tell Cheng Yi, Fei Yan Niao was the person who shot Cheng Yi and caused Cheng Yi to lose his memories.

When Cheng Yi found out he’s rich, Zheng Jia Ju begged Cheng Yi not to leave and be her bodyguard for another month. Cheng Yi agreed to wait a month before leaving, because she was eight months pregnant.

Fei Yan Niao waited outside Tan Pan Ting’s work building. Fei Yan Niao asked Tan Pan Ting to eat a meal with him for old times’ sake. Tan Pan Ting agreed and texted Gu Jiao Wen the restaurant location.

End of Chapter Thirty-Five

Chapter Thirty-Six

A week later, Qiao Tan Yuan didn't marry Shen Cheng as planned. But Shen Cheng didn't want to give up on her and asked her to keep the ring until she was absolute about her decision.

Qiao Tan Yuan put the ring in the drawer with Xiao Bao's gifts in her bedroom. Gu Jiao Wu didn't see her for a week, but she wasn't certain he had let go of Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan heard footsteps and turned around to face the door.

'What are you doing here?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was going to show Gu Jiao Wu she wouldn't accept him sacrificing himself for Xiao Bao.

Gu Jiao Wu stood in front of Qiao Tan Yuan and looked at her face. He hadn't seen her for a week. She had a healthy rosy complexion. Her eyes were like two shiny gems and her lips were like forbidden fruits tempting him. He admitted she was a beautiful woman and he kept thinking about their kiss a week ago.

'Did you make a decision?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Decision? Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know what decision Gu Jiao Wu wanted her to make.

'About us getting back together,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I gave you a week to make a decision.'

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't believe Gu Jiao Wu regarded her that poorly. Did he think she was a bad catch and unwanted by other men? Did he think she was so undesirable that she would be desperate enough to marry him again? How did he expect her to react... be grateful and happy he offered to sacrifice himself to marry her again? She clenched her hands and her broken heart wanted to chase him away. But she wasn't going to give him the satisfaction to know how much his words hurt her.

'Get back together?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu nodded. He thought Qiao Tan Yuan was smiling strangely.

'For Xiao Bao I should get back together with you... but...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qian Tan Yuan pulled a drawer and took out a box. She opened the box in front

of Gu Jiao Wu's face and smiled smugly.

'I accepted Shen Cheng's marriage proposal,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'm going to marry Shen Cheng. He promised he'll give me and Xiao Bao a happy family. You know he's a loyal and honorable man. I believe he will treat me and Xiao Bao well. So you can leave.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan, what do you mean?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan wore the ring and waved it in front of Gu Jiao Wu's face. 'Now do you see? Look at how big my diamond ring is. It shows Shen Cheng's sincerity.'

Gu Jiao Wu was annoyed at the sparkling diamond ring.

Qiao Tan Yuan was happy to see Gu Jiao Wu looked upset. 'It's a beautiful sparkling ring. Blindingly sparkling.'

Qiao Tan Yuan stepped to the opened drawer, put the box down, took out one of Xiao Bao's gifts, unlocked it and showed it to Gu Jiao Wu.

'But how can my ring compare to Xiao Bao's gift?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She waved Xiao Bao's diamond earrings in front of Gu Jiao Wu's face. 'Take a close look.'

Gu Jiao Wu wasn't impressed to see the sparkling diamond earrings.

'Shen Cheng gave this to Xiao Bao for her one month milestone,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Compared to you, Shen Cheng treats Xiao Bao miles better than you treat Xiao Bao.'

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Gu Jiao Wu in disdain. 'You say you want to be Xiao Bao's father. But what did you give Xiao Bao for her one month milestone? You gave her nothing.'

'Giving Xiao Bao expensive baubles doesn't prove someone is a good parent,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Xiao Bao is a baby. What would she know about diamonds? Qiao Tan Yuan, I didn't know you were this money hungry and materialistic.'

Money... materialistic? Qiao Tan Yuan smiled wider. If Gu Jiao Wu wanted to add another two bad traits to the long list of bad traits he falsely accused her of having, it was his business.

‘So what if I’m money hungry and materialistic?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Did you just find out? Gu Jiao Wu, like you said, I’m the Qiao Household’s spoiled princess. Since I was a little girl, I was given everything I wanted. I’m not scared to admit I’m money hungry and materialistic. If you’re disgusted by me, you can leave. I didn’t beg you to come here and sacrifice yourself.’

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to pick up a broomstick and sweep Gu Jiao Wu outside.

‘There’s nothing left to say,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You can go.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, if you’re like this I’ll won’t let you have Xiao Bao and be a bad influence on her,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan forced herself to laugh.

‘I don’t need your permission,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘What matters is my consent. Do you know how much Shen Cheng loves me? He loves everything about me. He loves that I’m money hungry and materialistic. He even bought a house and renovated the house to add a nursery for Xiao Bao. He visits Xiao Bao every day, and Xiao Bao smiles when she sees him. They have a good father and daughter relationship.’

Qiao Tan Yuan put the box on the bedside table and looked directly at Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes.

‘I’m wasting my breath talking to you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You don’t understand my perspective. It doesn’t matter. Shen Cheng and I are getting married next month. I’ll send you a wedding invitation.’

Qiao Tan Yuan pointed at the door. Gu Jiao Wu didn’t move. He looked at her a small smug face and smiled. What was there for her to be smug about? His gaze travelled down her body and back to her hand pointing at the door. Her forefinger was trembling and exposed her real feelings. He actioned the thought dominating his head. He held her trembling hand and pulled her into his chest. He wrapped an arm around her waist and kissed her lips.

Qiao Tan Yuan was stunned Gu Jiao Wu was kissing her. Why was he kissing her? Her heart raced but she told herself to push him away. He pulled her closer to him and their breaths harmonised with their moving lips. He sucked everything out of her, her breath and her waiting heart.

Qiao Tan Yuan cursed Gu Jiao Wu. What right did the AH have to kiss her? She opened her mouth to bite his tongue, but his tongue delved deeper into her mouth. His soft restless tongue aroused her and she didn't know what she should do. Her kissing inexperience was no match against Gu Jiao Wu's seductive kisses. His lips refused to part with her lips, and his tongue wrapped around her tongue like a snake coiling and suffocating its prey. Her will power to push him away weakened, and she leaned her subdued body into his chest for support so she wouldn't fall on the floor.

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yuan's limp hand. His hold around her waist tightened and his other hand held her neck. He deepened the kiss and heard their ragged breathing. Her innocent compliance made him happy. He wanted to taste the rest of her body.

A thump sound coming from the door made Qiao Tan Yuan snap out of Gu Jiao Wu's seductive haze. She pushed him away from her and looked at the door. She didn't know how long Shen Cheng was standing at the door, and there was a large long and wide box on the floor next to his feet. The pained look in Shen Cheng's eyes froze her heart, he witnessed Gu Jiao Wu holding her and kissing her. She turned to Gu Jiao Wu and resented him for making her hurt Shen Cheng even deeper. She didn't hesitate to slap Gu Jiao Wu's cheek.

The sound of a slap shocked Shen Cheng out of his pain. What was Qiao Tan Yuan doing? Why did she slap Gu Jiao Wu?

Qiao Tan Yuan ran to Shen Cheng before Gu Jiao Wu could react.

'Shen Cheng, don't misunderstand,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'It's not what you think. I can explain...'

'Tan Yuan, I trust you,' Shen Cheng said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was sad to see Shen Cheng force himself to smile and act calm.

'Shen Cheng?' Qiao Tan Yuan called.

Shen Cheng smiled, held Qiao Tan Yuan's hand and looked at the ring on her finger.

'We're getting married,' Shen Cheng said. 'Of course I trust you.'

‘Shen Cheng... it’s his fault... I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Shen Cheng rubbed Qiao Tan Yuan’s head like he was comforting a child.

‘I believe it wasn’t your fault,’ Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng wrapped an arm around Qiao Tan Yuan’s shoulder, and looked at Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Big brother, I’m marrying Tan Yuan,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘I believe you know what it means not to harass a friend’s wife.’

Gu Jiao Wu disliked seeing Shen Cheng standing close to Qiao Tan Yuan. He slowly stepped to Qiao Tan Yuan and looked at her face.

‘Tan Yuan, are you certain this is what you want?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I’m certain,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want Gu Jiao Wu to know the truth, she wasn’t marrying anyone.

Qiao Tan Yuan kissed Shen Cheng’s cheek. ‘Shen Cheng, I believe you will love Xiao Bao like your own daughter.’

‘Tan Yuan, what are you saying?’ Shen Cheng asked. ‘Xiao Bao is my daughter.’

Shen Cheng acted like Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t in the room. He crouched, picked up the fallen box on the floor and gave it to Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Tan Yuan, the designer wedding dress I ordered for you arrived from Milan today,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘You can try it on and see if it fits.’

End of Chapter Thirty-Six

Related

Thirty-Seven



Chapter Thirty-Seven

Qiao Tan Yuan held the mermaid wedding dress.

Qiao Tan Yuan kissed Shen Cheng's cheek. 'Shen Cheng, the dress is beautiful. I love it.'

'I'm happy you love the dress,' Shen Cheng said. 'Go try it on. I want to see how beautiful you look in the dress.'

Qiao Tan Yuan walked past Gu Jiao Wu to the bed.

Gu Jiao Wu looked coldly at Shen Cheng and left the room.

Qiao Tan Yuan heard the door closed, dropped the dress and sat on the bed. She was drained.

Suddenly Shen Cheng held Qiao Tan Yuan's waist and laid on top of her.

'Shen...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan pushed Shen Cheng's chest away from her, but he held her waist tighter.

Shen Cheng kissed Qiao Tan Yuan. For a moment she was too frightened to react.

'Stop,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted Shen Cheng to let go of her. She hated his tongue inside her mouth. What was Shen Cheng doing? It was the first time he acted forcibly. She didn't hate him, but she didn't want him to kiss her. She used all her strength to push him off her and moved to the corner of the bed.

'Shen Cheng... don't be like this,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Why didn't you slap me?' Shen Cheng asked.

Shen Cheng knew the answer. But he wished Qiao Tan Yuan would slap him. He would rather she hated him than pity him. At least if she hated him, he could swallow her to ease the pain in his heart.

'Shen Cheng, don't be like this,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was frightened, but she didn't want to hurt Shen Cheng.

'Tan Yuan, in your heart do you love me even a little?' Shen Cheng asked.

'Shen Cheng, I...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Tan Yuan, I love you,' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng didn't want to hear Qiao Tan Yuan reject him again. He would rather suffer being with her than suffer without her in his life. He loved her for too many years to lose her. He knew love couldn't be forced so he didn't fault Gu Jiao Wu for not loving Qiao Tan Yuan. But it didn't stop him falling into the same trap Qiao Tan Yuan fell in, love couldn't be forced and hard to escape.

Shen Cheng knew Qiao Tan Yuan didn't love him. He knew it didn't matter how much he loved Qiao Tan Yuan, he couldn't replace Gu Jiao Wu in Qiao Tan Yuan's heart. Qiao Tan Yuan loved Gu Jiao Wu to point even after they divorced, she couldn't forget Gu Jiao Wu. If Gu Jiao Wu appeared in front of her, she couldn't oppose the power Gu Jiao Wu had over her. He knew she couldn't fight her feelings for Gu Jiao Wu, and she loved Gu Jiao Wu so much that she was scared of her own feelings.

Shen Cheng took advantage of Qiao Tan Yuan's fear. He used her fear of loving Gu Jiao Wu to stay by her side. While she used him to protect herself from Gu Jiao Wu's rejection, she never made room in his heart for him. Many women saw him as a good catch yet he chose to follow his heart, and make himself suffer.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat still on the bed. What was she supposed to say? She admitted she was selfish and a weakling in front of Gu Jiao Wu. Her love for Gu Jiao Wu scared her. She always lost every fight with Gu Jiao Wu. But before Gu Jiao Wu's words angered and hurt her. What was she in Gu Jiao Wu's heart? Fighting with Gu Jiao Wu and fighting her feelings for Gu Jiao Wu were two different things. It was harder for her to escape her love for Gu Jiao Wu than avoid fighting with Gu Jiao Wu.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know what she needed to do, and how long it would take her to erase Gu Jiao Wu from her heart. She still loved Gu Jiao Wu so she instinctively pushed Shen Cheng far away. She knew it was unfair on Shen Cheng. Shen Cheng loved her. But the fair thing to do was to reject Shen Cheng completely. She looked down at the dress, picked it up and put it back in the box.

Qiao Tan Yuan forced herself to look at Shen Cheng's pained eyes and returned the box to Shen Cheng.

'Shen Cheng, I'm sorry,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was wrong. She shouldn't have been selfish if she knew she couldn't accept Shen Cheng's love.

'Shen Cheng, I'm sorry,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt no matter how many times she apologized to Shen Cheng, it wouldn't be enough.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't hide the truth, she rejected Shen Cheng's kiss and rejected Shen Cheng's love.

'Shen Cheng, take back it back,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She calmly took off the ring and put it in the box. 'Shen Cheng, I'm sorry. I don't love you and I can't marry you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan had to resolve her own feelings for Gu Jiao Wu, it wasn't right of her to involve Shen Cheng.

It was the first time Shen Cheng saw the conviction in Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes.

'Shen Cheng, I'm sorry,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I was selfish. I didn't consider your perspective.'

'Tan Yuan...' Shen Cheng said.

'I always tell myself to forget Gu Jiao Wu,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'But it's hard to forget him.'

Gu Jiao Wu lived too deeply in Qiao Tan Yuan's heart that years weren't enough to forget him. She could only hide half of her real heart in front of Gu Jiao Wu.

'I'll keep trying to forget him and try not to be scared of him,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'll try to be stronger. I'll raise Xiao Bao, and provide a happy life for Xiao Bao. I don't want to rely on anyone else, I want to rely on myself to take care of Xiao Bao.'

Shen Cheng didn't take the box back. Qiao Tan Yuan calmly put the box in his hands.

'Shen Cheng, let me be strong on my own and live a peaceful life with Xiao Bao,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'll forget Gu Jiao Wu on my own.'

Shen Cheng's heart ached. He didn't expect Qiao Tan Yuan would choose to be on her own. His last hope was gone.

'Tan Yuan, I won't force you,' Shen Cheng. 'Before I was wrong. Let's go back to the way it was. I want to marry you. I promise I won't pressure you.'

'No,' Qiao Tan Yuan said firmly. She knew she wouldn't change her mind. 'Shen Cheng, Gu Jiao Wu's right not to give Xiao Bao to me. If I can't protect myself

then how can I protect Xiao Bao?’

Qiao Tan Yuan vowed she would become stronger and independent. She would face Gu Jiao Wu on her own without Shen Cheng. She was going to protect Xiao Bao on her own, and not let anyone hurt Xiao Bao.

End of Chapter Thirty-Seven

Related

Thirty-Eight



Chapter Thirty-Eight

Side Story

Summary of Tan Pan Ting and Fei Yan Niao's Dinner Side Story:

Fei Yan Niao told Tan Pan Ting news about saving Cheng Yi's life.

Fei Yan Niao joked Tan Pan Ting should give him a kiss or one of the twins to thank him for saving Cheng Yi's life and letting Cheng Yi reunite with Zheng Jia Ju.

Gu Jiao Wen arrived at the restaurant and criticized Fei Yan Niao's restaurant choice. Fei Yan Niao said he was happy to eat bad food as long as he was eating with Tan Pan Ting. Both Tan Pan Ting and Gu Jiao Wen lost their appetites.

Fei Yan Niao asked Tan Pan Ting if he could at least be the twins' godfather. Tan Pan Ting refused.

Gu Jiao Wen and Tan Pan Ting returned home. Gu Jiao Wen told Tan Pan Ting not see Fei Yan Niao again. Tan Pan Ting explained why she ate with Fei Yan Niao to Gu Jiao Wen. Tan Pan Ting showed a photo of Zheng Jia Ju and Cheng Yi after plastic surgery to Gu Jiao Wen.

Chapter Thirty-Eight

Shen Cheng knew Qiao Tan Yuan wouldn't change her mind after she thought about a decision carefully. He gripped the box, turned around and walked away. His heart knew why he and Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't be together, it was always Gu Jiao Wu between them. Even if Gu Jiao Wu wasn't in the picture, Qiao Tan Yuan's heart and eyes couldn't see another man. She rejected him to spare him future

sufferings, and he wouldn't burden her by letting her see how deeply she broke his heart.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat on the bed and sighed. Her heart felt a lot lighter. She made too many mistakes. She didn't want to follow her impulsive heart anymore, and wanted to learn to be considerate of others.

Qiao Tan Yuan accepted Gu Jiao Wu didn't love her. She was only Xiao Bao's mother in Gu Jiao Wu's eyes. She didn't love Shen Cheng, and she wouldn't wait for Gu Jiao Wu's love anymore. If she accepted the truth long ago then she wouldn't be hurting. The truth was Gu Jiao Wu hated her deeply, and asked her to marry him again to give Xiao Bao a family. But she wasn't going to make the same mistake by marrying Gu Jiao Wu again. Their first marriage scarred her enough. Even if Gu Jiao Wu found out she wasn't marrying Shen Cheng, she wouldn't give Xiao Bao to Gu Jiao Wu.

End of Chapter Thirty-Eight

Related

Thirty-Nine



Chapter Thirty-Nine

Friday afternoon.

Gu Jiao Wu was working in his office when Wang Tu Ya called his phone. Wang Tu Ya rarely called him at work unless it was important.

‘Mum, is something wrong?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Jiao Wu, did you know Tan Yuan is going to Denmark?’ Wang Tu Ya asked.

‘What?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Mum, who told you the news?’

‘I bumped into Mr Wen,’ Wang Tu Ya said. ‘He mentioned Tan Yuan asked him what documents she needed to provide to go to Denmark.’

Gu Jiao Wu frowned. He remembered how happy Qiao Tan Yuan looked holding her wedding dress. Denmark? Did she plan go to Denmark with Shen Cheng?

‘Is Shen Cheng going with her?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Mr Wen said he only received copies of Qiao Tan Yuan’s documentation,’ Wang Tu Ya sad.

Wang Tu Ya didn’t know why Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to go to Denmark if Qiao Tan Yuan was marrying Shen Cheng.

‘I understand,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Mum, is there anything else?’

Wang Tu Ya couldn’t believe how calm Gu Jiao Wu sounded.

‘Jiao Wu, Tan Yuan wouldn’t go to Denmark by herself,’ Wang Tu Ya said. ‘She would take Xiao Bao too. Xiao Bao is your daughter, my granddaughter.’

Gu Jiao Wu gripped the phone and spoke calmly. ‘Mum, don’t worry. I’ll take care of it.’

Wang Tu Ya was scared about how Gu Jiao Wu would take care of the situation.

‘I don’t care about what happened between you and Tan Yuan,’ Wang Tu Ya said. ‘But now you and Tan Yuan have Xiao Bao. Tan Yuan loves you yet you don’t care about her. What happens when she takes Xiao Bao to Denmark and marry Shen Cheng? For Xiao Bao’s sake, can’t you get back together with Tan Yuan? I want you to bring Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao home.’

‘Mum...’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He didn’t know what he was supposed to do. ‘Don’t worry. I promise I’ll take care of everything.’

‘If you don’t want me to worry then hurry up and bring Xiao Bao to me,’ Wang Tu Ya said. ‘I don’t care if you hate Tan Yuan, Xiao Bao is still your daughter. Whether you and Tan Yuan get back together is between you two. But I want my granddaughter home with me.’

Wang Tu Ya missed Xiao Bao. The last time she saw Xiao Bao was at Xiao Bao’s one month celebration. Xiao Bao was growing bigger and more adorable by the day. It wasn’t fair Chen Ting Du would get to watch two grandchildren grow up. What about her? She wanted to see Xiao Bao grow up too.

‘Mum, I promise I’ll bring Xiao Bao home,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Um, I’ll be waiting for you to bring Xiao Bao home,’ Wang Tu Ya said.

Gu Jiao Wu hung up the phone. He looked at the photo of Xiao Bao on the phone for a while. Why did Qiao Tan Yuan want to go to Denmark? Did she want to avoid him?

After work Gu Jiao Wu drove to the Qiao Mansion.

Gu Jiao Wu entered the Qiao Mansion, but he didn’t expect to see Mr Qiao

and Qiao Jie sitting on the sofa in the living room.

‘Uncle,’ Gu Jiao Wu greeted.

‘Jiao Wu, come sit next to me,’ Mr Qiao said.

‘Yes, uncle,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and sat next to Mr Qiao. ‘Uncle, have you been well?’

‘I’ve been alright,’ Mr Qiao said.

‘Uncle, I’m here to see Tan Yuan,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Jie scoffed. ‘See my big sister? Liar. You’re only here to see Xiao Bao.’

‘Qiao Jie!’ Mr Qiao said. He gave Qiao Jie a warning look and turned to face Gu Jiao Wu. ‘It’s normal for you to want to see Xiao Bao. But Jiao Wu, if I’m not mistaken, you and Tan Yuan are divorced.’

‘Uncle...’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He knew Mr Qiao was angry at him. ‘In the past I was wrong. I promise in the future I’ll treat Tan Yuan well.’

‘Jiao Wu, you should save those words for Tan Yuan,’ Mr Qiao said. ‘I admit I’ve spoiled her rotten. I won’t stop you seeing her or seeing Xiao Bao. But Jiao Wu, that year no one forced you to marry Tan Yuan. If you married her then you’re her husband and need to treat her well. But you only made her miserable. I should give you a beating.’

‘Uncle...’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was remorseful. He didn’t think he bullied Tan Yuan, but he was a bad husband to Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘I can let go the past,’ Mr Qiao said. ‘But I’m warning you, if you think you can step all over my daughter again, I’ll make you pay.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t open his mouth to defend himself. If Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t give birth to Xiao Bao then he wouldn’t need to sit through Mr Qiao’s lecture.

‘Forget it,’ Mr Qiao said. ‘Tan Yuan’s upstairs.’

‘Thank you uncle,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and sighed in relief.

‘One more thing,’ Mr Qiao said. ‘You can call me uncle today, but in the future I hope you’ll be calling me dad.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to discuss marrying Qiao Tan Yuan again with Mr Qiao. He stood and walked upstairs.

Qiao Jie glared at Gu Jiao Wu's back.

'Dad, why did you let him go upstairs?' Qiao Jie asked. 'Didn't he bully big sister enough?'

'What would you know?' Mr Qiao asked. 'Don't you know how stubborn your big sister is? Look at Shen Cheng, he loves her deeply but she rejected him. If she doesn't love Gu Jiao Wu then she wouldn't give birth to Xiao Bao. There's nothing I can do to change her heart.'

Mr Qiao sighed. How many men were there in the world? Why did Qiao Tan Yuan need to tie herself around a cold tree like Gu Jiao Wu? As a father, he felt helpless to protect Qiao Tan Yuan's heart.

Qiao Jie thought about Xiao Bao. Mr Qiao was right, Qiao Tan Yuan wouldn't give birth to Xiao Bao unless she still loved Gu Jiao Wu.

Upstairs, Gu Jiao Wu entered the nursery to see Xiao Bao first. Xiao Bao was lying on the bed, and her big round eyes were looking at her surroundings. Mrs Chu was waving a toy bell above Xiao Bao's head.

'Xiao Bao, look up here,' Mrs Chu said.

Xiao Bao looked up, she tried grabbing the bell, but Mrs Chu held it higher. Gu Jiao Wu frowned. He grabbed the bell out of Mrs Chu's hands, and gave the bell to Xiao Bao. He didn't expect Xiao Bao's hands were too small, and she couldn't hold onto the bell. The bell fell onto Xiao Bao's forehead.

'Waah, waah...' Xiao Bao cried.

Gu Jiao Wu's heart couldn't stand to hear Xiao Bao cry. He picked her up and patted her back.

'Waah, waah, waah...' Xiao Bao cried.

Mrs Chu took Xiao Bao from Gu Jiao Wu's arms, and patted Xiao Bao's back.

'Xiao Bao, don't cry,' Mrs Chu coaxed. She glared at Gu Jiao Wu. 'Xiao Bao's hands are too small. She can't hold anything yet.'

Gu Jiao Wu was embarrassed. He thought Mrs Chu was bullying Xiao Bao.

Xiao Bao's big round eyes were watery. She blinked her eyes, and tears fell out. She heard Mrs Chu's soothing voice, and stopped crying. She pouted her small lips adorably. Gu Jiao Wu wanted to hold Xiao Bao, but he didn't want her to cry again and decided to go see Qiao Tan Yuan.

Gu Jiao Wu walked to Qiao Tan Yuan's bedroom. He was surprised the door was locked. He tampered with the lock, and unlocked the door. When he walked inside, he heard sounds of running water in the bathroom. Was Qiao Tan Yuan taking a shower?

Gu Jiao Wu walked to the sofa and saw documents on the coffee table. He picked up the documents. There were copies of visa applications and Denmark childcare brochures. Did Qiao Tan Yuan want to move to Denmark permanently? He tossed the documents on the coffee table. He wasn't going to let Qiao Tan Yuan take Xiao Bao to Denmark.

The bathroom door opened. Gu Jiao Wu turned around and saw Qiao Tan Yuan drying her hair, and only a towel wrapped around her body.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked to the bedside table to get the hair dryer. She turned around and was shocked to see Gu Jiao Wu in front of the sofa. She dropped the towel in her hand, and glanced at the door. After she breastfed Xiao Bao, she told Mrs Chu that she would lock the door while she was showering. If the door was locked then how did Gu Jiao Wu come into her bedroom?

Gu Jiao Wu stared at Qiao Tan Yuan's sensual body. There were water beads on her body from her shower. The water beads dripped down neck to her breasts. Her breasts were bigger after she gave birth to Xiao Bao. Even with a towel wrapped around her body, he could see her chest move in sync with her breathing. Under the towel, he saw her long bare legs. Then his eyes looked hungrily up and down Qiao Tan Yuan's body again.

Qiao Tan Yuan was uncomfortable Gu Jiao Wu was looking at her like she was naked. She picked up the fallen towel on the floor, and covered her chest.

'You... how did you get in here?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Get out.'

End of Chapter Thirty-Nine

Related

Forty



Chapter Forty

Qiao Tan Yuan forgot about the towel.

After Qiao Tan Yuan pointed at the door she remembered she wore nothing under the towel, because the towel fell on the floor. She thought she was safe in her locked bedroom, and no one would walk into her bedroom. So she only wrapped a towel loosely around her body, and didn't change clothes in the bathroom.

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan looked like Venus from the Birth of Venus painting. He held her hands before she could pick up the fallen towel.

Gu Jiao Wu looked into Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes, and felt like time stood still for them. He only held her hands gently, but she was too flustered to push him away.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew she had a beautiful body. But after giving birth to Xiao Bao, there were baby fat on her thighs and waist. She felt self-conscious about her body, and quickly looked away from Gu Jiao Wu's eyes. She didn't have baby fat on her body before she was pregnant, but she couldn't entice Gu Jiao Wu's interest.

Qiao Tan Yuan thinking about how her body would repulse Gu Jiao Wu like in

the past made her body insecurities disappear. She pushed him away, picked up the towel and wrapped it around her body.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, this is the Qiao’s residence,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I want you to leave my bedroom.’

Gu Jiao Wu stood still and stared at Qiao Tan Yuan’s body. She rewrapped the towel tightly around her body, but it outlined the contours of her body even more. He thought about their kisses, and it enhanced his desire for her.

‘If you don’t leave, I’ll call the cops,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t believe in idle threats. She stepped to the bed and picked up her phone. But Gu Jiao Wu grabbed her phone from behind her.

Qiao Tan Yuan turned around. Gu Jiao Wu was holding the phone in the air. She jumped up and was angry she couldn’t reach the phone. She wasn’t prepared for him to throw the phone on the bed, and grabbed hold of his shirt to stop herself from falling.

‘Ah...’ Qiao Tan Yuan cried out.

Qiao Tan Yuan fell back on the bed, and Gu Jiao Wu fell on top of her because she was holding onto his shirt.

Gu Jiao Wu propped his hands on the bed, and eased his body pressure off Qiao Tan Yuan’s body. Their noses were touching, and he felt her warm breath on his lips. She widened her eyes, still startled from the sudden fall.

The lust in Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes startled Qiao Tan Yuan more than falling onto the bed. Her hands were still holding onto his shirt. She let go of his shirt to push him away. But his lips kissed her lips unannounced again. She couldn’t believe it was the third time he kissed her. Why did he want to kiss her?

Qiao Tan Yuan felt Gu Jiao Wu kissed her differently to the last two times he kissed her. He kissed her rougher like he lost control. Her body was trapped between his body and the bed. The distance between their bodies were as close as their joined tongues. She didn’t want to give into her desire, but she felt her body becoming hotter. One of his hands held her hands above her head so she couldn’t push him away. His other hand pulled the towel off her body. She moved her hands to slap him, but his hold on her hands tightened. His lips

released her lips, and trailed down to her breasts. Having someone suckled her breasts wasn't different to Xiao Bao drinking her breast milk.

Gu Jiao Wu licked the sweet breast milk off Qiao Tan Yuan's nipples. He thought her natural body scent was arousing and addictive. He was a man. After a long drought if he wasted an opportunity to taste a woman's body that aroused his senses then he wasn't a straight man. His hand moved down closer to Venus' hidden treasure.

Gu Jiao Wu's soft lips and tongue on Qiao Tan Yuan's breasts returned her senses. His free hand moved down her body. What was he doing? She couldn't move her hands, but it didn't mean she couldn't move her legs. She used all her leg strengths and kneed him between his legs.

Gu Jiao Wu's body rolled off Qiao Tan Yuan's body. He laid on the bed in excruciating pain.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat up on the bed, and wrapped the towel securely around her body.

'Gu Jiao Wu, you AH,' Qiao Tan Yuan cursed.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought of many crude names for Gu Jiao Wu. What was she in his eyes? His personal prostitute? Did he think he could use her body anytime he had an itch? She stood, pulled out a drawer, grabbed clothes and dressed faster than her ability to calm her anger.

'Gu Jiao Wu, if you step into the Qiao's residence again, I won't be lenient on you next time,' Qiao Tan Yuan warned.

Qiao Tan Yuan was going to hire two bodyguards in the morning. If Gu Jiao Wu dared to step through the Qiao Mansion front gates, the bodyguards would kick him to hell.

Gu Jiao Wu was a man, and he wasn't immune to the pain after being kicked between his legs. If he wasn't on the bed then he would be rolling around on the floor.

Gu Jiao Wu slowly got out of bed, and stood in front of Qiao Tan Yuan in pain.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, what are you doing?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't feel lucky Qiao Tan Yuan was a woman who kicked him instead of a man. Did she want to turn him into a eunuch?

Qiao Tan Yuan scoffed. 'I should be the one asking you what are you doing.' She wasn't scared of Gu Jiao Wu anymore. 'Why are you so free to run around, and come to the Qiao's residence?'

Qiao Tan Yuan suspected Gu Jiao Wu drove to her home, because he thought she would sleep with him if he was in the mood. She wouldn't let herself be flustered thinking about what he was doing to her body before. She wanted to move on with her life. Being with him would be taking a step back.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, I came here to visit Xiao Bao,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan knew how to frustrate him to death.

'You don't need to,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She thought Gu Jiao Wu would either come to her home to steal Xiao Bao or to get her to satisfy him in bed if he was in the mood. 'Xiao Bao doesn't love you. If you don't visit her, she's even happier.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan, is that why you want to take Xiao Bao to Denmark?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Because you don't want me to visit Xiao Bao?'

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at the opened documents on the coffee table, and knew Gu Jiao Wu must have read the documents.

'I'm going on a holiday to Denmark,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Why can't I take Xiao Bao with me on a holiday?'

'Holiday?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Do you think I'm an idiot? If you want to take Xiao Bao on a holiday then why do you need to look at childcare applications in Denmark?'

'So what if I want to live in Denmark with Xiao Bao?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'It's a good place to raise Xiao Bao.'

'Don't make excuses,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'You only want to separate me and Xiao Bao.'

'So what if I don't want you to see Xiao Bao?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Xiao Bao is my daughter. I have the right to choose where to raise her.'

‘Xiao Bao is my daughter too,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He grabbed Qiao Tan Yuan’s arm. ‘You don’t have the right to decide Xiao Bao’s future on your own.’

End of Chapter Forty

Related

Forty-One



Chapter Forty-One

‘Who has the right to decide Xiao Bao’s future,’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought it was pointless fighting with Gu Jiao Wu, neither of them was willing to surrender. She pulled her arm out of his hold, and took a step back.

‘You don’t have the right to decide Xiao Bao’s future,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Have you forgotten you didn’t want Xiao Bao to be born? What right do you have to visit my daughter?’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to fight with Qiao Tan Yuan. He looked at the anger and hurt in her eyes, and took a deep breath to calm himself.

Gu Jiao Wu had been busy working. But he didn’t stop thinking about how to get Qiao Tan Yuan to accept he was Xiao Bao’s father. He didn’t have the right to stop Qiao Tan Yuan marrying Shen Cheng because they were divorced. But he and Qiao Tan Yuan have a daughter together. He wasn’t going to let go of Xiao Bao. He didn’t want Qiao Tan Yuan to marry Shen Cheng, and Shen Cheng claiming Xiao Bao as a member of the Shen Household. He didn’t want to hurt Shen Cheng, but he wasn’t going to give Xiao Bao to Shen Cheng.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, why didn’t you marry Shen Cheng?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu was distracted by the pain between his legs, Qiao Tan Yuan owed him for the pain her knee gave him.

Qiao Tan Yuan was surprised Gu Jiao Wu knew she called off the wedding.

‘None of your business,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Not my business?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Even if you don’t marry Shen Cheng, do you think I’ll let you raise Xiao Bao overseas?’

‘I don’t need your permission,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Do you think contributing a tiny sperm gives you the right to dictate Xiao Bao’s life? Where were you during the nine months I was pregnant?’

Tiny sperm? Gu Jiao Wu was livid.

‘If you didn’t drug me and stole my sperm then I wouldn’t be standing here,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan rubbed her chest. What drugging Gu Jiao Wu to sleep with her? What stealing his sperm? She couldn’t believe he still didn’t believe she didn’t drug him at the hotel.

‘So what if I drugged you and stole your sperm?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Aren’t you Mr Invincible? If you are then how did you let someone like me drug you twice and steal your sperm? You should change your name to Mr Dumbo.’

Mr Dumbo? Gu Jiao Wu was too angry to speak.

‘Did I drug you before?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘If I didn’t drug you then why were your hands all over me? Oh, I forgot to ask, did your tiny brother liked the feeling of my knee wrapped gift? If after a long famine, you want to satisfy your hunger, I think you should find a chicken to satisfy your hunger.’

Chicken? Gu Jiao Wu’s complexion darkened.

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t scared of Gu Jiao Wu’s anger. She must have been blind and dumb to be intimidated by him in the past. She wouldn’t give him another opportunity to mock her.

Qiao Tan Yuan pointed at the door. ‘The door is over there.’

Qiao Tan Yuan finally calmed down after confronting Gu Jiao Wu. She scoffed at him, turned around and blow dry her hair as if he didn't exist.

Gu Jiao Wu was distracted by Qiao Tan Yuan sitting in front of the vanity and blow drying her hair. She hadn't dyed or permed her hair for ten months. Her long ebony hair was naturally straight. The way she tilted her head to the side and bared her nape was provocative. He was too mesmerized to move.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't know how long he watched Qiao Tan Yuan prepare for bed. After she was done blow drying her hair, she moisturized her skin. He could smell the sweet organic cream she used while still breast feeding Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan put the hair dryer and organic cream in a drawer, stood and walked to the bed. She was surprised Gu Jiao Wu was still standing in her bedroom. She was too tired to tell him to leave again. She laid in bed under the bedsheet with her back facing Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu laid on the bed and turned Qiao Tan Yuan's body to face him.

'Gu Jiao Wu, what do you want?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan's hands so she couldn't slap him.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, you kicked me,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Yes, it was me who kicked you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She looked down at Gu Jiao Wu's crotch and smiled smugly. 'Who said I can't kick you? What was I supposed to do? Let you treat me like your personal prostitute?'

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yuan's hands. He was upset she misunderstood him. He didn't see her as his personal prostitute.

Qiao Tan Yuan slapped Gu Jiao Wu's cheek.

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Gu Jiao Wu, I told you, you can go find a chicken to satisfy your hunger,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Keep your distance from me. Seeing you makes me want to vomit.'

Gu Jiao Wu glared at Qiao Tan Yuan, the woman who slapped him thrice. The woman next to him was a shrew. If she was a man, he would have slapped her thrice too. He was distracted again by her trembling body, and her angry shy

eyes.

Gu Jiao Wu's stomach ached, and he remembered he skipped dinner. He stood and looked down at Qiao Tan Yuan lying on the bed. Her skin looked smoother than usual.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, don't dream about raising Xiao Bao in Denmark,' Gu Jiao Wu warned. 'Xiao Bao is my daughter too. Even if you marry Shen Cheng and move to overseas, you can't change the truth. But don't think I'll let you take Xiao Bao overseas.'

Qiao Tan Yuan sat up on the bed. 'Gu Jiao Wu, soon you'll see me take Xiao Bao to Denmark.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan, soon you'll accept you can't take Xiao Bao to Denmark,' Gu Jiao Wu retorted.

Qiao Tan Yuan ignored Gu Jiao Wu. In a week hers and Xiao Bao's travelling documents to Denmark would be approved. She chose a neighborhood in Denmark suitable for raising children.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to fight with the stubborn Qiao Tan Yuan anymore. He hunched over the bed, and his face was an inch in front of her face. She moved back, he moved closer and stared hungrily at her red swollen lips.

The way Gu Jiao Wu was staring at Qiao Tan Yuan's lips made her put her guard up.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, I'm not hungry enough to find a chicken,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'But I know you're hungry for a man enough to drug me. Before I was satisfying your hunger a little. Shouldn't you thank me?'

Gu Jiao Wu quickly walked to the door before Qiao Tan Yuan slapped him a fourth time.

Qiao Tan Yuan aimed a pillow at Gu Jiao Wu, but the pillow hit the door.

'Gu Jiao Wu, go to hell,' Qiao Tan Yuan cursed.

At the door Gu Jiao Wu looked at the pillow on the floor then he smiled at Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Too bad you missed,' Gu Jiao Wu teased.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you AH, go to hell!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu closed the door and smiled wider. He didn’t know why seeing Qiao Tan Yuan frustrated to death put him in a good mood. He walked to the nursery to check on Xiao Bao. Xiao Bao was sleeping on her bed. He dismissed the look of weariness on Mrs Chu’s face, and stood in front of Xiao Bao’s bed. From his height, looking down at Xiao Bao, she had his eyelids and nose, and Qiao Tan Yuan’s smooth skin and lips. He thought Xiao Bao inherited the best physical traits from him and Qiao Tan Yuan, and knew Xiao Bao would grow up to be a beautiful woman like Qiao Tan Yuan.

Gu Jiao Wu gently stroked Xiao Bao’s adorable small face. Xiao Bao’s skin was soft and smooth like Qiao Tan Yuan’s skin. He quickly retrieved his hand, remembering the feeling of Qiao Tan Yuan’s skin aroused him. He turned around and left the nursery.

Mrs Chu sighed in relief to see Gu Jiao Wu leave. She pitied him. It was obvious he loved Xiao Bao, but Xiao Bao would cry whenever he held Xiao Bao.

Outside the Qiao Mansion, Gu Jiao Wu’s stomach ached more after he sat in the car. He waited for the pain to pass while staring at Qiao Tan Yuan’s bedroom on the second floor. A while later her bedroom light turned off, and he assumed she was asleep. He couldn’t believe that shrew woman kicked and cursed him like a stray cat. But remembering her angry eyes, and the way she confidently defied him made him smile. He drove off to look for food. While driving, he thought about ways to tame the shrew and get her to give Xiao Bao to him.

End of Chapter Forty-One

Related

Forty-Two



Chapter Forty-Two

Gu Jiao Wu drove to a restaurant.

At the restaurant Gu Jiao Wu ordered a bowl of congee. His stomach ached and he winced.

‘Gu Jiao Wu?’ Li Lam asked. ‘Are you OK? Do you have a stomach ache?’

‘I’m OK,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu acted like his stomach didn’t ache, but Li Lam didn’t leave and sat opposite next to him.

‘Are you here to eat dinner?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Um, I worked overtime today,’ Li Lam said.

A waiter came and gave Li Lam a menu.

‘Give me a bowl of seafood congee,’ Li Lam ordered without looking at the menu.

The waiter nodded and walked to the kitchen.

Gu Jiao Wu was annoyed Li Lam sat at his table when the restaurant had many empty tables because it was past dinner time.

‘Are you here on your own?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Li Lam nodded. ‘Why? You don’t want me to sit with you?’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t receive any new news about Li Lam’s past. He tolerated Li Lam because he suspected she knew where Chu Da was.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, how can you be cold hearted toward me?’ Li Lam asked. ‘The

other day you undressed me and took advantage of me.'

Gu Jiao Wu glared at Li Lam. Li Lam spoke loud enough for the other customers and workers to hear.

'Do you see a dog biting?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

If Li Lam didn't look like Chu Da, Gu Jiao Wu would have let Li Lam fend for herself that night. Yet Li Lam twisted his good deed, and bit him like a crazed dog.

Dog? Li Lam was furious Gu Jiao Wu called her a dog.

'Why are you such a petty man?' Li Lam asked.

Gu Jiao Wu ate enough congee to satisfy his stomach. He stood and walked to the counter at the door. But Li Lam grabbed his arm.

'Gu Jiao Wu, how can you be this cold hearted to an old lover?' Li Lam asked.

Gu Jiao Wu was annoyed Li Lam wouldn't let go of his arm.

'My old lover was Chu Da, not you,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I know you're not Chu Da, you can stop acting.'

Li Lam let go of Gu Jiao Wu, wrapped her arms around his neck and blew into his ear.

'Are you sure?' Li Lam asked. 'Do you remember that day I worked overtime at school? You drove me home, I cooked dinner for you and I gave you my virginity. We kept our relationship private, because we weren't married and living in a small town. I didn't want to you to have a bad reputation because of me.'

Gu Jiao Wu pushed Li Lam away from him and glared at her.

'Enough,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu sat down again. He knew Chu Da was a private person, and wouldn't air their private relationship to strangers. If Li Lam knew about his and Chu Da's private relationship then he was certain Li Lam knew where Chu Da was.

Li Lam sat and ate the bowl of seafood congee she ordered.

'Why aren't you leaving?' Li Lam asked.

‘Where is Chu Da?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘What’s your real relationship to Chu Da? Why do you know Chu Da’s secrets?’

‘I am Chu Da,’ Li Lam said. ‘Why won’t you believe me? You gave me a necklace for my birthday. You asked me to marry you and meet your family...’

‘Enough,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If you are Chu Da, why did you leave four years ago?’

‘I...’ Li Lam said.

‘Why did you leave me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t believe Li Lam was Chu Da. But he thought perhaps Li Lam knew why Chu Da left him.

‘I had a reason,’ Li Lam said. ‘Do you think I wanted to leave you?’

Li Lam covered her eyes and sobbed.

‘What reason?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Why did you leave?’

‘I’m sorry,’ Li Lam said. She sniffed her nose. ‘I can’t tell you why.’

‘I’ll believe you’re Chu Da after you tell me why you left four years ago,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu only wanted answers, he didn’t want to hear Li Lam’s fake sob.

Li Lam waited for Gu Jiao Wu to leave before she stopped crying. After she finished eating, she walked to the counter but the floor manager said a man paid for her meal. She nodded and smiled while walking to her car. She wasn’t surprised Gu Jiao Wu was a generous person. She knew what explanations Gu Jiao Wu wanted to hear, but she wasn’t going to tell him. She planned to slowly torment him.

The following day, Gu Jiao Wu visited Zheng Jia Ju’s shop again because he heard news Cheng Yi was alive.

End of Chapter Forty-Two

Related

Forty-Three



I SEE... A BABY.



Chapter Forty-Three

Side Story

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju's Side Story:

Cheng Yi didn't remember Gu Jiao Wu was his friend. Cheng Yi mistook Gu Jiao Wu as the father of Zheng Jia Ju's baby. Cheng Yi cancelled his promise to Zheng Jia Ju to stay the full month because he thought her baby's father was back.

After Cheng Yi left Zheng Jia Ju's shop, Zheng Jia Ju's water broke. Gu Jiao Wu thought he was forced to be a midwife in his lifetime. Gu Jiao Wu called an ambulance, and went to the hospital with Zheng Jia Ju because Cheng Yi had amnesia. Zheng Jia Ju begged Gu Jiao Wu to get Cheng Yi to come to the hospital.

Chapter Forty-Three

At the hospital.

Outside the delivery room, Gu Jiao Wu called Cheng Yi's phone. Cheng Yi didn't pick up. Gu Jiao Wu finally believed Cheng Yi had amnesia, because Cheng Yi wasn't a man who would abandon Zheng Jia Ju when hers and Cheng Yi's baby's lives were at risk.

Gu Jiao Wu could hear Zheng Jia Ju's screams from the delivery room. It made him remember when Qiao Tan Yuan gave birth to Xiao Bao, and he realised he was a blessed man. If that day he wasn't with Qiao Tan Yuan, he wouldn't know how scared and anxious Qiao Tan Yuan would be. He was blessed he was there for Qiao Tan Yuan to protect Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao. He was blessed Qiao Tan Yuan didn't die during childbirth, he didn't want to think about Xiao Bao not having a mother.

In the past Gu Jiao Wu would have been indifferent if Qiao Tan Yuan passed away. But after he got to see Qiao Tan Yuan's maternal heart, the thought of Qiao Tan Yuan dying sickened him. He thought about how Qiao Tan Yuan laid naked under him last night, and was certain he no longer hated Qiao Tan Yuan.

A female doctor came out of the delivery room, and broke Gu Jiao Wu's deep thoughts.

'Is the patient's family here?' the doctor asked.

'Yes,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu thought about how Qiao Tan Yuan suffered during childbirth, and he was worried Zheng Jia Ju was in pain too.

'The umbilical cord is coiled around the baby's neck,' the doctor said. 'Do you agree for the patient to have an emergency C-section to save the mother and baby?'

‘I agree,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at his phone, there was no miscalls from Cheng Yi. He saw Cheng Yi as his friend. If Cheng Yi had amnesia then he felt a duty as a friend to support Zheng Jia Ju during childbirth.

‘Doctor, the patient is my little sister,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’m begging you to help my little give birth to the baby.’

‘Um, we’ll do our best,’ the doctor said and walked back to the delivery room.

Gu Jiao Wu heard Zheng Jia Ju screamed again. He couldn’t stand idle and do nothing. In his worried state, he forgot Cheng Yi had amnesia and texted a coded message to Cheng Yi. He realised his mistake, and sent a direct message, ‘Zheng Jia Ju is giving birth. Come to the hospital now.’

Gu Jiao Wu waited. He wished Cheng Yi’s heart had a little compassion, and Cheng Yi would come the hospital even though Cheng Yi didn’t know Cheng Yi was the father of Zheng Jia Ju’s baby.

By three in the afternoon, Gu Jiao Wu knew Cheng Yi didn’t hear his wish. Zheng Jia Ju refused to have a C-section, and gave birth to a baby boy after five hours of labour.

The doctor walked out of the delivery room, and explained Cheng Yi’s son’s situation.

‘The baby boy is having trouble breathing on his own,’ the doctor said. ‘He’s sent to the ICU.’

Gu Jiao Wu panicked. ‘What about my little sister?’

‘The patient is stable but weak after giving birth,’ the doctor said. ‘You can go with her to her hospital room.’

‘Thank you doctor,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu saw a nurse pushed a portable crib to the ICU. He was worried to see Cheng Yi’s son’s blue face.

‘Will my nephew be OK?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘The ICU ventilator will help the baby boy breathe until he can breathe on his

own,' the doctor said.

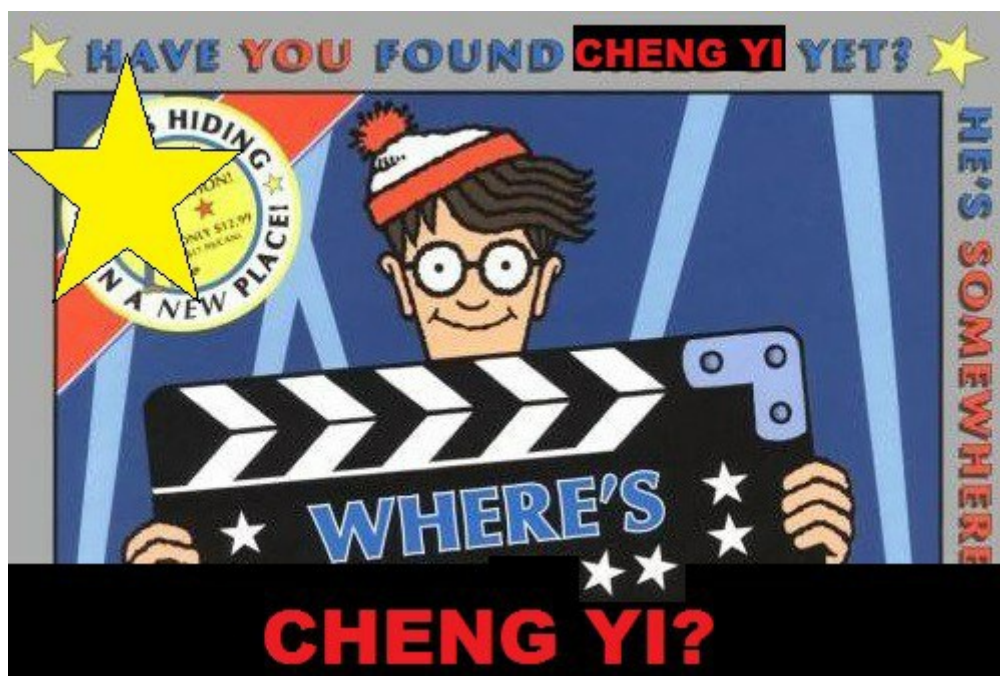
Gu Jiao Wu believed Cheng Yi's son would be monitored carefully in the ICU. He saw another doctor pushed Zheng Jia Ju's stretcher to a hospital room. Zheng Jia Ju's unconscious pale complexion, and weak body looked the same as Qiao Tan Yuan after Qiao Tan Yuan gave birth to Xiao Bao. He cursed Cheng Yi, and followed Zheng Jia Ju to the hospital room. He was furious at Cheng Yi after he heard Zheng Jia Ju murmured Cheng Yi in her sleep.

Gu Jiao Wu called Cheng Yi, but Cheng Yi's phone was switched off. Where was Cheng Yi when Cheng Yi's woman and son's lives were at risk?

End of Chapter Forty-Three

Related

Forty-Four



Chapter Forty-Four

Where's Cheng Yi?

Gu Jiao Wu remembered Cheng Yi's son's blue face, and he couldn't forgive Cheng Yi for not coming to the hospital. Even if Cheng Yi had amnesia, Zheng Jia Ju's baby boy was still Cheng Yi's son.

Gu Jiao Wu called one of his assistants.

'I don't care what dirty tactics you use,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I want you to bring Cheng Yi to the hospital now.'

Gu Jiao Wu hung up his phone, and sat on the chair in front of Zheng Jia Ju's bed.

Gu Jiao Wu wasn't surprised Zheng Jia Ju was sleeping after a painful five hour childbirth. Looking at Zheng Jia Ju made him wonder how much pain Qiao Tan Yuan endured to give birth to Xiao Bao.

Gu Jiao Wu knew Zheng Jia Ju would be sleeping for a while so he walked upstairs to the ICU. He was relieved to see Cheng Yi's son's complexion was more pink than blue.

Later, Gu Jiao Wu returned to Zheng Jia Ju's hospital room, Zheng Jia Ju was awake.

‘Where’s my baby?’ Zheng Jia Ju asked.

‘Your son is healthy,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘He’s four kilograms.’

‘My son is healthy...’ Zheng Jia Ju said and her heart lightened.

Zheng Jia Ju looked at the door, and at the phone on the bedside table. Her heart didn’t feel as light.

‘He didn’t come...’ Zheng Jia Ju said.

Gu Jiao Wu gritted his teeth, and wondered why his assistant didn’t bring Cheng Yi to the hospital yet.

‘Are you tired?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Are you hungry?’

‘I’m not hungry,’ Zheng Jia Ju said. She looked at the empty glass on the bedside table. ‘Can you pour me a glass of water?’

‘Um,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and poured Zheng Jia Ju a warm glass of water.

Gu Jiao Wu put the empty glass on the bedside table.

‘The doctor said you refused to have a C-section,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Why did you risk your life and your son’s life?’

Zheng Jia Ju’s eyes and heart stung. ‘In that moment I thought I was going to die. If I died, my son would be alone in the world. So I wanted to die with my son.’

Gu Jiao Wu silently contemplated.

‘How pitiful would my son be in the world with no mother and a father who doesn’t love him?’ Zheng Jia Ju asked. ‘So I thought it’s better if my son and I died together.’

‘Cheng Yi doesn’t remember you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Um... I thought he died,’ Zheng Jia Ju said. ‘But he’s alive, and I’m hurting more than when I thought he died...’ She shook her head. ‘No, no. He doesn’t remember me. But it’s better than him dead.’

‘Zheng Jia Ju... he doesn’t remember... you didn’t have to give birth to his son,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu wanted to give Cheng Yi a beating. He thought Zheng Jia Ju didn't need to struggle raising a son on her own when Cheng Yi didn't remember her.

'I want my son,' Zheng Jia Ju said. 'When I thought he was dead, I wanted to give birth to his son. If his son is alive in the world, his blood would run through his son's body. His son is proof of how much I loved him.'

'Why do you want to have a man's son who doesn't remember you, respect you or love you?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Even if he doesn't remember me, respect me or love me I'll still give birth to his son,' Zheng Jia Ju said. 'I think the pain is worth having his son with me.'

Gu Jiao Wu thought the conviction on Zheng Jia Ju's face looked the same as Qiao Tan Yuan's face being a protective mother hen over Xiao Bao.

'Do you think a woman only gives birth to a baby for the man she loves?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I can't speak for all women,' Zheng Jia Ju said. 'But for me I can go on dates and sleep with a man I don't love. But I would never give birth to a baby for a man I don't love.'

Zheng Jia Ju's words made Gu Jiao Wu think about Qiao Tan Yuan. Did Qiao Tan Yuan risk her life to give birth to Xiao Bao because she loved him? Qiao Tan Yuan used to tell him that she loved him. But he didn't believe Qiao Tan Yuan truly loved him. He used to think Qiao Tan Yuan was spoiled child who chased after him, because she saw him as a toy she couldn't have. He thought if he rejected Qiao Tan Yuan enough, she would let go of him. He hated Qiao Tan Yuan when she was a spoiled and a selfish child.

'What would you do if the man you loved doesn't love you?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I'll do everything to make him accept my love,' Zheng Jia Ju said.

'What if he rejects your love?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I don't know,' Zheng Jia Ju said. 'Perhaps I'll knock him unconscious or put a spell on him so there's only me in his head.'

Gu Jiao Wu wondered if Qiao Tan Yuan thought the same way as Zheng Jia Ju. Did Qiao Tan Yuan scheme to give birth to Xiao Bao because she didn't receive

his love?

‘Do you hate him?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘It’s not his fault he doesn’t remember me,’ Zheng Jia Ju said.

Zheng Jia Ju used to think if Cheng Yi saw their son, Cheng Yi would remember her and believe she gave birth to Cheng Yi’s son. But after Cheng Yi refused to be with her while she gave birth to their son, she wasn’t certain Cheng Yi would remember her.

‘Even if he doesn’t remember me, I don’t hate him,’ Zheng Jia Ju said. ‘I love him.’

Zheng Jia Ju’s devotion made Gu Jiao Wu’s heart softened toward Qiao Tan Yuan. He thought Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t the same hateful person he used to think she was.

End of Chapter Forty-Four

Related

Forty-Five



Chapter Forty-Five

The door opened.

Zheng Jia Ju looked at the door and saw a bruised Cheng Yi standing at the door with his hands tied behind his back. Behind him was a group of men in black suits who also had bruised faces.

Zheng Jia Ju sat up on the bed too fast, and felt pain below her stomach.

Gu Jiao Wu saw Zheng Jia Ju winced. He helped her sit up on the bed, and put a pillow behind her back.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Cheng Yi's bruised face then he looked at his assistants' bruised faces.

'Who attacked first?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Executive Gu, didn’t you say to use any dirty tactic to bring Cheng Yi to the hospital?’ an assistant asked.

Gu Jiao Wu walked to Cheng Yi and untied Cheng Yi’s hands.

‘Ganging up on a man isn’t manly,’ Cheng Yi said.

‘I’m sorry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He pointed at Zheng Jia Ju. ‘She called your name while giving birth to your son. I called your phone, but you didn’t answer. I wanted you to come see her and your son.’

‘She giving birth has nothing to do with me,’ Cheng Yi said.

Gu Jiao Wu was shocked by Cheng Yi’s heartless words. Not only did Cheng Yi forget and didn’t love Zheng Jia Ju, Cheng Yi’s cold attitude toward Zheng Jia Ju was hurting Zheng Jia Ju more.

‘Cheng Yi, are you a man?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘She only wants you to be with her while she gives birth to your son. Do you need to be this cold blooded?’

Cheng Yi didn’t forget how Gu Jiao Wu helped Zheng Jia Ju sit up on the bed.

‘You must be joking,’ Cheng Yi said. ‘Why do I need to watch your woman give birth to your son?’

‘The baby boy is your son!’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Executive Gu...’ Zheng Jia Ju called weakly.

If Zheng Jia Ju’s wasn’t in pain, she would cry. But crying in front of the indifferent Cheng Yi would hurt her more.

Zheng Jia Ju forced herself to smile.

‘Thank you Executive Gu, you can let him go,’ Zheng Jia Ju said.

‘Zheng Jia Ju...’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He couldn’t stand seeing the cold hearted Cheng Yi and the broken hearted Zheng Jia Ju. He grabbed Cheng Yi’s arm. ‘You, follow me.’

Gu Jiao Wu dragged Cheng Yi to the ICU to see Cheng Yi’s son.

Cheng Yi’s son’s complexion was a healthy pink and sleeping soundly.

Gu Jiao Wu pointed at Cheng Yi’s son. ‘Take a look at your son! Don’t you feel

anything?’

Cheng Yi looked at the baby boy’s small face that looked exactly like Zheng Jia Ju’s face. Then he pushed Gu Jiao Wu away from him.

Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t believe Cheng Yi felt nothing toward Cheng Yi’s son. He never forgotten how awe struck and blessed he was the first time he saw Xiao Bao.

Cheng Yi stared at the baby boy for a while. He turned around and walked to the elevators.

‘Cheng Yi!’ Gu Jiao Wu called. ‘Did you take a close look at your son?’

Cheng Yi stood still, but didn’t turn around to face Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Have you said enough?’ Cheng Yi asked. ‘You’re her husband. She gave birth to your son. It has nothing to do with me.’

Gu Jiao Wu watched Cheng Yi leave. He couldn’t believe how cold blooded Cheng Yi was.

Gu Jiao Wu walked back to Zheng Jia Ju’s hospital room. He looked at Zheng Jia Ju’s disappointed face, and felt angrier at Cheng Yi.

‘Go find a good nurse maid for Zheng Jia Ju,’ Gu Jiao Wu instructed an assistant.

‘Yes Executive Gu,’ the assistant said.

Gu Jiao Wu’s assistants left Zheng Jia Ju’s hospital room.

Zheng Jia Ju looked sadly out the window.

‘Thank you Executive Gu,’ Zheng Jia Ju said.

‘You don’t need to thank me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. Zheng Jia Ju looked out the window, but she couldn’t hide her tears from him. ‘Do you want me to teach him a lesson?’

‘No,’ Zheng Jia Ju said.

Zheng Jia Ju laughed at herself for hurting to see Cheng Yi’s bruised face, he didn’t even remember her.

‘My mum is on her way to take care of me,’ Zheng Jia Ju said. ‘I’m sorry for troubling you.’

‘My assistant will be here soon with a nurse maid who’ll help you take care of your son,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If you need anything else, don’t hesitate to tell my assistant.’

‘I’ll be OK,’ Zheng Jia Ju said.

The way Zheng Jia Ju was forcing herself to smile made Gu Jiao Wu want to give Cheng Yi another beating.

‘Take good care of yourself,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Um,’ Zheng Jia Ju said.

Gu Jiao Wu walked outside and called an assistant.

‘I don’t care what you do as long as you stop Cheng Yi leaving this district,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu hung up the phone. He looked at the photo of Xiao Bao, and realised how blessed he was. He was there at Xiao Bao’s birth, and knew Xiao Bao was his daughter. Unlike Cheng Yi who couldn’t recognise Cheng Yi’s own son.

Gu Jiao Wu sped to the Qiao Mansion. Seeing Cheng Yi’s apathy toward Cheng Yi’s son, made him miss Xiao Bao and he wanted to see Xiao Bao immediately.

At the Qiao Mansion, Qiao Tan Yuan was playing with Xiao Bao before bed time. Xiao Bao was growing bigger by the day, and slept less. She felt blessed to have Xiao Bao in her life. She believed Xiao Bao knew she had a broken heart so Xiao Bao was a good baby. Xiao Bao would happily play during the day, sleep after being breast fed and at night Xiao Bao would cry a little before going back to sleep.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought she acted like a child before giving birth to Xiao Bao. She watched Xiao Bao sleep, and thought it was the most beautiful period in her life.

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t going to let Gu Jiao Wu take Xiao Bao. She was determined to raise Xiao Bao in Denmark where Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t find them.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked back to her bedroom, sat on the sofa and browsed through brochures of houses on the market in Denmark. She had always dreamt of living in Denmark so she learned how to speak Danish long ago.

Downstairs Mrs Qiao nodded at Gu Jiao Wu, she pointed upstairs. Gu Jiao Wu greeted Mrs Qiao, and walked upstairs. He thought about how last time he saw Qiao Tan Yuan naked after a shower, and stood in a daze outside Qiao Tan Yuan's bedroom.

End of Chapter Forty-Five

Related

Forty-Six



Chapter Forty-Six

The door was unlocked.

Gu Jiao Wu quietly walked into Qiao Tan Yuan's bedroom. She was lying on the sofa and reading. She wore the same short pink cotton night gown like last time.

Qiao Tan Yuan obviously turned the page and smiled.

'Oh, this house has a beautiful garden,' Qiao Tan Yuan said to herself.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at the next page. 'Oh, this is a beautiful house too.'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know which house to choose. She wished she could ask Xiao Bao which house Xiao Bao loved. When she was younger she dreamt of buying a house with a spacious garden of flowers, especially roses.

A manly finger pointed at a triple storey house. 'I think this house is good.'

'Um, I think this house is good too,' Qiao Tan Yuan replied obliviously.

A manly finger? Qiao Tan Yuan sat up on the sofa. Gu Jiao Wu sat next to her on the sofa, and she moved away from him. He cornered her on the sofa, and their faces were less than one centimetre apart.

'What are you doing here?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't forget how Gu Jiao Wu kissed her naked body. What was wrong with him? Why was he running to her home after dinner?

‘If you’re here to steal Xiao Bao, I’ll fight with you to our deaths,’ Qiao Tan Yuan warned.

‘Did you eat dinner?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Dinner? Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Gu Jiao Wu like he lost his mind.

‘You’re joking,’ Qiao Tan Yuan mocked.

It was late at night. Of course Qiao Tan Yuan ate dinner already.

Gu Jiao Wu rubbed his hungry stomach. ‘I haven’t eaten dinner.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was confused why Gu Jiao Wu would think she cared if he didn’t eat dinner.

Qiao Tan Yuan pointed at the door. ‘Then what are you doing here? You can go and eat.’

Gu Jiao Wu was surprised Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t care he had a stomach ache.

‘I’ll still live being a little hungrier,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’m staying here.’

Qiao Tan Yuan honestly didn’t know what possessed Gu Jiao Wu.

‘What do you want?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t pleased Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t welcome him warmly. He looked at her stomach, and remembered what he thought about on the way to the Qiao Mansion. He thought about the book he read about what women experienced after childbirth, and what they needed to do to nourish their bodies.

‘Did you eat nutritious meals after you gave birth to Xiao Bao?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan blinked, and thought she misheard Gu Jiao Wu. She pinched his cheeks, his cheeks were warm. She touched his forehead, he didn’t have a fever.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, did you hit your head?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, what gibberish are you speaking?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘If you don’t have brain damage, don’t you think you’re the one speaking gibberish?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Xiao Bao is almost two months old. It’s a little

late asking me if I ate nutritious meals after giving birth to Xiao Bao.'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't dispute Qiao Tan Yuan's reasoning. It was true Qiao Tan Yuan gave birth to Xiao Bao almost two months ago.

'Gu Jiao Wu are you still thinking about us?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'What?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'About us getting back together,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You don't need to be a sacrificing cat living with a mouse. It won't matter how much you pretend to care about me, I won't give Xiao Bao to you.'

Gu Jiao Wu's lips moved closer to Qiao Tan Yuan's lips. She had no room to move back on the sofa so she pushed his chest away from her.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, I'm not here to take Xiao Bao,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't know why he wanted to see Qiao Tan Yuan, and put aside thoughts about persuading her to give him Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan scoffed. She didn't believe Gu Jiao Wu.

'Even if you want to take Xiao Bao, I won't let you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'You...' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu remembered on TV there were many shows about a mother's love for their child. He didn't believe that kind of love existed until witnessing two women suffering labour pains. He finally understood how unconditional a mother's love toward their child was.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, tell me honestly why you didn't take the pill that day?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu wanted to know if Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to give birth to his daughter the same reason why Zheng Jia Ju gave birth to Cheng Yi's son. Was it because Qiao Tan Yuan didn't receive love from him so she wanted to keep a part of him through Xiao Bao?

Qiao Tan Yuan remembered Gu Jiao Wu asked the same question before.

'It's none of your business,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'None of my business?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. He stared at Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes.

‘Did you give birth to Xiao Bao because you love me?’

‘Gu Jiao Wu!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Will you die if you don’t show how conceited you are? Who loves you?’

‘You,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He knew the truth, but he wanted to hear Qiao Tan Yuan admit she still loved him. ‘Qiao Tan Yuan, you love me so deeply because you can’t have me, you want to have my child. That way even if I’m not with you, you’ll have my child by your side. Xiao Bao is your hope.’

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Gu Jiao Wu’s calm eyes looking down at her love for him.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to think about why she didn’t take the pill that day. That day she walked to the pharmacy shop, but she didn’t buy the pills. She understood if she took the pill then everything would end. But she didn’t want to give up hope. If she was pregnant it meant she would at least have Gu Jiao Wu’s child. At that time she loved Gu Jiao Wu deeply. It hurt her to see Gu Jiao Wu, and she missed him if she didn’t see him. She forsaken everything, including her self-respect and ambition to keep loving Gu Jiao Wu.

When Qiao Tan Yuan found out the heavens gave her Xiao Bao, her hope, she was euphoric. Then Gu Jiao Wu walked into her office to sign divorce papers. She hid her joy and sadness while signing the divorce papers. Afterward she threw an opened bottle of pills at Gu Jiao Wu.

It took Qiao Tan Yuan a long time to start letting go of the past. She forced herself to grow up, and not to revolve her life around Gu Jiao Wu. She told herself not to be happy if she saw him smiling in the distance, and not to cry at night if he insulted her. Why did Gu Jiao Wu reappeared in her life after she wanted to forget him?

‘Mr Gu, stop joking,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t love you. After being married to you, I found out there was no such thing as a good man. So I decided I didn’t want to marry again. But I need an heir to take over Qiao’s company after I retire. You can stop thinking so highly of yourself.’

Gu Jiao Wu glared at Qiao Tan Yuan’s smug face. ‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I remember you said you loved me.’

‘Um, I did love you a long time ago,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘But I don’t love you anymore.’

‘You’re lying,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t believe Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t love him. If she didn’t love him, she wouldn’t risk her life to give birth to Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan let go of Gu Jiao Wu’s chest.

‘I’m not lying,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t need to lie. Who didn’t love recklessly in their youth? My head wasn’t screwed on properly when I was younger. But now I can think clearly. I know I don’t love you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan turned her head toward the coffee table to avoid Gu Jiao Wu’s lips, and she pushed his chest hard away from her.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you must have hit your head hard today so you’re not thinking straight and speaking gibberish,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m not your gullible Chu Da so I’m not fooled by your act.’

Qiao Tan Yuan mentioned Chu Da’s name to provoke Gu Jiao Wu enough to slam the door after leaving.

Gu Jiao Wu sat upright on the sofa, and his arms caged Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Don’t mention her name,’ Gu Jiao Wu warned.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want Qiao Tan Yuan to involve Chu Da in their mess.

Qiao Tan Yuan laughed at herself for being right. Gu Jiao Wu was still protective of Chu Da.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I can call her name if I want to,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Chu Da, Chu Da, Chu Da. Chu Da must have been your first love. Chu Da has the innocent appeal, and has a likeable easy going personality. Unlike me who repulse you. Men must love women like Chu Da. A loveable submissive woman.’

‘Stop speaking,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to hear Qiao Tan Yuan say Chu Da’s name. He didn’t know why Chu Da left, but he hated seeing Qiao Tan Yuan’s smugness while insulting Chu Da. He fisted his hands. He knew Qiao Tan Yuan was provoking him.

‘I can speak if I want to,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m not your wife. This is the Qiao’s residence, and you’re in my bedroom. I can say anything I want to in my own bedroom. Look at how deeply you love Chu Da. You can’t forget her after she left you. You even dream about her in your sleep. What a pity she doesn’t need you, and left you for five hundred thousand dollars. Didn’t she know your true net worth as an heir of Gu’s company?’

Gu Jiao Wu gripped Qiao Tan Yuan’s left arm. She knew it was a sign he was about to lose his patience. She wanted to laugh and cry. The pain in her arm cleared her pained heart. She wasn’t the foolish young Qiao Tan Yuan in the past. She didn’t scheme anymore to gain Gu Jiao Wu’s attention.

Qiao Tan Yuan pointed at the door. ‘If you don’t want to hear me speak, you know where the door is.’

Qiao Tan Yuan waited for Gu Jiao Wu to let go of her, but he pulled her toward him.

End of Chapter Forty-Six

Related

Forty-Seven



Chapter Forty-Seven

‘Chu Da isn’t a gold digger,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s shoulders. He remembered Li Lam’s words, he believed Chu Da had a reason why Chu Da left.

Qiao Tan Yuan laughed at herself for hurting to hear Gu Jiao Wu defend Chu Da.

‘I saw Chu Da take my cheque and leave,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If you don’t want to hear me speak, the door is behind you.’

Leave? Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t believe Qiao Tan Yuan expected him to leave after provoking him.

Gu Jiao Wu pulled Qiao Tan Yuan against his body, and cornered her on the sofa. He kissed her lips. She raised her hand to slap him, but he held her hand. His body pressure on her body made it hard for her to breathe. She remembered how she dealt with his unannounced kiss last time. She raised her knee to kick him. But he was prepared, he wrapped her legs around his waist.

The sofa doily fell onto the floor.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t believe Gu Jiao Wu thought he had the right to do as he pleased with her body. Who did he think she was? Someone who would let him hug her, and kiss her anytime he wanted to? She opened her mouth to bite his tongue, but he deepened the kiss.

The door slammed, Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan immediately untangled themselves from each other and sat upright on the sofa.

‘Big sister, I bought you... Gu Jiao Wu?’ Qiao Jie said.

Qiao Jie didn’t know what Gu Jiao Wu was doing in Qiao Tan Yuan’s bedroom

late at night? Did Gu Jiao Wu come to bed Qiao Tan Yuan? Gu Jiao Wu, what a bastard!

Qiao Tan Yuan picked up the fallen doily, and covered her crumpled night gown.

‘Qiao Jie, don’t you know how to knock?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Big sister, you told our family you’ll keep your door unlocked for Mrs Chu to bring Xiao Bao to you,’ Qiao Jie. ‘I didn’t expect you to have an unwanted guest in your bedroom late at night.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was mortified Qiao Jie witnessed Gu Jiao Wu kissing her in her bedroom.

‘Qiao Jie, did you have something you wanted to discuss with me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Um, did you forget about my birthday party coming up?’ Qiao Jie asked. He gave Qiao Tan Yuan the large box he was holding. ‘I bought a dress for big sister to wear to my birthday party.’

‘Thanks Qiao Jie,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You can leave it on the coffee table. I’ll try it on tomorrow.’

Qiao Jie glared at Gu Jiao Wu, and put the box on the coffee table.

‘Big sister, there are some despicable men in this world,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘Big sister can recognise a despicable man when you pay attention to him, he doesn’t even take one look at you. But when you stop paying attention to him, he’ll sniff you and pursue you. A despicable man is an untrustworthy man. Big sister, think carefully before you let this kind of man back into your life.’

‘Qiao Jie!’ Qiao Tan Yuan called. ‘I understand. You can go outside first.’

‘Big sister, I’m only worried about you,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘Don’t forget how he mistreated you while you were married to him. Just because he says sweet words to you, don’t take him back.’

‘Qiao Jie...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Jie was right. Qiao Tan Yuan berated herself for letting herself be used by Gu Jiao Wu before. She shouldn’t let herself forget how Gu Jiao Wu mistreated

her, because he hugged her and kissed her a couple of times.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I used to look up to you,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘But don’t mistake the Qiao’s residence for the Gu’s residence. I won’t let you disrespect my big sister under this roof. If you do, I’ll give you a beating enough for your mother not to recognise your face.’

Qiao Jie turned around, left the room and closed the door.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat further away from Gu Jiao Wu on the sofa. She noticed his clothes were crumpled too.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I want you to go,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Don’t come back again. I don’t want to see you.’

‘Of course I’ll come back again,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

As long as Qiao Tan Yuan was living at the Qiao Mansion, Xiao Bao would be living with her and he would visit them.

‘Gu Jiao Wu!’ Qiao Tan Yuan called. ‘I told you before, if you’re hungry, go find yourself a chicken. If you use me again, Qiao Jie doesn’t need to give you a beating. I’ll beat you to death myself.’

‘I remember I’m not the only hungry one,’ Gu Jiao Wu provoked. ‘Before you were feeling pleased too.’

Qiao Tan Yuan raised her hand to slap Gu Jiao Wu. He captured her hand, and his face hovered in front of her face.

‘Can you honestly say you won’t aroused before?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Um, I admit I’ve been starved since I was pregnant with Xiao Bao,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘It’s normal for me to crave a man’s touch. After being starved for a long time, I would be aroused by other men, not just you. Stop deluding yourself, Mr Untrustworthy. Women can sense what a despicable man you are from a mile away.’

Gu Jiao Wu wanted to show Qiao Tan Yuan was wrong when his stomach ached again, and reminded him he skipped dinner.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I want to sleep,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I can’t sleep if you’re here.’

Qiao Tan Yuan noticed Gu Jiao Wu's pained face, and his hand pressed against his stomach. But she didn't believe someone made of steel like Gu Jiao Wu could be sick.

'Gu Jiao Wu, you can stop acting,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I won't fall for your trick.'

End of Chapter Forty-Seven

Related

Forty-Eight



Chapter Forty-Eight

Side Story

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju's Side Story:

Zheng Jia Ju and Cheng Yi's son were discharged from the hospital.

Cheng Yi dropped by Zheng Jia Ju's parent's home. Zheng Jia Ju was happy to see Cheng Yi because she thought he came to see her and their son. But Cheng Yi came to pack his belongings.

Cheng Yi gave Zheng Jia Ju a cheque, and thanked her for giving him a temporary place to stay. Zheng Jia Ju returned his cheque, and begged him to stay. Cheng Yi didn't force her to accept his cheque, carried his packed bag and left.

Chapter Forty-Eight

'Can you give me a glass of water?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'No, this isn't a restaurant,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Go outside and look for a restaurant.'

Gu Jiao Wu was in too much pain to drive.

‘Gu Jiao Wu... are you OK?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Are you worrying about me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Who’s worrying about you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘I don’t want you to die in my bedroom. Go find another place to die.’

‘Don’t worry, I’m not going to die here,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan hesitated for a while before standing and pouring Gu Jiao Wu a glass of water.

‘You can drink water and go,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu accepted the glass of water, and took out a packet of Omeprazole tablets from his wallet.

Qiao Tan Yuan grabbed the packet from Gu Jiao Wu’s hand while he drank water and swallowed a tablet.

‘You have a stomach ulcer?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Um,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t give back the packet of tablets to Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Stay here and rest,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu watched Qiao Tan Yuan leave the room. His stomach still hurt, and he was too drowsy to drive.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t know how long he napped on the sofa. When he opened his eyes, Qiao Jiao Wu was standing in front of him holding a bowl of congee.

‘What are you staring at?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Haven’t you seen a beautiful woman before?’

‘Did you make the congee?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘You know I don’t know how to cook,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I asked Mrs Chu to make it for you. Stop talking, and eat.’

Gu Jiao Wu ate the congee.

‘I hate cooking and the smell of kitchens,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t like burning her hands cooking either. There was no

reason for her to cook if she could afford to hire a chef.

‘What happens when there’s no one around you to cook for you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Would you rather die of hunger or cook?’

Qiao Tan Yuan laughed. ‘That day won’t happen. I can always hire a chef.’

‘Um, good idea,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He put the empty bowl of congee on the coffee table. ‘Do you plan to hire a chef in Denmark to cook for you and Xiao Bao too?’

‘Of course,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Do you think it’s best for Xiao Bao to take her overseas away from her relatives?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘How will she cope being in a strange place, and surrounded by unfamiliar faces?’

‘Xiao Bao will love Denmark,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Are you sure?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan began to doubt her decision. Xiao Bao would be away from her parents and brother.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, have you said enough?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘You’re done eating so you can go.’

Gu Jiao Wu stood, and Qiao Tan Yuan was surprised to see how serious he looked.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, if I say I’m not going to fight you for Xiao Bao, will you stay here with Xiao Bao?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I don’t believe you’re that generous,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Of course of not that generous,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I have one condition.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I don’t care about your conditions,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Xiao Bao is my daughter. Hurry up and go.’

‘You can’t change the truth Xiao Bao is my daughter too,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘My condition is I get unlimited access to see Xiao Bao.’

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She didn’t want Gu Jiao Wu to be a part of hers and Xiao Bao’s life. ‘Xiao Bao doesn’t need you. Besides you didn’t want Xiao Bao. I hate how you changed your mind, and want to claim Xiao Bao to suit your agenda.’

‘It doesn’t matter if you hate me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll come here again to see Xiao Bao.’

‘Shameless thick face,’ Qiao Tan Yuan mumbled after Gu Jiao Wu walked to the door.

At the door Gu Jiao Wu heard Qiao Tan Yuan’s insult. He turned around, and saw her pouting lips and mumbling curses.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, if you insult me again, I’ll show you what a shameless thick face I can be,’ Gu Jiao Wu threatened.

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan remembered how Gu Jiao Wu kissed her on the sofa before, and she blushed red head to neck.

‘AH,’ Qiao Tan Yuan cursed after Gu Jiao Wu left and closed the door.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know why lately Gu Jiao Wu was behaving unlike his usual self. If he wanted Xiao Bao, he didn’t need to kiss her breathlessly like in a romance novel. She didn’t know why he kissed her.

Qiao Tan Yuan told her heart to stop racing, and she rubbed her confused head. But she couldn’t stop remembering Gu Jiao Wu’s lips kissing her lips. She reminded herself they were divorced, and she wanted to start a new life without Gu Jiao Wu. Suddenly she remembered the strange questions he asked her before. He asked her if she loved him then he kissed her. Did he want to use her love to get her to agree to give Xiao Bao to him?

Qiao Tan Yuan tried to shake Gu Jiao Wu’s words out of her head... ‘Qiao Tan Yuan, let’s get back together... Xiao Bao is my daughter too... Qiao Tan Yuan, you love me...’

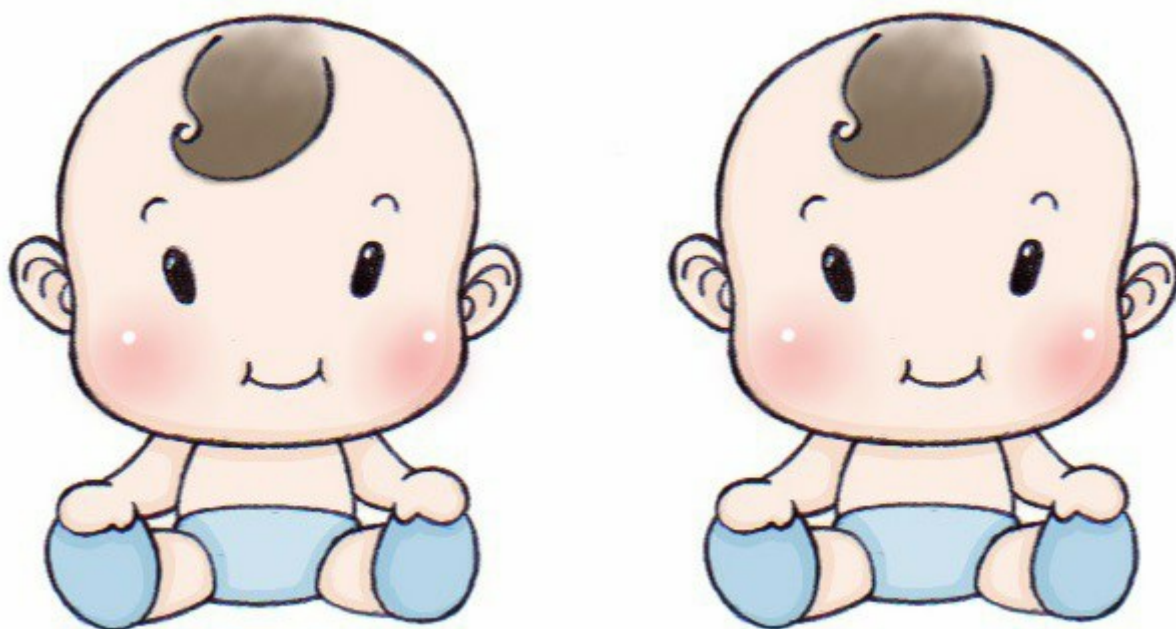
Qiao Tan Yuan gripped the sofa doily. She was disgusted Gu Jiao Wu tried to use her love to get what he wanted.

How could Gu Jiao Wu be that cruel? Qiao Tan Yuan hated him for using her love so he could get Xiao Bao. Did he think she would let him step all over her again? His lies woke her up. She finally understood, and saw the real despicable Gu Jiao Wu. She almost believed him when he said if she stayed, he wouldn't fight her for Xiao Bao. Next time she saw him, she would keep at least a three step distance from him. Better yet, she had to find a way to stop him seeing her and Xiao Bao.

End of Chapter Forty-Eight

Related

Forty-Nine & Fifty



Chapter Forty-Nine & Chapter Fifty

Side Story

Summary of Gu Jiao Mai and Du Lei Xin's Side Story:

Gu Jiao Mai's ex-boyfriend died saving her life.

Du Lei Xin secretly loved Gu Jiao Mai.

In TRB I, Du Lei Xin used Zheng Jia Ju to forget Gu Jiao Mai. But cheated on Zheng Jia Ju to get Zheng Jia Ju to breakup with him after Gu Jiao Mai's ex-boyfriend died.

A housekeeper informed Gu Jiao Wu, Tan Pan Ting was at the hospital giving birth. Gu Jiao Wu wondered if he was going to have two nephews or two nieces. Gu Jiao Wu planned to see Xiao Bao after visiting Tan Pan Ting at the hospital.

Gu Jiao Wu was heading to the hospital, but he noticed Gu Jiao Mai was still at home and understood Gu Jiao Mai was missing her ex-boyfriend. Gu Jiao Wu decided to spend time with Gu Jiao Mai, and took her to the park.

At the park, Gu Jiao Wu and Gu Jiao Mai saw newlyweds taking wedding photos. Gu Jiao Wu brotherly nagged Gu Jiao Mai about moving on. Gu Jiao Mai told him not sound like Chen Ting Yu. Gu Jiao Wu asked Gu Jiao Mai if she was dating a new man, and if she was scared Chen Ting Yu wouldn't approve, he

would speak to Chen Ting Yu on her behalf. Gu Jiao Mai was about to tell Gu Jiao Wu, Du Lei Xin was pursuing her but they were interrupted by Li Lam.

End of Chapter Forty-Nine

Chapter Fifty

Side Story

Summary of Gu Jiao Wen and Tan Pan Ting’s twins:

Gu Jiao Wu rejected Li Lam’s business card. Gu Jiao Mai told Gu Jiao Wu she thought Li Lam seemed like an insincere person.

Gu Jiao Wu drove Gu Jiao Mai to the hospital.

At the hospital Tan Pan Ting was disappointed she gave birth to two sons. A 2.5kg baby boy and a 3kg baby boy. Tan Pan Ting blamed Gu Jiao Wen for jinxing their twins to be two baby boys instead of two baby girls. Gu Jiao Wen was too happy Tan Pan Ting, and their two boys were healthy to say he wasn’t a jinx.

Gu Jiao Wu saw his nephews and missed Xiao Bao. He skipped dinner and drove to the Qiao Mansion.

End of Chapter Fifty

Related

Fifty-One



Chapter Fifty-One

‘Qiao Jie drove Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao to a friend’s house,’ Mrs Qiao said.

Mrs Qiao smiled politely. She didn’t approve of her son-in-law’s behavior. Qiao Tan Yuan told her how Gu Jiao Wu was using the excuse of pursuing her to get Xiao Bao. If Gu Jiao Wu didn’t truly want to get back together with Qiao Tan Yuan then she wouldn’t stop Qiao Tan Yuan going to Denmark with Xiao Bao.

‘Xiao Bao is two months old,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Isn’t she too young to go out? Did aunty go with them?’

‘Yes,’ Mrs Qiao said. She believed Qiao Tan Yuan told her the truth. Gu Jiao Wu only cared about Xiao Bao, and didn’t care about Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘Anything else?’

‘No,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu farewell Mrs Qiao, and walked to his car. In his car he realised he forgot to ask Mrs Qiao who Qiao Tan Yuan was visiting. He didn’t know who Qiao Tan Yuan’s friends were. He called his assistant to find Qiao Tan Yuan’s location. Then he thought about how Xiao Bao liked to play with a bell so he drove to the shopping mall to buy toys for Xiao Bao. At a children’s toy shop, he bought some shiny musical toys for Xiao Bao.

After Gu Xiao Wu put Xiao Bao's toys in his car, his assistant called him. Qiao Tan Yuan wasn't at a friend's house. She was at the same shopping mall as him. Why did Mrs Qiao lie to him?

Outside a children's clothing shop, Qiao Tan Yuan persuaded Qiao Jie to go home and rest. For two months she was cooped at home eating nutritious food. It was the first time she was out shopping on her own. She wanted to buy warm clothes for Xiao Bao.

'Big sister, what if Xiao Bao is hungry?' Qiao Jie asked. 'I don't have breast milk to feed her.'

'Auntie will give Xiao Bao formula milk if she's hungry before I come back home,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'OK, make sure you call me to drive you home,' Qiao Jie said.

'Yes, yes,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Stop worrying about me. I've recovered after two months.'

Qiao Jie reluctantly walked to the carpark, and Qiao Tan Yuan walked into the children's clothing shop. Qiao Tan Yuan selected cute warm blue and pink outfits for Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked out of the shop, and someone grabbed the shopping bags she was holding.

'What are you doing here?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Why can't I be here?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'It's a public place.'

Gu Jiao Wu watched Qiao Tan Yuan choose clothes for Xiao Bao, but he didn't see Qiao Jie, Mrs Chu or Xiao Bao. He realised Qiao Tan Yuan was shopping on her own, and Xiao Bao was at home.

'Yes, yes, it's a public place,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan's shopping bags behind his back.

'You're here on your own?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu was mad at Qiao Jie. Didn't Qiao Jie know Qiao Tan Yuan was still recovering? Why didn't Qiao Jie go shopping with Qiao Tan Yuan, and help her

hold heavy bags?

‘What’s wrong with me shopping on my own?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘The days are getting colder. I didn’t want Xiao Bao to be sick so I let her stay home with my mum and aunty. Why can’t I shop for warm clothes for Xiao Bao?’

‘Of course you can go shopping,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes swept over Qiao Tan Yuan’s body. Her hair was tied in a ponytail, she wore a red V-neck blouse, white pants and white sandals. Strangers wouldn’t believe she was a mother, because she looked too young and beautiful.

‘Follow me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I don’t want to follow you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu mistook her for a loyal puppy who wanted to follow him around.

Gu Jiao Wu carried Qiao Tan Yuan’s shopping bags, and walked to the escalators.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted Xiao Bao to try on the cute outfits she bought, and reluctantly followed Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu led Qiao Tan Yuan into a crowded cafe. He chose a table next to a window. He sat on the U-shaped lounge between Qiao Tan Yuan and the shopping bags.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, get to the point,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘What do you want to say? I’m not free all day to talk with you.’

Gu Jiao Wu pretended he didn’t hear Qiao Tan Yuan. He ordered a mug of warm milk for her and a cup of coffee for himself.

Qiao Tan Yuan frowned. She was averse to drinking milk, because her family forced her to drink milk for Xiao Bao’s sake.

‘I don’t want to sit here and drink with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Say what you want so I can go.’

A waiter quickly brought the coffee and milk to Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan’s table.

‘Why are you still going to Denmark?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Why not?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘You promised me you wouldn’t take Xiao Bao to Denmark,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I didn’t promise you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You chose to assume I wasn’t going to Denmark anymore.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, if you’re going to be like this then I’ll see you in court,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Court?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘OK, I don’t mind seeing you in court. Who do you think the judge will grant custody to? I’ll tell the judge how my ex-husband mistreated me, and is an unfit parent.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, do you want to publicized you drugged your ex-husband to get him to sleep with you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Go ahead,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t mind letting the judge know how you wanted me to abort Xiao Bao.’

Gu Jiao Wu wanted to resolve their differences with Qiao Tan Yuan amicably outside of court. He would be satisfied if Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t prevent him seeing Xiao Bao.

‘If there’s nothing else, I’m leaving,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t scared of Gu Jiao Wu’s intimidation tactics. She stood, he grabbed her hand and pulled her back onto the lounge.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan...’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He was frustrated with the unreasonable shrew next to him. ‘If you still want to take Xiao Bao to Denmark, I’ll do everything to stop you.’

‘We’ll see if you can stop me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t let go of her hand. ‘I’m not scared of you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan pulled her hand free and stood again. She didn’t expect Gu Jiao Wu to yank her arm, she lost her balance and fell on his lap and he held onto her waist. His chest was warm, and she felt his erection. She tried to stand, but her head hit his chin. She rubbed her sore head, turned around and glared at Gu Jiao Wu.

‘What do you want?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu put the mug of warm milk in Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand.

‘Drink,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I don’t want to,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Drink,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu read it was recommended women drink milk while breast feeding their child.

‘I don’t want to,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t going to fall for Gu Jiao Wu’s act a second time. She knew he was only pretending he cared about her.

‘Are you sure?’ Gu Jiao Wu threatened.

‘Why do I have to drink milk if you tell me to?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Do I look like I don’t have free will?’

Why was Qiao Tan Yuan averse to drinking a mug of milk? Gu Jiao Wu smiled at her, drank a sip of milk, held her chin and transferred the milk into her mouth.

Qiao Tan Yuan was forced to swallow the milk if she wanted to breathe. She was shocked Gu Jiao Wu would kiss her in public.

Gu Jiao Wu loosened his hold around Qiao Tan Yuan’s waist after he transferred half the mug of milk into her mouth.

‘Tastes delicious,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Delicious? Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know what Gu Jiao Wu thought tasted delicious.

Gu Jiao Wu saw Qiao Tan Yuan’s dazed look, and he smiled.

‘Both tastes delicious,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu realised he liked kissing Qiao Tan Yuan’s sweet lips.

Qiao Tan Yuan stared at Gu Jiao Wu’s smiling face, and she was certain he was possessed.

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She noticed the customers were looking at

her and Gu Jiao Wu, and she blushed. 'We're in a public cafe. But you...'

'I what?' Gu Jiao Wu teased. 'It's sinful to waste food.'

'Waste food?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was confused why Gu Jiao Wu kissed her because he didn't want to waste food.

'Milk is food too,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'You can't leave and waste food.'

Qiao Tan Yuan rubbed her angry and embarrassed chest. She didn't know Gu Jiao Wu was nonchalant about PDA.

'Gu Jiao Wu...' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She rubbed her lips to get rid of Gu Jiao Wu's taste off her lips. 'I didn't order milk. You ordered the milk so you should drink it yourself.'

Gu Jiao Wu put the half full mug of milk in Qiao Tan Yuan's hand.

'Drink,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'You...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'If you don't drink, I don't mind helping you drink again,' Gu Jiao Wu threatened.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu must have hit his head after waking up in the morning.

Qiao Tan Yuan gulped the rest of the milk, slammed the empty mug on the table and glared at Gu Jiao Wu's smug face.

'I drank it all, can you let me go now?' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yuan. She stood, he grabbed the cup of coffee and she lost her balance again to avoid the coffee splashing on her white pants.

'Ah...' Qiao Tan Yuan cried out softly.

Qiao Tan Yuan fell on Gu Jiao Wu's lap again, and the coffee narrowly missed her white pants. But Gu Jiao Wu's erection disturbed her more.

'Gu Jiao Wu, you did that on purpose,' Qiao Tan Yuan accused.

'Of course not,' Gu Jiao Wu denied. 'I don't want to waste food.'

Gu Jiao Wu drank the cup of coffee. He thought the coffee tasted sweeter than usual.

Qiao Tan Yuan waited for Gu Jiao Wu to finish drinking the coffee, because she didn't want to stain her white pants.

'Done?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Why are you in a rush?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. He was free the rest of the day to play with Qiao Tan Yuan. 'If you want to go, I won't stop you.'

'Let go of me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yan. She stood too quickly, bumped his arm and coffee stained her white pants.

'You did that on purpose!' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Oh... I'm sorry,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'It was an accident.'

Gu Jiao Wu put the cup of coffee on the table, picked up a napkin and wiped the coffee beads off Qiao Tan Yuan's stained white pants.

Qiao Tan Yuan snatched the napkin out of Gu Jiao Wu's hand. She failed to wipe the coffee stain off her white pants, threw the napkin on the table and glared at Gu Jiao Wu.

'Enough,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Stay away from me. I'm going home.'

'I'll drive you home,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He stood and looked at Qiao Tan Yuan's white pants. 'It's my fault your pants is stained. Let me buy you a new outfit as an apology.'

'I can go home myself,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Are you sure you want to walk on the streets dressed like this?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu knew Qiao Tan Yuan cared about her image so he was certain she wouldn't leave the shopping mall wearing coffee stained white pants.

'I'll go buy new clothes myself,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan took back her shopping bags, and walked upstairs to buy new pants.

Gu Jiao Wu followed Qiao Tan Yuan upstairs. He thought she was walking fast like she was stomping his face on the floor. He had fun teasing her, and pictured her puffing out angry steam.

Qiao Tan Yuan tried out two white pants in the women's department of a shop. Then she walked to the counter to pay for the pants, but the shop assistant informed her Gu Jiao Wu paid for her pants.

Qiao Tan Yuan carried the shopping bags outside the shop, and saw Gu Jiao Wu waiting for her.

'I can afford to pay for my own pants,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu was dreaming if he thought he could pay her to hand over Xiao Bao.

'I only want to compensate you for your stained pants,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Don't you have something you need to do?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

It wasn't the weekend, Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know why Gu Jiao Wu was so free to follow her around.

'Um, I need to drive you home,' Gu Jiao Wu said and pointed at the direction of the carpark.

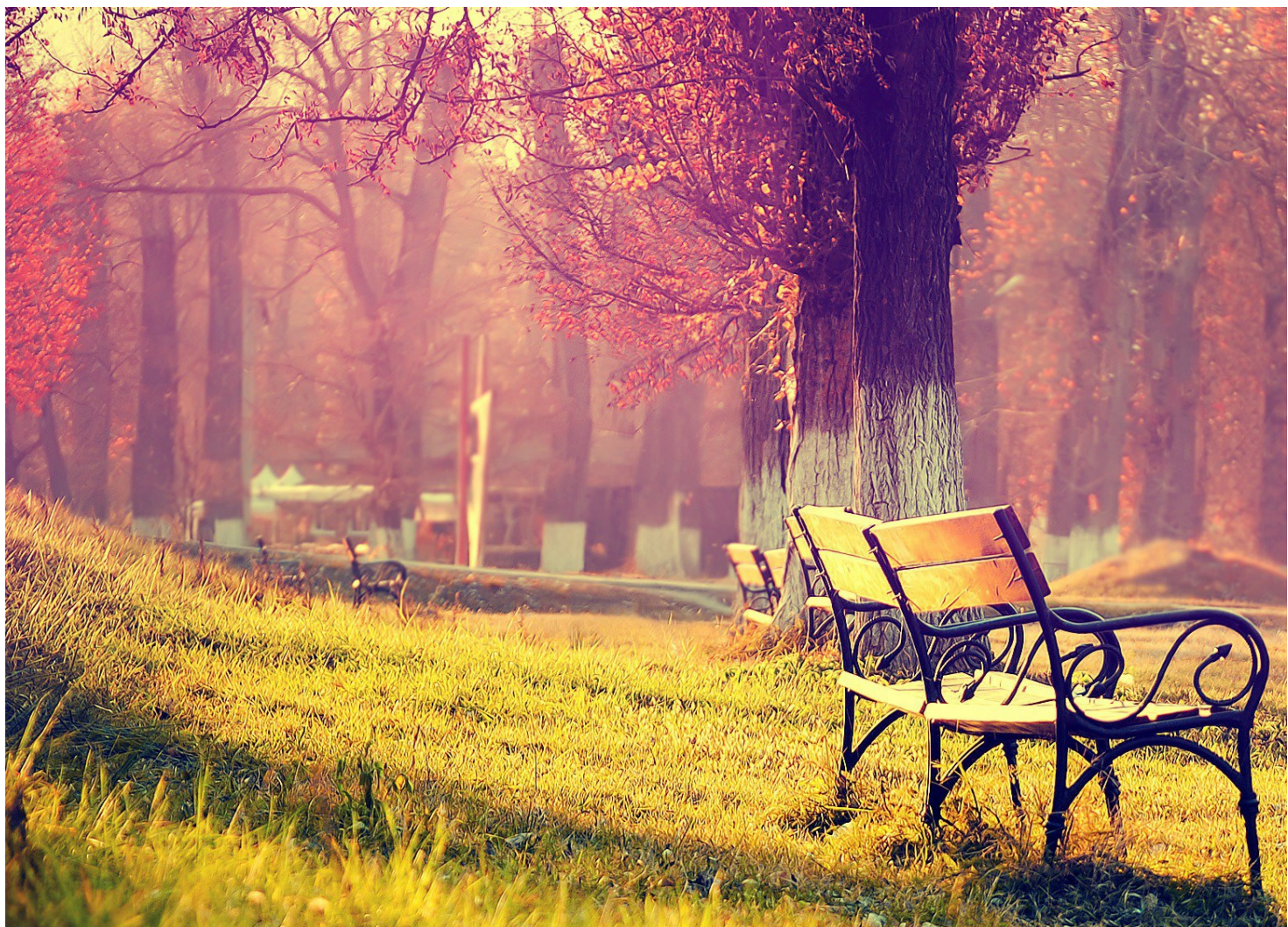
'I don't want you to drive me home,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'It'll take you a long time to hail a cab at this late hour,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Are you sure you want to wait?'

End of Chapter Fifty-One

Related

Fifty-Two



Chapter Fifty-Two

‘I’m not going to fall for your lies,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew Gu Jiao Wu was toying with her feelings because he wanted Xiao Bao. She strode off in the direction of the taxi zone.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t know why Qiao Tan Yuan called him a liar. He honestly wanted to take her home. He chased after her, and held her hand.

‘I’ll drive you home,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t overpower Gu Jiao Wu’s strength, he held her hand and led her to his black car.

‘Since I want to see Xiao Bao, driving you home isn’t inconvenient,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘AH!’ Qiao Tan Yuan cursed. ‘Don’t think you can manipulate me to get me to give Xiao Bao to you. I’ll be raising Xiao Bao in Denmark.’

Gu Jiao Wu calmly drove. The sun was setting, and people were out and about on the streets after work.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked out the window. It wasn't the first time she was in the same car with Gu Jiao Wu. When they were married, he drove her to attend many formal business functions. Back then if she tried to initiate a conversation with him in the car, he would ignore her and wore a cold expression while driving. She used to think he was allergic to smiling. She didn't expect after they divorced he would smile at her. She stole secret glances at him. He looked like a handsome warm hearted man when he was smiling. Then she remembered he was putting on an act to get her to give him Xiao Bao, and she quickly looked back out the window.

'Gu Jiao Wu!' Qiao Tan Yuan called. She didn't recognise the roads outside the window. 'Where are you taking me? This isn't the way back to my home.'

'Calm down,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I'm taking you somewhere so we can resolve our differences amicably.'

'I am calm,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Stop the car, and let me out.'

'Do you think I'll let you take Xiao Bao to Denmark?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I told you before, I don't need your permission to take Xiao Bao to Denmark,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu stepped on the accelerator. Qiao Tan Yuan tried opening the passenger door, but he locked the doors.

'AH! Let me out!' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan saw a familiar park reserve. Why did Gu Jiao Wu want to take her to the park reserve?

Gu Jiao Wu parked the car. Qiao Tan Yuan refused to come out of the car. He held her hand and dragged her to a stone bench.

The fading sunlight that illuminated the red leaves on the tall trees was a beautiful sight, but it brought back a painful memory for Qiao Tan Yuan. She remembered the last time she was here was after her college graduation. She witnessed Gu Jiao Wu hugging and kissing Chu Da. If she knew Gu Jiao Wu was in love with someone else, she wouldn't have blindly studied and worked so she could be suited to be with Gu Jiao Wu. She wouldn't have wasted years loving someone who didn't love her.

Gu Jiao Wu thought the park reserve scenery was beautiful. He hadn't visited the park reserve for many years because he was busy building his career. It was a lot of pressure to be the Gu's company successor. Outsiders would be gleeful to see him fail so he worked diligently to prove himself he earned his position and to be successful on his own merits.

Gu Jiao Wu remembered the last time he was at the park reserve he was with Chu Da. Did he not treat her good enough? Was that why she left him? He thought he had a future with Chu Da, and they would have many opportunities to go sightseeing. But he couldn't find Chu Da for more than four years. If Chu Da returned and knew he married, divorced and have a daughter with Qiao Tan Yuan, would Chu Da accept to be with him?

Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu were lost in their own thoughts while the sky slowly darkened.

'Gu Jiao Wu, why did you bring me here?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She didn't want to replay the image of Gu Jiao Wu kissing Chu Da anymore. 'It doesn't matter. Take me home.'

Gu Jiao Wu sat on the stone bench, and he gestured for Qiao Tan Yuan to sit next to him.

Qiao Tan Yuan turned around to leave.

'Qiao Tan Yuan are you scared of me?' Gu Jiao Wu provoked.

Qiao Tan Yuan turned around and looked at Gu Jiao Wu.

'You must be joking, why would I be scared of you?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked around the park reserve. There were many tourist taking photos.

'If you're not scared of me then sit next to me,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to hear Gu Jiao Wu gloat, and sat next to him on the stone bench.

'Gu Jiao Wu, you're still young,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'In the future you'll marry another woman, and have other children. Why do you need to take Xiao Bao?'

'You're still young too,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'You can marry another man, and

have children with him. Why must you hold onto Xiao Bao?’

‘Because I’m not going to marry anyone else, and have another child,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Living a peaceful life with Xiao Bao is enough for me.’

The fading sunlight behind Qiao Tan Yuan made her look otherworldly, Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t take his eyes off her. He knew she was beautiful. But after seeing her take care of Xiao Bao and being protective over Xiao Bao, made her more beautiful in his eyes.

‘You’re not going to marry anyone else?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Is it because you love me too deeply so you don’t want to marry anyone else?’

‘Gu Jiao Wu... why are you such an egotistical AH?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘I’m stating the truth,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Have you forgotten, this is where you once pulled me toward you and told me I belonged to you?’

‘You... why do you need to remember?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Back then I was young and foolish. I didn’t know the difference between love and infatuation. Now I can see you don’t have any loveable traits. You’re selfish and cold hearted. You looked at me coldly all day like I owed you a life. Why would I love such a hateful man?’

Gu Jiao Wu stood in front of Qiao Tan Yuan, loomed over her and stared at her flushed face. He held her waist so she couldn’t run away.

‘Um, you were young and foolish,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘But you told me, you would rather die than let me escape.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, how thick is your face?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu captured Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand before she could slap him.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, stop being a shrew,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘So what if I’m a shrew?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Didn’t you say you hate me? If you hate me, why are you like this?’

‘In the past you were hateful,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Um, I’m a hateful woman,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Why are you holding onto a woman you hate?’

Gu Jiao Wu saw Qiao Tan Yuan's fuming face, and he smiled.

'But now you're not a hateful woman,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'You only think I'm not a hateful woman anymore because I gave birth to your daughter,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't agree with Qiao Tan Yuan. He was confused why he didn't hate her anymore.

Qiao Tan Yuan understood Gu Jiao Wu's silence meant he tolerated her because she was Xiao Bao's mother.

'Gu Jiao Wu, go to hell!' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan stomped on Gu Jiao Wu's foot, he let go of her and she escaped. But she got up too quickly, tripped over a jagged rock and fell on the ground.

'Ah...' Qiao Tan Yuan cried out.

Gu Jiao Wu helped Qiao Tan Yuan sit back on the stone bench, but she didn't thank him.

'Gu Jiao Wu if you hate me, keep your distance from me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You know I'm an arrogant, reckless and selfish person. I have no good traits. The further you're away from me the better. Otherwise you'll only see me do more hateful things.' She tried to stand up, but felt pain in her ankle and realised she twisted her ankle. 'Ah... it hurts.'

'Are you OK?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Stay away, you don't need to pretend you're a good person,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn't going to let Gu Jiao Wu suck her back to orbiting her life around him. She was starting to regain her self-respect and building a new life.

Gu Jiao Wu ignored Qiao Tan Yuan's provocation. He crouched in front of her, and rolled up her pants hem. Her ankle was swollen.

'You twisted your ankle,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'It's your fault,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought if Gu Jiao Wu didn't take her to the park reserve then she wouldn't twist her ankle.

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu couldn't believe Qiao Tan Yuan had the energy to oppose him even when she was injured. He gently massaged her ankle.

'Ah... what are you doing... it hurts,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'I'll take you to see a doctor,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He turned his back to her. 'Jump on.'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know why he wanted to piggy back her.

'I can go find a doctor on my own,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan stood on her own, and limped a couple of steps.

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu called. He couldn't believe Qiao Tan Yuan could be that reckless. 'If you don't want me to piggy back you...'

Gu Jiao Wu lifted Qiao Tan Yuan into his arms, and carried her to the car.

'Gu Jiao Wu, put me down!' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'How can you walk on a twisted ankle?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'It's your fault!' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'I didn't tell you to walk fast,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu couldn't believe Qiao Tan Yuan didn't watch where she was walking, but she blamed him for her ankle injury.

'If you didn't take me to a hell hole like this then I wouldn't be injured,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Watch your mouth,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't want the tourists to attack Qiao Tan Yuan for insulting a popular tourist attraction.

'Watch your little sister!' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't care if the tourists could hear her cursing.

‘My little sister is at home,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll make sure I watch over my little sister. Thank you for your concern.’

‘You... Mr Thick Face!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘If you curse again, I’ll show you what a real Mr Thick Face looks like,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and blew on Qiao Tan Yuan’s neck.

Qiao Tan Yuan remembered how Gu Jiao Wu fed her milk and kissed her at the cafe, and she stopped struggling in his arms.

Gu Jiao Wu thought the tourists would have mistaken him and Qiao Tan Yuan were filming a romantic movie scene because Qiao Tan Yuan looked like a beautiful damsel in distress in his arms. He loved her natural body scent mingled with breast milk. It made him think about her sweet lips and her naked body... he walked faster out of the park reserve to the car. It didn’t take him long to put her down on the passenger seat.

‘I’ll take you to see a doctor,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Take me home and I’ll go to see a doctor myself,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Didn’t you say it’s my fault?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu locked the doors and drove off.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know why she was angry. Gu Jiao Wu was focused on driving fast. She didn’t expect there was a day Gu Jiao Wu would toy with her, kiss her and even carry her. She didn’t know what he was thinking and feeling. Was he acting unusual out of impulse or was he only toying with her to get Xiao Bao? It didn’t matter if she didn’t know why he was acting strangely, because she was certain he didn’t love her. She didn’t want him to appear in front of her anymore, it reminded her what a love sick fool she used to be and she was scared she would want to fall for his lies.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, tell me honestly what will it take for you to let me go?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t see Qiao Tan Yuan’s face, but he heard the despair in her voice. Did she truly want to escape him?

Gu Jiao Wu parked on the side of the road.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know why Gu Jiao Wu suddenly parked on the side of the road. It was a busy road, many tourist cars were passing by.

'I admit I'm no match to oppose you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She was tired, and felt defeated. 'Whether it's in the past, now or the future, I can't match up to you. I'm reasonably discussing Xiao Bao's future with you as if we're discussing terms of a contract, because I truly want you to let me go. I don't want you to appear in front of me anymore. I don't want you to toy with me. Can you move on with your life like you did before you knew Xiao Bao existed? It's best for Xiao Bao if we live our own separate lives.'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't think it was in Xiao Bao's best interest to take Xiao Bao away from her father, grandparents, uncles and aunts.

Gu Jiao Wu turned to face Qiao Tan Yuan, but he couldn't open his mouth. There wasn't just despair in her voice, there was despair in her eyes too. He vaguely remembered he saw the same expression on her face in the distant past, but he couldn't remember when because in the past he rarely looked at her.

End of Chapter Fifty-Two

Related

Fifty-Three



Chapter Fifty-Three

Side Story

Summary of Fei Yan Niao and Li Dan Qi's Side Story:

Cheng Yi flew back to the U.S. to see Fei Yan Niao, and ask why Cheng Yi was rich.

Fei Yan Niao didn't want to tell Cheng Yi why, and asked Cheng Yi to go back to Zheng Jia Ju and Cheng Yi's son because Fei Yan Niao didn't want Li Dan Qi to recognise Cheng Yi killed Li Dan Qi's parents.

Chapter Fifty-Three

Gu Jiao Wu didn't care about Qiao Tan Yuan in the past so he rarely looked at her. His impressions of Qiao Tan Yuan before their divorce was a blur. His distorted images of the past Qiao Tan Yuan made it hard for him to remember when he saw her look as despaired as she did sitting in front of him in the car. He would rather see her being adorably stubborn, reckless and cursing him than seeing the despair in her eyes.

Adorable? Gu Jiao Wu didn't think there was a day he would correlate adorable and Qiao Tan Yuan together. But the way Qiao Tan Yuan was bantering with him before was adorable. Qiao Tan Yuan was adorable when she was taking care of their daughter too. Suddenly he felt compelled to hold her and kiss her.

Gu Jiao Wu braced Qiao Tan Yuan's neck, and he kissed her gently. He wanted to comfort her, and didn't want to see despair in her eyes. His comforting kiss

quickly turned into desire. He couldn't hold a beautiful woman who he was attracted to in his arms, and not want to taste all of her. He wasn't a pious monk, he was an ordinary man.

The dark night sky provided a covering for the black car on the side of a busy tourist road.

For a long time inside the car, two bodies were moving rhythmically together, two hearts racing and two mouths gasping for air.

After the black car stopped shaking, it was quiet in the black car as the perspiration on the two quenched bodies.

Freedom was returned to Qiao Tan Yuan's hands. She looked blankly at Gu Jiao Wu. Her red bra and red blouse were still pulled up to her neck, her white underwear and white pants were pulled to her ankles. One white sandal on one of her feet, but she didn't know where the other white sandal was flung to. She had trouble snapping out of the carnal haze between her and Gu Jiao Wu.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt it was surreal, Gu Jiao Wu pounced on her and ravished her in his car on the side of a busy road. She couldn't remember what happened the moment before Gu Jiao Wu pounced on her. Her head was muddled, and it was even hard for her to piece together what happened between her and Gu Jiao Wu. She could remember Gu Jiao Wu kissed her, she shoved his chest, he pounced on her and they exchanged some words...

'Gu Jiao Wu... let me go...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Don't speak... focus on us...' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan's legs were trapped in the car's tight space, and there was no room for her to move back. Gu Jiao Wu's hands slid under her red blouse, he kneaded her breasts, kissed her deeply and she couldn't fight her desire for him.

The carnal haze slowly cleared, and Qiao Tan Yuan realised Gu Jiao Wu ravishing her in the car wasn't a dream. While he was stroking her desire, she didn't know where she lost her common sense. She remembered she instinctively followed his lead, and matched his body rhythm. How could her limited experience defeat his skilful caresses?

Qiao Tan Yuan registered pain below her waist. Gu Jiao Wu fondled her roughly, and his arousal ravaged her body... didn't he know a woman's first time after giving birth was painful?

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yuan. He sat up, reached for tissues, pass some tissues to her, cleaned below his waist, pulled up his pants and pulled down his shirt. When he looked at her, she was still frozen. He hesitated before wiping the proof of their coupling off her body. Then he helped her pull up her pants, pull down her blouse, search for her missing sandal and put it back on her bare foot.

Gu Jiao Wu had abstained for too long, and he couldn't hold back his suppressed urges while tasting all of Qiao Tan Yuan's body. He looked worriedly at her blank frozen face, and held her stiff hand.

'Are you OK?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan's common sense returned. Gu Jiao Wu's warm hand was holding her hand. But she looked at his hateful face, and slapped his cheek.

'Gu Jiao Wu, you AH!' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

End of Chapter Fifty-Three

Related

Fifty-Four



Chapter Fifty-Four

In a car?

Gu Jiao Wu was a despicable AH! Qiao Tan Yuan saw car headlights on the busy road next to his black car. She was worried tourists in cars passing by saw her and Gu Jiao Wu being intimate with each other before, and took photos. She could picture the newspaper headlines in the morning, 'Qiao's company's heiress Ms. Qiao banging her ex-husband on a public road.'

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to crawl into a hole. Did Gu Jiao Wu think she was some woman he could use to satisfy himself at his convenience? He was too much. He should at least have the decency to take her to a hotel room, not impulsively ravish her in a car on a public road. What was she in his heart? Did he think she was a toy he could play with when he wanted to, and toss aside when he didn't want to play with her anymore? Was that why he unrepentantly took liberties of her in his car?

Qiao Tan Yuan's slap didn't hurt Gu Jiao Wu. She had little energy left after he thoroughly ravished her.

Gu Jiao Wu was confused why Qiao Tan Yuan was angry at him. He remembered he made her orgasmed several times under his body before.

'Are you angry?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Are you joking?’ Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t believe his intelligence was that low. Did her slap affect his brain?

‘Why are you angry?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘You were revelling in pleasure before.’

‘I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan saw confusion on Gu Jiao Wu’s face, and didn’t know how to explain to him about his misconduct.

‘What pleasure?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, you have no finesse. If I don’t hit you then who do I hit?’

Qiao Tan Yuan remembered the night Xiao Bao was conceived. Gu Jiao Wu pounded her body throughout the night, and wouldn’t let go of her. In the morning, she couldn’t walk properly and her whole body ached.

Qiao Tan Yuan admitted Gu Jiao Wu pleased her physically in the car before, but there was no pleasure in the void of her heart. She didn’t want to expose her vulnerabilities to him. He would only use it against her.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t believe Qiao Tan Yuan felt no pleasure under his body. She pricked his masculine pride. No finesse? What man wanted to hear their woman tell them they had no finesse, and couldn’t pleasure their woman? A man would rather be poor and ugly than be labelled ‘unsatisfying’ by a woman, regardless whether the man loved her.

In contrast Qiao Tan Yuan loved one man half of her life, Gu Jiao Wu. She didn’t know about the consequences of her careless words.

Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan talking to each was like two children fighting with each other in two different languages.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you didn’t satisfy me at all,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You only know how to give me pain and discomfort. I hate you. In the future, you can’t touch me again.’

Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t a player. But he had enough experience in the intercourse department with women to judge his own physical prowess. Qiao Tan Yuan’s

words only summoned one thought in his head.

Gu Jiao Wu pounced on Qiao Tan Yuan's body again, and he didn't allow any gaps between their bodies.

'Gu Jiao Wu... what are you doing?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Nothing...' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan's wrists together using one hand, and his other hand hurriedly undressed her.

'If you're not satisfied, I don't mind pleasuring you again,' Gu Jiao Wu whispered in Qiao Tan Yuan's ear.

Qiao Tan Yuan stared in disbelief at the intense lust in Gu Jiao Wu's eyes.

The warnings of Qiao Tan Yuan's common sense was softer than the sounds of her racing heart.

Inside the cramped car, Qiao Tan Yuan could hear hers and Gu Jiao Wu gasping for air. Her body shook again under his hot solid body.

A long time later, Qiao Tan Yuan felt like she broke her back. She looked at Gu Jiao Wu, he looked energized and relaxed.

'Are you satisfied yet?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't have energy to open her mouth.

Gu Jiao Wu wasn't angry Qiao Tan Yuan didn't admit the truth. His lips hovered over her ear, and whispered a promise.

'If you're not satisfied, I don't mind another round with you,' Gu Jiao Wu whispered. He grinned slyly. 'We'll have as many rounds together as it takes to satisfy you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan wished she had the strength to slap the grin off Gu Jiao Wu's face. A drugged Gu Jiao Wu was nothing compared to a sober Gu Jiao Wu. She finally understood the real distance between a man and woman's physical strength.

'AH...' Qiao Tan Yuan cursed softly.

Gu Jiao Wu's hand moved below Qiao Tan Yuan's waist.

‘What did you say?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan understood if she cursed Gu Jiao Wu again, she was doomed. She couldn’t overpower him, but she could turn her head away so she couldn’t see his hateful face. She looked outside the window and saw the brightly lit poles on the roads against the night sky.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t clearly see drivers passing by through the tinted windows of Gu Jiao Wu’s car, but it didn’t mean the drivers couldn’t see Gu Jiao Wu lying on top of her body.

Gu Jiao Wu sensed Qiao Tan Yuan was glaring at him. He was too satisfied to be angry. He dressed, helped her dressed and sat up.

A while later, Gu Jiao Wu drove Qiao Tan Yuan to a small town nearby.

Qiao Tan Yuan silently vowed she was going to keep her distance from Gu Jiao Wu after she returned to the Qiao Mansion.

‘Have you played enough?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Stop the car, and let me out!’

Gu Jiao Wu accelerated to Ling Hu’s home.

Gu Jiao Wu parked in front of Ling Hu’s home, Qiao Tan Yuan refused to get out of the car. He was in a good mood and refreshed. He opened the passenger door, and carried her into Ling Hu’s home.

A man opened the front door.

‘Young man, what are you doing here late at night?’ the man asked.

‘Is Ling Hu here?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘My friend injured her ankle.’

Ankle? Qiao Tan Yuan was overwhelmed by anger and pleasure, she forgot all about her injured ankle.

Gu Jiao Wu carried Qiao Tan Yuan into an inner courtyard, and put her down in front of a round table. Opposite them was a young man dressed in white clothes, and he wore a white bracelet.

Ling Hu patted Gu Jiao Wu’s shoulder.

‘Little fellow, what brings you here to see me?’ Ling Hu asked.

‘I wasn’t sure you were here,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Ling Hu laughed. ‘Then why did you stop by?’

‘My friend twisted her ankle,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know why Gu Jiao Wu avoided saying her name in the young man’s home.

‘Friend?’ Ling Hu asked.

Ling Hu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan, and his eyes saw clearly who she was.

Ling Hu crouched in front of Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Can you lift your leg for me to examine your ankle?’ Ling Hu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan hesitated, and lifted her leg.

Ling Hu examined Qiao Tan Yuan’s ankle, and looked up at Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Her ankle is twisted a little,’ Ling Hu said. ‘I’ll massage her ankle to reduce the swelling, and she’ll recover quickly.’

‘I’m sorry for troubling you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘If you keep being courteous with me then I won’t consider you a friend,’ Ling Hu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought the young man was handsome. But she didn’t think he was handsome when he massaged her ankle. At the start she felt pain then her ankle didn’t hurt anymore.

‘Thank you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Ling Hu smiled. ‘You don’t have to thank me. We’re fated to meet today. I don’t have anything to give you for our first meeting except this humble bracelet.’

Gu Jiao Wu was shocked to see Ling Hu wanted to give Qiao Tan Yuan the priceless white opal bracelet.

‘You don’t need to give me anything,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t close to Ling Hu, but he generously massaged her ankle. How could she accept a gift from Ling Hu? Besides, she didn’t want to wear a

tacky white beaded bracelet found at every souvenir shop.

‘If you don’t accept my gift, it’ll offend me,’ Ling Hu said. He looked at Gu Jiao Wu. ‘If your friend doesn’t accept my gift, it means you don’t consider me as a friend.’

‘If he’s giving you a gift, you should take it,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan gave the two strange men a dirty look, and accepted the tacky bracelet.

‘Good, good,’ Ling Hu said. ‘You two should stay, and share a meal with me.’

‘Um,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan politely followed the two strange men to the dining table. She had a feeling Ling Hu knew she and Gu Jiao Wu didn’t have dinner before visiting Ling Hu. Ling Hu had prepared food enough for three people. The prepared food tasted delicious like a chef cooked the food. She happily ate, but she didn’t understand what language Gu Jiao Wu, and Ling Hu were speaking. It wasn’t German or Italian.

After dinner, Gu Jiao Wu drove Qiao Tan Yuan to the Qiao Mansion.

‘During dinner, what language were you speaking with Ling Hu?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

One of the reasons Qiao Tan Yuan used to learn different languages was to impress Gu Jiao Wu, like German and Danish.

‘Sanskrit,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Sanskrit? Qiao Tan Yuan looked suspiciously at Gu Jiao Wu. She couldn’t step any closer to Gu Jiao Wu even if she wanted to. She didn’t understand who he was. He had many secrets he didn’t want to share with her. Like the phone he used when they were trapped in the elevator.

Qiao Tan Yuan took off the white bracelet, and passed it to Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Can you return this to your friend,’ Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘I don’t want to accept something from a stranger.’

‘Are you naive or a dummy?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘What did you say?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was too angry that she forgot she vowed not to let Gu Jiao Wu affect her moods anymore.

‘Do you know how priceless the bracelet is?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Isn’t it a cheap bracelet?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘It’s a white opal bracelet,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was shocked speechless.

‘He wore that bracelet for years,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘It’s his priceless treasure, and a charm to ward off evil.’

Gu Jiao Wu glanced at Qiao Tan Yuan’s shocked face. Ling Hu’s bracelet was sought after by many people. He was shocked too. He didn’t know why Ling Hu would generously give Qiao Tan Yuan a priceless bracelet after meeting her for the first time.

‘If I accept this priceless bracelet, do you think I should give him something in return?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘No, even if you came back to see him, you won’t see him,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Why?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘He’s a nomad and rarely at home so you won’t see him next time you visit his home,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘How did you know he was home today?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Luck,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s ankle injury was minor. But she was breast feeding Xiao Bao. Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t be relieved unless he asked Ling Hu’s opinion. He didn’t want Qiao Tan Yuan to consume unsafe medicine that could adversely affect Xiao Bao.

‘Is he a monk?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘No,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘How did you meet him?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Fate,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Fate?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t force Gu Jiao Wu to tell her if he didn’t want to. She looked out the window, she was nearly home. Suddenly she missed Xiao Bao, and was anxious to see Xiao Bao. Was Xiao Bao hungry? Did Xiao Bao cry?

‘Can you drive faster?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu listened, and sped to the Qiao Mansion.

After Gu Jiao Wu parked in front of the Qiao Mansion, Qiao Tan Yuan jumped out of the car and walked inside. He frowned, he didn’t want her to put pressure on her injured ankle. He carried the shopping bags full of clothes and toys for Xiao Bao, and walked inside.

‘Tan Yuan, why are you back home this late?’ Mrs Qiao asked. ‘Xiao Bao was crying for you. I called your phone several times, but you didn’t pick up.’

‘Mum, I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t hear her phone ring. She checked her phone, and saw more than ten miscalls.

‘Mum, I’m sorry, I didn’t hear the phone ring,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Aunty, it’s my fault,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I dragged Tan Yuan sightseeing, and drove her home late.’

‘Tan Yuan, go upstairs first,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘Xiao Bao’s still awake. She’s waiting for you.’

‘Yes mum,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and walked upstairs.

Gu Jiao Wu put the shopping bags on the sofa. Then walked toward the stairs, but Mrs Qiao stopped him.

‘Jiao Wu, I was wrong to suggest you should get back together with Tan Yuan,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘I’ve accepted you hate Tan Yuan. It’s best if you two stay separated amicably.’

Gu Jiao Wu was surprised Mrs Qiao opposed him marrying Qiao Tan Yuan again.

‘I don’t hate Tan Yuan anymore...’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘It doesn’t matter how you feel toward Tan Yuan,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘Tan Yuan doesn’t want to get back together with you. I hope you won’t come here to see Tan Yuan anymore. Can you let Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao live a peaceful life?’

‘Aunty, Tan Yuan and I have a daughter together,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If Tan Yuan takes Xiao Bao overseas, how many times a year do you think you’ll get to see them? If Tan Yuan is living with me again, aunty can see Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao how often you want to. Isn’t that a better situation?’

Mrs Qiao knew how much effort it took Qiao Tan Yuan to let go of Gu Jiao Wu. She didn’t know what Gu Jiao Wu’s real intention was, but she knew she didn’t want Gu Jiao Wu to toy with Qiao Tan Yuan and hurt Qiao Tan Yuan again.

‘Aunty, Tan Yuan and I bought these clothes and toys for Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Tan Yuan’s tired, and needs rest. Tomorrow I’ll come back to see Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao.’

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan would want to fight with him if he walked upstairs so he wanted to give her time to calm down first before reasoning with her again.

End of Chapter Fifty-Four

Related

Fifty-Five



Chapter Fifty-Five

‘Does he think he can buy big sister’s love?’ Qiao Jie asked.

Qiao Jie wasn’t impressed by the shopping bags on the sofa, and glared at Gu Jiao Wu as Gu Jiao Wu walked to the front door.

Mrs Qiao sighed. If Gu Jiao Wu’s heart was in the right place, Qiao Tan Yuan would accept him again even without receiving a single gift. She picked up the shopping bags, and walked upstairs to the nursery.

In the nursery, Qiao Tan Yuan felt guilty Xiao Bao cried for her after sunset. Mrs Chu bottle fed Xiao Bao, and coaxed Xiao Bao to sleep. Her body was sweaty and itchy. She walked to her bedroom, and took off her clothes to shower. She was startled to see Gu Jiao Wu’s kiss marks on her neck to her legs.

‘AH!’ Qiao Tan Yuan cursed Gu Jiao Wu.

Qiao Tan Yuan blamed Gu Jiao Wu, it was his fault she didn’t hear her phone ring. Usually she had a lot of breast milk to feed Xiao Bao, but Gu Jiao Wu... she sighed, and walked to the bathroom. After a hot shower, she wore a night gown before walking to her bed because she didn’t want the AH to get another opportunity to see her naked. But he wasn’t in her bedroom, only her mum was waiting on her bed.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat on the bed next to Mrs Qiao.

‘Mum, Xiao Bao’s asleep,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I know, I want to talk to you,’ Mrs Qiao said.

‘Yes?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Tan Yuan, you and Jiao Wu...’ Mrs Qiao said.

‘Mum, there’s nothing between him and I,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to hear Gu Jiao Wu’s name, she wanted to sleep and forget him.

‘Tan Yuan...’ Mrs Qiao said.

Mrs Qiao was unhappy Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to avoid Qiao Tan Yuan’s own heart. She saw Gu Jiao Wu’s kiss marks on Qiao Tan Yuan’s body, and it made her worry Gu Jiao Wu would break Qiao Tan Yuan’s heart again.

‘If Jiao Wu loves you, I’ll give my blessing to see you two back together,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘But now I believe you, he wants to get back together with you for the wrong reason. He wants to give Xiao Bao a family. If this is what you want too, I’ll accept your decision. But if you’re waiting for him to...’

‘Mum... I’m tired,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I want to sleep. Can we talk about this tomorrow?’

‘Tan Yuan...’ Mrs Qiao said.

Mrs Qiao couldn’t force Qiao Tan Yuan to face Qiao Tan Yuan’s feelings toward Gu Jiao Wu. She stood and left Qiao Tan Yuan’s bedroom.

Qiao Tan Yuan pulled the bedsheet over her body to cover the kiss marks. She slept, but couldn’t avoid Gu Jiao Wu in her sleep...

‘Tan Yuan, I love you,’ the dream Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan hugged the dream Gu Jiao Wu.

‘I love you too,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

The dream Gu Jiao Wu pushed Qiao Tan Yuan away, and snatched Xiao Bao from the cot.

‘If you love me, you need to give me Xiao Bao,’ the dream Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘No, Xiao Bao is my daughter,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Didn’t you say you love me?’ the dream Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘If you love me, you need to give everything to me, including Xiao Bao.’

The dream Gu Jiao Wu laughed, ignored Qiao Tan Yuan’s pleas and carried Xiao Bao away.

‘No...’ Qiao Tan Yuan murmured.

Qiao Tan Yuan woke up. It was a dream, but her body aches weren’t a dream. Her dream felt like a premonition. Gu Jiao Wu was using her love to get Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan rubbed her chest to calm her heart ache. In three days she could escape Gu Jiao Wu’s influence.

The oblivious Gu Jiao Wu arrived at the Gu Mansion. Everyone was asleep except Gu Jiao Wen and Tan Pan Ting were staying at the hospital with his twin nephews.

Gu Jiao Wu thought it was an eventful day. Meeting his twin nephews, helping Gu Jiao Mai face the ghost in her heart, and Qiao Tan Yuan... he lost his control with Qiao Tan Yuan. He walked to the bathroom, showered and noticed Qiao Tan Yuan’s scratch marks on his shoulders.

Gu Jiao Wu smiled. The sweet taste of Qiao Tan Yuan’s body exceeded his expectations. He didn’t know why he lost his control, but he was certain he had no regrets. He wasn’t going to let Qiao Tan Yuan leave him. Being with Qiao Tan Yuan put him in a good mood, he had let go of his resentments toward Qiao Tan Yuan. He thought their bodies were compatible, and he anticipated reuniting with Qiao Tan Yuan and raising their daughter together. Their reunion would make Gu Tian Chu happy too.

In the morning, Gu Jiao Wu woke up early and drove to the Qiao Mansion.

Gu Jiao Wu visited Xiao Bao in the nursery first. Xiao Bao was fed, and Mrs Chu was playing with Xiao Bao. He couldn’t resist holding the adorable Xiao Bao, but she cried and Mrs Chu took her from his arms. He took his frustrations to Qiao Tan Yuan’s bedroom, but he was surprised he couldn’t see Qiao Tan Yuan so he returned to the nursery.

‘Where’s Tan Yuan?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked Mrs Chu.

‘I don’t know where Miss Qiao is,’ Mrs Chu said.

Gu Jiao Wu understood Qiao Tan Yuan was avoiding him, because she was still angry at him. He would wait for her to calm down, and give her time to think about what was best for Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan saw Gu Jiao Wu's car parked in front of the Qiao Mansion early in the morning. She hid in another room to avoid him, because she didn't want to face the truth in her heart that being together with him last night gave her hope. But her dream reminded her not to let him hurt her again.

Gu Jiao Wu drove off, and Qiao Tan Yuan returned to her bedroom. She packed hers and Xiao Bao's belongings to go to Denmark, and she won't have to see Gu Jiao Wu again.

After work, Gu Jiao Wu returned to the Gu Mansion. Everyone was awake, Gu Jiao Wen and Tan Pan Ting arrived home from the hospital. His twin nephews were sleeping soundly in the new nursery built for them. Gu Jiao Wen hired two nursemaids to help take care of the baby boys.

Gu Jiao Wu noticed Tan Pan Ting gained weight on her skinny frame. Gu Jiao Wen was smiling at Tan Pan Ting and the baby boys. As a new father, he understood Gu Jiao Wen's elation.

When the baby boys were awake, Gu Jiao Wu held them and played with them. They didn't cry, and it made him think about Xiao Bao and Qiao Tan Yuan. Xiao Bao didn't let him hold her, and Qiao Tan Yuan was avoiding him. He wanted to be with Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao like how Gu Jiao Wen had Tan Pan Ting and the boys in Gu Jiao Wen's life.

Gu Jiao Wu returned to his bedroom. He was frustrated Qiao Tan Yuan was avoiding him. But he needed to be patient, and give Qiao Tan Yuan time to accept Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao belonged with him.

In the evening, during dinner at the Qiao Mansion, Qiao Tan Yuan sensed Mr Qiao and Qiao Jie were hiding a secret from her.

'Dad, what's wrong?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Mr Qiao didn't want to worry Qiao Tan Yuan since she was going to Denmark with Xiao Bao soon.

'Nothing, I'm going to miss you,' Mr Qiao said.

'Qiao Jie, tell me what happened,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Jie avoided eye contact with Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Nothing happened,’ Qiao Jie said.

‘Nothing?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She knew Qiao Jie wouldn’t avoid eye contact with her unless something was wrong. ‘What did you do?’

‘Big sister, I didn’t do anything except work for the whole year,’ Qiao Jie said.

‘Are you sure?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Um, big sister, I swear I didn’t do anything,’ Qiao Jie said.

Qiao Tan Yuan sighed. ‘Dad, don’t you trust me?’

‘It’s only a small problem,’ Mr Qiao said. ‘Qiao Jie can handle it.’

‘What small problem?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Big sister, don’t worry, I’ll resolve it,’ Qiao Jie said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t believe it was a small problem. That night she couldn’t sleep worrying about Mr Qiao and Qiao Jie.

The following morning, Qiao Tan Yuan breast fed Xiao Bao and drove to Qiao’s company headquarters.

The secretary was surprised to see Qiao Tan Yuan came to work.

‘Miss Chen, give me the internal financial reports for the last two months,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Executive Qiao... you’re still on maternity leave,’ Miss Chen said.

‘It doesn’t matter if I’m on maternal leave, I’m still responsible for managing Qiao’s company,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Hurry and show me the financial reports. Also, let me review any new contracts in the last two months.’

‘Yes Executive Qiao,’ Miss Chen said.

Two hours later, Qiao Tan Yuan slammed the reports and contracts on her office desk. She pressed the internal intercom. ‘Miss Chen, come into my office.’

Miss Chen nervously entered Qiao Tan Yuan’s office.

‘Why didn’t you inform me about this?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Executive Qiao, Manager Qiao told me that he’ll be responsible for taking care of this situation,’ Miss Chen said.

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded, and walked upstairs to Qiao Jie's office.

'Big sister, why are you at work?' Qiao Jie asked. 'You'll be leaving for Denmark soon.'

'You made a mess at work,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Do you expect I can still go to Denmark?'

Qiao Tan Yuan put a contract on Qiao Jie's desk.

'Are you a child?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Were you drunk when you signed this contract?'

'I...' Qiao Jie said.

Qiao Jie remembered he was drunk at an informal business dinner last weekend. The sexy hostess serving him gave him a lap dance, and he signed the contract while drunk.

'One million!' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You made a loss of one million! How do you expect dad to clean up your mess?'

'Big sister... I'm sorry,' Qiao Jie said. 'I made a mistake. I promise I'll fix it.'

'How are you going to fix it?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'I...' Qiao Jie said. 'I'm thinking about the solution.'

'What solution?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Jie didn't dare say he made a million dollar mistake not a billion dollar mistake.

'Big sister, you'll be going to Denmark tomorrow,' Qiao Jie said. 'You don't have to worry about this. I'll think of a solution.'

'Does everyone at the company know about this yet?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Not yet,' Qiao Jie said. 'I only told dad yesterday.'

Qiao Jie was forced to tell Mr Qiao, because he had two days left to cough up one million dollars.

'Good, keep this quiet for now,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I don't want the news to adversely affect Qiao's company shares.'

‘Big sister, what do you suggest I do?’ Qiao Jie asked.

‘I’m going to find an investor,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I want this resolved within two days.’

‘Big sister, you don’t have to get involved,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘I’ll get a loan.’

‘Qiao Jie, if you get a loan, you’ll be advertising there’s something wrong with Qiao’s company’s cash flows,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Do you think dad would worry about this if you can just get a loan?’

‘Big sister, what should I do?’ Qiao Jie asked. ‘Yesterday I looked for Tong Shang Wen and Hu Zui Ren. But they are on an overseas business trip.’

Qiao Jie didn’t dare to look for Shen Cheng, because he knew Qiao Tan Yuan would skin him if he involved Shen Cheng.

Qiao Tan Yuan was relieved at least Qiao Jie had half a brain, and didn’t involve Shen Cheng. She owed Shen Cheng too much, and didn’t want to trouble Shen Cheng anymore. Then she thought about Du Lei Xin.

‘Qiao Jie, next time use your brain,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If you continue to be reckless, you’re not only harming yourself but you’ll be harming Qiao’s company’s reputation and the livelihoods of Qiao’s company’s employees. You need to take your managerial duties seriously.’

‘Big sister, I understand,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘I promise, next time I won’t make the same mistake.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was speechless. Did Qiao Jie plan to make a different big business mistake? She sighed, and walked to the door.

‘Big sister, who are you meeting?’ Qiao Jie asked.

‘You don’t need to worry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Jie pressed Mr Qiao’s direct line on the intercom. ‘Dad, big sister knows.’

A while later, Qiao Tan Yuan entered Du Lei Xin’s office.

‘Are you meeting a client soon?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Du Lei Xin was surprised to see Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Welcome,’ Du Lei Xin said.

Du Lei Xin remembered Gu Jiao Wu mentioned Gu Jiao Wu didn't let Qiao Tan Yuan drink coffee and tea. He called his secretary, and his secretary brought two glasses of water into his office and closed the door after leaving.

'Tan Yuan, you should drink water,' Du Lei Xin said. 'I didn't think you would want to drink coffee or tea.'

Qiao Tan Yuan sat in front of Du Lei Xin's desk. She was impressed he paid attention to detail.

'You know how to be attentive,' Qiao Tan Yuan praised. 'But I didn't come to see you today to drink water with you.'

'Um, I know,' Du Lei Xin said and smiled. 'Why are you here?'

'A private loan,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Tong Shang Wen and Hu Zui Ren are overseas. You're my last resort.'

'Um,' Du Lei Xin said. He didn't need to ask why Qiao Tan Yuan didn't ask Shen Cheng for a loan. 'I heard you're leaving for Denmark. Why are you still working?'

'A small family situation,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'We're friends. You can tell me directly what you want in return. I trust you won't leak news about this. If you can't help me, I'll think of a different solution.'

'How much do you need?' Du Lei Xin asked.

'One million,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Du Lei Xin coughed. 'I thought Bai Hua Qiao franchise shops were thriving.'

'Um, they are,' Qiao Tan Yuan said proudly. 'But sometimes there's a small bump along the way.'

'Um,' Du Lei Xin said. He suspected Qiao Jie was the small bump. 'Honestly loaning you one million usually isn't a big deal. But I've committed five million to a new investment. It'll be hard for me to take one million out of the new investment even if it's short term.'

Qiao Tan Yuan believed Du Lei Xin was being honest, because Du Lei Xin had good work ethics.

'I'm sorry for disturbing you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'll leave.'

‘Wait,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘Why are you always in a rush?’

‘You know what I’m like,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m the type that can’t sleep well at night if I can’t fix a problem.’

‘A few days ago, I met a client who was interested about my new investment,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘I can meet my client again, and ask if my client is still interested. Then taking a million out short term wouldn’t be an issue.’

‘How long will your client take to make a decision?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘I’m having dinner with my client tonight,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘Tomorrow I’ll let you know my client’s decision.’

End of Chapter Fifty-Five

Related

Fifty-Six



Chapter Fifty-Six

‘I’ll call you tomorrow,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan left Du Lei Xin’s office, and Du Lei Xin’s secretary brought two cups of coffee into his office.

Gu Jiao Wu walked into Du Lei Xin’s office from the adjoining room.

‘Big brother, do you think I should help Tan Yuan?’ Du Lei Xin asked.

Gu Jiao Wu sat on the same chair Qiao Tan Yuan occupied a moment ago. He drank a sip of coffee and smiled.

‘Why bother asking if you know my answer?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Do you want me to turn her down so she’ll knock on your door?’ Du Lei Xin asked.

‘You’re a real charmer,’ Gu Jiao Wu said sarcastically. ‘Why don’t you use your charm on Jiao Mai?’

‘Jiao Mai is different to Tan Yuan,’ Du Lei Xin said.

‘If I was you I would enlist Chen Ting Yu’s help,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You don’t understand,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘If Jiao Mai is pressured into being with me, she wouldn’t be happy.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn't understand what Du Lei Xin was thinking. He and Du Lei Xin were two different types of men. If Du Lei Xin loved Gu Jiao Mai then Du Lei Xin should do whatever it took to be with Gu Jiao Mai. He wanted to be with Qiao Tan Yuan. He knew Qiao Tan Yuan was avoiding him, but he was confident he could find ways to get her to take the initiative to seek him.

Du Lei Xin didn't know how Gu Jiao Wu felt toward Qiao Tan Yuan. But he knew Gu Jiao Wu was the father of Qiao Tan Yuan's daughter. Gu Jiao Wu wouldn't leave Qiao's company in the lurch. Even if Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan shared a daughter, he knew Gu Jiao Wu still didn't have closure from Gu Jiao Wu's previous relationship with Chu Da otherwise Gu Jiao Wu would have been interested in Qiao Tan Yuan years ago.

'Jokes aside, what's your next move regarding Tan Yuan?' Du Lei Xin asked.

'Didn't you have dinner plans with your client?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'If you don't get moving, you'll be late.'

'OK, I'll help,' Du Lei Xin said. 'But you shouldn't regret letting go of this opportunity.'

'I don't have any regrets,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

At the Qiao Mansion, Qiao Tan Yuan walked into the nursery. Mrs Chu was changing Xiao Bao's nappy. Xiao Bao's lips were pouting, she knew it meant Xiao Bao was hungry. She breast fed Xiao Bao, and Xiao Bao slept.

Afterward Qiao Tan Yuan sat on the bed, turned on her laptop and searched online about the unknown company Qiao Jie carelessly invested in while drunk. The company was a start-up company, and the value of their total assets were worth less than one million so Qiao's company wouldn't recover their investment if the company Qiao Jie invested in declared bankruptcy. She looked at hers and Xiao Bao's packed bags, because of Qiao Jie's mess she didn't know what to do about the Denmark flight tickets. She opened another window, and searched for the airline customer contact number.

Gu Jiao Wu quietly walked into Qiao Tan Yuan's bedroom. She was sitting on the bed, and frowning at the laptop screen. He knew she was worried about Qiao's company, but he would act like he didn't know what happened. When he was two steps in front of the bed, she quickly closed the window screens on the

laptop and looked at him suspiciously.

‘How did you come in here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan asked her family and Mrs Chu not to let Gu Jiao Wu into their home.

‘I walked,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan slammed the laptop screen down. Gu Jiao Wu always knew how to make her frustrated.

‘Get out,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Is Qiao’s company diversifying?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked and sat on the bed next to Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Has nothing to do with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If there’s nothing else, get out and let me sleep.’

‘Don’t you have anything you want to say to me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I don’t have anything I want to say to you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Even if Qiao Tan Yuan had to cancel her flight tickets and was worried about Qiao’s company, she wouldn’t give Gu Jiao Wu a chance to blackmail her.

‘Are you sure?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I’m sure,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu’s lips were coming toward Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips so she sat further away from him.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, don’t you need to work overtime?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s white night gown hugged her body. The body Gu Jiao Wu remembered tasted sweet in his car. He held her face, and kissed her lips.

Qiao Tan Yuan recognised the lust in Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes while he was kissing her. It was the same the same way he looked at her in his car, she blushed and pushed his chest.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, get out,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, besides those words, do you know how to say other words?’

Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘If you don’t want to leave then I’ll leave,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

There were plenty of rooms in the Qiao Mansion. If Gu Jiao Wu liked Qiao Tan Yuan’s bedroom, she wouldn’t care if he spent the rest of his life in her bedroom without her in it.

Qiao Tan Yuan reached for the laptop, Gu Jiao Wu lifted her onto his lap and wrapped her legs around his waist. He wanted to kiss her lips, but she turned her head to the side and his lips landed on her cheek.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, it’s wrong for a man to force himself on a woman,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘You’re right,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Tan Yuan... I haven’t forced myself on a woman before...’

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips. She clamped her mouth closed, and withheld her tongue from him. His hand on her waist moved down her thigh, and under her white night gown. She opened her mouth to protest, and his tongue reunited with her tongue.

Qiao Tan Yuan dug her fingernails into her palms to force herself not to immerse herself in Gu Jiao Wu’s kisses. But her heart defied her will power. She could feel his hot body even through their clothes. Suddenly she heard Xiao Bao’s cry. She pushed his chest, and would have fallen on the floor if he wasn’t holding her waist.

Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t happy to let go of Qiao Tan Yuan’s soft body on his lap. But he let her push him back on the bed to go to the nursery.

Gu Jiao Wu waited for his body to cool down before he walked to the nursery. Xiao Bao was crying, Mrs Chu changed Xiao Bao’s nappy and Xiao Bao raised her small hands toward Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Does Xiao Bao want mummy?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked and smiled.

Qiao Tan Yuan was at work most of the day, but Xiao Bao was always in her heart. She held Xiao Bao in her arms, and Xiao Bao’s small hands reached for her breasts.

‘Xiao Bao, you drank mummy’s milk before,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She held Xiao Bao’s small hand. ‘Are you still hungry?’ Xiao Bao’s face rubbed against her chest. ‘Yes, yes, Xiao Bao’s hungry. Mummy will feed you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan turned around, and carried Xiao Bao to her bedroom. Gu Jiao Wu was leaning against the nursery door, and the smile on her face disappeared.

‘Why haven’t you left?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

End of Chapter Fifty-Six

Related

Fifty-Seven



Chapter Fifty-Seven

Bond?

It was hard for Gu Jiao Wu to accept the disparity between the Qiao Tan Yuan's bond with Xiao Bao and his bond with Xiao Bao. Xiao Bao was attached to Qiao Tan Yuan, but Xiao Bao would cry in his arms.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to waste her energy fighting with Gu Jiao Wu, and she didn't want him to see her breast feeding Xiao Bao again. She carried Xiao Bao past him to her bedroom, locked the door and breast fed Xiao Bao.

Xiao Bao fell asleep in Qiao Tan Yuan's arms. She smiled and wished adults were easily satisfied, eating and sleeping like Xiao Bao. She carried Xiao Bao back to the nursery, and didn't care where Gu Jiao Wu disappeared to.

When Qiao Tan Yuan laid back on her bed, she thought about the price she would have to pay if Du Lei Xin gave Qiao's company the short term loan. One million wasn't petty cash, but she would rather owe Du Lei Xin than Shen Cheng. She didn't hear news about Sheng Cheng, she hoped Shen Cheng was doing well and regretted using Shen Cheng. It was all Gu Jiao Wu's fault. If Gu Jiao Wu stopped pressuring her... she shook her head. She needed to stop thinking about Gu Jiao Wu, and not let Gu Jiao Wu get to her.

If Qiao Jie knew how to use a brain, Qiao Tan Yuan would be overseas with Xiao Bao and out of Gu Jiao Wu's reach. If she kept her distance from Gu Jiao Wu

then he couldn't break her heart again. That night she had another sleepless night.

In the morning, Qiao Tan Yuan went to work and called Du Lei Xin.

'Lei Xin, what did your client say?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'I'm sorry I can't help you,' Du Lei Xin said. 'My client said I declined their offer last time, and invested money in a different investment.'

'I understand,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. Even if she understood the business world, she was still disappointed. 'I'm sorry for troubling you, I'll look for someone else to help-'

'Wait,' Du Lei Xin said. He knew Qiao Tan Yuan would hang up if he didn't interrupt her. 'I can't help you, but there is someone who can help you.'

'Who?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Gu Jiao Wu,' Du Lei Xin said.

Qiao Tan Yuan would rather hear Du Lei Xin suggest Shen Cheng than Gu Jiao Wu.

'No, I don't need his help,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Why not?' Du Lei Xin asked. 'You gave birth to his daughter. He's not cold blooded. If you open your mouth, he would help you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan gripped the phone. 'Thank you, but I don't need his help.'

Qiao Tan Yuan hung up the phone. She didn't want to listen to Du Lei Xin persuade her to change her mind.

Qiao Tan Yuan's heart was racing as fast as her anger overflowing. Ask Gu Jiao Wu for help? The price was too high. He would blackmail her into marrying him again, and it would give him the right to have custody of Xiao Bao. Afterward he would break her heart, divorce her again and shut her out of Xiao Bao's life.

Qiao Tan Yuan diverted her anger into productivity. She called Hu Zui Ren, he said he would be back in town soon. Then she called Qiao's company lawyers, and discussed if there were any contract clauses to void the contract. But lawyers informed her that the contract was binding because Qiao Jie was in a

position to authorise the transaction, and he signed the contract using the Qiao's company's seal.

If Qiao Jie wasn't Qiao Tan Yuan's little brother, she would strangle him. Qiao's company's assets were valued at one hundred million, but Qiao's company's shares could plummet because of a one million dollar sink hole investment. How did Qiao Jie expect to keep his position if their employees lost faith in his decision making ability to help lead Qiao's company in the right direction?

At lunch time, Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to go home to breast feed Xiao Bao. On the way out of her office, she saw Qiao Jie walking toward her office with a young man she didn't recognise.

'Big sister,' Qiao Jie greeted.

'Qiao Jie, did you need something?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Big sister, I want you to meet Zheng Quan's company's CEO,' Qiao Jie said.

Qiao Tan Yuan assessed the sink hole company's CEO. He looked under thirty, tall, had a straight nose and was smiling condescendingly at her like women were inferior. Yes, he looked like a narcissistic sink hole. The type of man she hated the most. He was the one who set up the trap for Qiao Jie to fall in, it made him more repulsive in her eyes.

The young man sensed Qiao Tan Yuan's disapproval. 'Who is she?'

'My big sister, Executive Qiao of Qiao's company,' Qiao Jie said proudly.

'Oh,' the young man said. He thought Qiao Tan Yuan was another simpleton woman. 'Hello, I'm Quan Zheng Hao.'

Quan? Qiao Tan Yuan hid her surprise. The sink hole had a redeeming silver lining. She was relieved if Quan Zheng Ha failed there was someone to clean up his mess.

'Qiao Jie, I thought the money transfer was scheduled for tomorrow,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'That's right,' Qiao Jie said. 'CEO Quan came here to treat us lunch to mark the start of our collaboration.'

'Lunch?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She didn't hide her disdain in front of Quan

Zheng Hao. 'Wouldn't that be too premature? If he believes he is in the position to treat us lunch then he wouldn't need our investment. He shouldn't waste time treating us, and spend it on making profitable products, and give us a decent return on our investment. When I see his success on our bank statements then he'll be in a position to treat us lunch.'

Quan Zheng Hao's interest in Qiao Tan Yuan inclined.

'I have confidence my company's products will be successful on the market,' Quan Zheng Hao said.

'Qiao Jie, you two should stop standing idle here and go find ways to make profits,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to see the hood winked Qiao Jie's face anymore. She walked to the elevators. She didn't know why Qiao Jie associated with someone like Quan Zheng Hao who was all air and no substance. One day left, where was she going to find one million?

Quan Zheng Hao watched Qiao Tan Yuan walk to the elevators.

'Your big sister's impatience is impressive,' Quan Zheng Hao said.

Qiao Jie laughed. 'Um, impressive indeed.'

'Is she married?' Quan Zheng Hao asked.

'Married and divorced,' Qiao Jie said. He looked down at Quan Zheng Hao. 'If you want to pursue my big sister, hurry up and make a profit or my big sister will kill me because you're a liability.'

'Relax, my company's products are close to the implementation phase, and the products will be profitable,' Quan Zheng Hao said. He patted Qiao Jie's shoulder. 'Then you can sit back, and count money.'

'I hope so,' Qiao Jie said.

Qiao Jie was scared if Quan Zheng Hao failed, he would become a leper at Qiao's company.

At the Qiao Mansion, Qiao Tan Yuan breast fed and played with Xiao Bao.

'Tan Yuan, you don't have to worry about Qiao's company,' Mrs Qiao said. 'If

you want to go to Denmark, you should go.'

'Mum, am I not a member of the Qiao Household?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'How can I do nothing when Qiao's company is in trouble?'

'But...' Mrs Qiao said.

Mrs Qiao didn't want to see Qiao Tan Yuan exhausted taking care Xiao Bao, and Qiao's company's problems.

'Mum, I'll stay here until everything is resolved,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Tan Yuan...' Mrs Qiao said.

Mrs Qiao didn't know what to do with the stubborn Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Go and do what you need to do,' Mrs Qiao said. 'Aunty and I will take care of Xiao Bao.'

'Thank you mum,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked to the car, and sped back to her office. On the way to her office she cursed Qiao Jie for taking a risky one million dollar gamble on Quan Zheng Hao. She was too preoccupied cursing them that she almost ran a red light if she didn't brake suddenly.

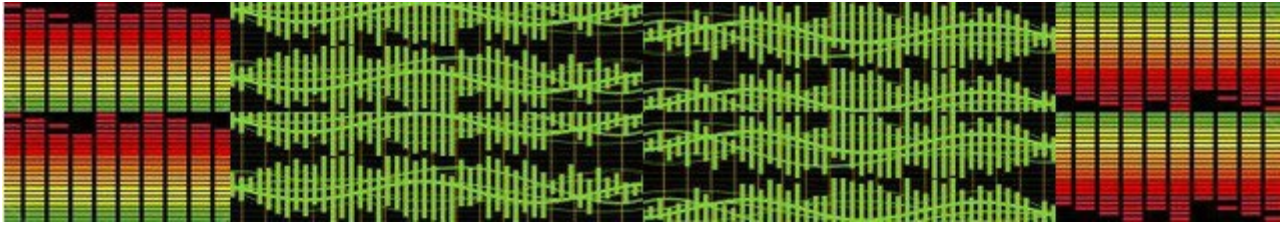
Qiao Tan Yuan looked out the window, and noticed a familiar black car was parked in front of building. Gu Jiao Wu's black car? It was his fault she was too familiar with the interior of his black car.

A second later, a young woman stepped out of Gu Jiao Wu's car... Chu Da?

End of Chapter Fifty-Seven

Related

Fifty-Eight



Chapter Fifty-Eight

Chu Da?

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't see Gu Jiao Wu's face, but she could see Chu Da smiling and waving bye to Gu Jiao Wu. Gu Jiao Wu nodded his head at Chu Da and drove off.

The cars behind Qiao Tan Yuan honked. She drove on auto pilot to her office while she processed what she witnessed a moment ago. Gu Jiao Wu and Chu Da? After Xiao Bao was born, she forgot she saw Chu Da together with Gu Jiao Wu at the cafe. She laughed at her naivety. Gu Jiao Wu loved Chu Da deeply. Why would Gu Jiao Wu let go of Chu Da?

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know why Gu Jiao Wu would toy with her if Gu Jiao Wu was together with Chu Da unless... she remembered Chu Da had ovarian cancer. Even if Chu Da was in remission, Chu Da couldn't have children. Gu Jiao Wu was too cruel. Gu Jiao Wu would resort to seducing a woman he hated to give anything to the woman he loved. Gu Jiao Wu wanted to give Xiao Bao to Chu Da.

Qiao Tan Yuan braked suddenly. The car behind her swerved to the side of the road to avoid hitting her car.

'You MF, are you blind?' the driver next to Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Do you know how to f'g drive? You could have killed someone!'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know how she managed to park at her VIP parking or how long she sat in the car. She thought about how Gu Jiao Wu kissed her, and his insistence for them to get back together. It all made sense. Chu Da was back, and Gu Jiao Wu wanted to make Chu Da happy by giving Chu Da the opportunity to raise Xiao Bao, and having Xiao Bao call Chu Da mum.

Qiao Tan Yuan's body was shaking, and the familiar cold feeling in her heart

stirred, and slowly cracked again. Gu Jiao Wu's cruelty crumbled her heart to dust. Did Gu Jiao Wu hate her that much? Hate her enough to use her body, and steal Xiao Bao to make another woman happy.

Hopelessness washed over Qiao Tan Yuan's broken heart. Her eyes and nose stung, but she suppressed her tears. She took a deep breath, and chanted at her reflection in the rear mirror... 'Qiao Tan Yuan, don't degrade yourself any lower...'

Qiao Tan Yuan was done with degrading herself. Whatever happened less than a day ago was dead to her. She was going to seize the start of a new day, and Gu Jiao Wu would never have another chance to hurt her again.

Qiao Tan Yuan's first priority for the new day was to resolve Qiao's company immediate problems. She opened the car door, walked into the headquarters building and took the elevator to her office.

Quan Zheng Hao was on his way out of Qiao's company's headquarters. He was surprised to see Qiao Tan Yuan blindly walk past him. For a brief moment there was pain and despair in her eyes, but a second later her eyes looked cold and determined. He realised Qiao Tan Yuan was an intriguing woman, and was happy he would have opportunities in the future to spend time with Qiao Tan Yuan.

Late in the afternoon, Qiao Tan Yuan was finalising her plan of attack to secure Qiao's company's future. If she wasn't worried about how Xiao Bao was at home, she would have stayed back at work even later.

When Qiao Tan Yuan arrived home, Mr Qiao felt guilty he off loaded Qiao Jie's mess to Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Tan Yuan, you don't need to worry about Qiao's company anymore,' Mr Qiao said. 'Let me deal with the consequences.'

'Dad, if you and Qiao Jie told me earlier than it would have given me more time to figure out a plan to salvage the situation,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Why did Qiao Jie leave it to the last minute to find a solution?'

'Yes, yes, yes,' Qiao Jie said. 'Big sister is right. It's all my fault. You can lecture me all you want later. Have you come up with a solution?'

‘I’ve locked in five hundred thousand dollars,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Tomorrow I’ll get a loan.’

‘A loan?’ Qiao Jie asked.

‘Getting a loan won’t be a problem now,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Big sister, didn’t you advise me not to get a loan yesterday?’ Qiao Jie asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was confident even if news of what the loan was for was leaked, Qiao’s company would still thrive after the public found out who Quan Zheng Hao’s father was.

‘Qiao Jie, you don’t have to worry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I know what I’m doing.’

Mr Qiao and Qiao Jie trusted Qiao Tan Yuan’s decision.

The following morning, Qiao Tan Yuan went to the city’s largest bank and applied for a five hundred thousand dollar loan. She used ten percent of Qiao’s company’s shares as a guarantee. After negotiating with the bank, the bank approved the loan.

Qiao Tan Yuan returned to her office where Qiao Jie was waiting to suck up to her.

‘Big sister, you’re a genius,’ Qiao Jie praised.

‘Qiao Jie, you better monitor Zheng Quan’s company’s progress closely,’ Qiao Tan Yuan warned. ‘You’ve risked one million of the Qiao’s company’s money not one hundred thousand dollars.’

‘Yes, yes,’ Qiao Jie said. He was still in awe of Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘Yesterday the uncles lectured me too. Today uncle Chu praised big sister in front of dad. Uncle Chu said big sister’s problem solving skills are impressive.’

‘Qiao Jie, don’t leave anything to the last minute again,’ Qiao Tan Yuan warned. ‘Prepare yourself for tomorrow’s press conference I asked Miss Chen to setup for Qiao’s company.’

‘Press conference?’ Qiao Jie asked. ‘What for?’

‘What else?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘By tomorrow the public will find out Qiao’s

company is diversifying their products, and invested a million dollars in Zheng Quan's company. Afterward Qiao's company shares will boom.'

'Big sister is indeed impressive,' Qiao Jie praised.

'You can save your kiss ass words,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Go notify Zheng Quan's company to prepare product samples for tomorrow's press conference.'

'Um, I'll call Quan Zheng Hao,' Qiao Jie said.

'How did you meet him?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Through a mutual friend,' Qiao Jie. 'I've known him for two months, he's alright. A week ago he treated me to dinner, and I agreed to invest in his company.'

'Um, you better pray he can make money for Qiao's company,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'If not, I'll sell you to repay the bank loan.'

'Big sister, am I only worth five hundred thousand dollars?' Qiao Jie protested.

'Um, I don't know if you're even worth that much,' Qiao Tan Yuan teased. 'You're such a trouble maker. Even I wouldn't want to buy you.'

'Big sister...' Qiao Jie said. 'Alright, I'll get back to work. If I stand here all day with you, you won't stop goading me.'

Qiao Tan Yuan patted Qiao Jie's shoulder affectionately, and walked into her office. She didn't expect Gu Jiao Wu to be waiting for her in her office. But she didn't let Gu Jiao Wu see how much he hurt her. She composed herself, and turned around to leave her office.

Gu Jiao Wu captured Qiao Tan Yuan's arm.

End of Chapter Fifty-Eight

Related

Fifty-Nine



Chapter Fifty-Nine

‘Did you get a loan?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu received news Qiao Tan Yuan would rather risk Qiao’s company shares than come to him for help.

‘Why?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Why not?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked coldly. ‘Taking loans for new ventures is a common business transaction.’

‘Why didn’t you tell me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

It didn’t matter how much Qiao Tan Yuan needed, whether one million or one billion dollars, Gu Jiao Wu would find the money for her. But she refused to ask for his help.

‘Mr Gu,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She pulled her arm out of Gu Jiao Wu’s hold, and took a step back. ‘We’re divorced. Why do I need to tell you about my business?’

Gu Jiao Wu sensed Qiao Tan Yuan’s attitude toward him was different than the last time he visited her and Xiao Bao. Although she didn’t want to see him, she didn’t treat him coldly like he was a stranger. He hated seeing her distance herself from him.

‘What happened?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu wanted to know why Qiao Tan Yuan suddenly treated him like a stranger.

‘I told you, my business has nothing to do with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan loved Gu Jiao Wu, but she wasn’t going to let him use her as a baby maker machine. She wouldn’t let him hurt her again, and take her daughter to give to another woman. She didn’t respect herself enough, but she wasn’t an imbecile. The Gu Jiao Wu standing in front of her wasn’t worthy of her love. She would be an imbecile to let him stay close to her, and hurt her again.

‘I can help you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was certain something happened. Why else would Qiao Tan Yuan treat him differently than usual.

‘Thank you for the offer but I don’t need your help,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘It’s not in your best interest to keep being stubborn and reckless,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You don’t have to worry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Zheng Quan’s company isn’t established in the market place. But I’m confident their products will sell, and be a profitable investment for Qiao’s company.’

Even if Qiao Tan Yuan thought there was a fifty per cent chance Zheng Quan’s company would prosper, but she would act one hundred percent confident in

front of Gu Jiao Wu so he couldn't look down on her.

'Big sister is right,' Qiao Jie said.

Qiao Jie heard Gu Jiao Wu's voice, and walked into Qiao Tan Yuan's office.

'Mr Gu, thank you for taking an interest in Qiao's company,' Qiao Jie said. 'Like big sister said, we made a good investment.'

Gu Jiao Wu only looked at Qiao Tan Yuan. 'Qiao Tan Yuan, can we talk privately?'

'I have nothing to say to you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Gu Jiao Wu, we're divorced. In the future you and I should live our own separate lives. I hope you won't come to see me anymore. Xiao Bao, is my daughter and I won't give her to anyone, including you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan hated Gu Jiao Wu toying with her while he was with another woman. She thought at least the cold hearted Gu Jiao Wu was better than the AH Gu Jiao Wu standing on two boats.

Gu Jiao Wu saw how much Qiao Tan Yuan hated him before she walked out of her office. He chased after her to get her to tell him what happened to make her hate him. But Qiao Jie stood in his way.

'Gu Jiao Wu, you heard big sister,' Qiao Jie said. 'She wants to move on with her life. You should do the same, and stay away from her.'

Gu Jiao Wu was surprised at Qiao Jie's disrespectful tone of voice. He watched Qiao Jie disappear with Qiao Tan Yuan. He didn't know what he did to deserve their hate. His phone rang, and distracted his thoughts.

'Um, I'll be there soon,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

In the evening, Qiao Tan Yuan returned home, and breast fed Xiao Bao. She stroked Xiao Bao's face that looked exactly like Gu Jiao Wu. It made her scared Gu Jiao Wu would do anything to get Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan reminded herself she didn't need to be scared of Gu Jiao Wu. As long as she didn't let him near her, and give him an opportunity to hurt her again.

'Xiao Bao, you're mummy's little treasure,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Mummy is

going to protect you, and not let anyone harm you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan silently cursed the AH Gu Jiao Wu. If he had Chu Da then he should stay away from her. In her eyes, he was a stranger.

The following morning at nine, a press conference was held in the lobby of Qiao's company's headquarters.

Qiao Tan Yuan wore a sky blue dress under a black jacket at the press conference. A hair stylist braided her long hair, and left hair strands on the side of her cheeks.

Qiao Tan Yuan saw Qiao Jie and Quan Zheng Hao walked into the lobby. Qiao Jie looked taller than usual in a white suit, and Quan Zheng Huo wore a black suit confidently.

'Hello Executive Qiao,' Quan Zheng Hao greeted.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't shake Quan Zheng Hao's offered hand. She nodded her head politely, and looked at Qiao Jie.

'Qiao Jie, go see if Manager Li of the PR Department has prepared everything,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Yes big sister,' Qiao Jie said and went to look for Manager Li.

'Mr Quan, I don't know why you targeted Qiao's company,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'But since we have a work contract, I hope your company's employees will work diligently to make quality and profitable products. Otherwise I'll show you what happens if you mess with Qiao's company.'

'Executive Qiao, your harsh words have injured my heart,' Quan Zheng Hao said. He looked up and down Qiao Tan Yuan's body. She looked beautiful in the blue dress. 'I wanted to collaborate with Qiao's company, and to have a profitable working relationship. Why else would I choose Qiao's company?'

'That's your business,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She wasn't gullible like Qiao Jie. 'I only want to know about profits and losses.'

Quan Zheng Hao could see Qiao Tan Yuan didn't trust him. He stepped closer to her, and sniffed her.

'Executive Qiao, you're the definition of a beautiful rose,' Quan Zheng Hao

said. 'Your beauty attracts men to you, but they're scared to get too close because of the thorns on your body.'

'Mr Quan, you're the definition of a carnivorous flower,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Quan Zheng Hao laughed, and wrapped an arm around Qiao Tan Yuan's waist.

'Executive Qiao, I'm interested in you,' Quan Zheng Hao said. 'Let's go to dinner together after the press conference.'

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Quan Zheng Hao's arrogant face, and patted his neck.

'Mr Quan, if you want to eat human flesh, go find another human to eat,' Qiao Tan Yuan warned. 'I'm not edible, one bite and you'll be choked to death.'

Qiao Tan Yuan's soothing warning words floated into Quan Zheng Hao's ears. But he was focused on her gentle breath, and sweet body scent. He held her waist tighter and smiled.

'I'm not scared of choking to death,' Quan Zheng Hao whispered in Qiao Tan Yuan's ear. 'Especially being choked to death by a beautiful rose.'

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Quan Zheng Hao's smooth voice sounded like a TV host's voice. Suddenly Quan Zheng Hao spun her around to stand behind Quan Zheng Hao, and she saw Gu Jiao Wu stood in front of them. Gu Jiao Wu also wore a black suit, she admitted Gu Jiao Wu always looked tall and handsome in a suit.

Gu Jiao Wu glared at Quan Zheng Hao who was holding onto Qiao Tan Yuan's waist, and he fisted his hands.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to move out of Quan Zheng Hao's hold, but Quan Zheng Hao refused to let go of her waist. She glared at Quan Zheng Hao, and he smiled in return.

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan and Quan Zheng Hao were exchanging loving glances, and made his heart uncomfortable.

Miss Chen entered the lobby, and saw Qiao Tan Yuan's predicament.

'Executive Qiao, it's almost time to start the press conference,' Miss Chen said.

'Um,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s waist was freed, and she followed Miss Chen.

Gu Jiao Wu grabbed Qiao Tan Yuan’s arm. ‘Who is he?’

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t understand why Gu Jiao Wu sounded jealous. What was there for him to be jealous about? Her life was none of his business.

‘It has nothing to do with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She smiled, freed her arm and looked at Gu Jiao Wu as if he was a stranger. ‘Mr Gu, this is Qiao’s company not Gu’s company.’

End of Chapter Fifty-Nine

Related

Sixty



Chapter Sixty

‘Wait for me,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t turn around, and walked to the platform.

Gu Jiao Wu glared at Quan Zheng Hao chasing after Qiao Tan Yuan. He took out his phone, gave instructions to his assistant and walked to the VIP seating area.

The reporters and cameramen thought they were interviewing and filming three stars, two handsome men and a beautiful starlet.

‘CEO Quan are you married?’ a reporter asked.

‘No,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. He looked at Qiao Tan Yuan, and smiled. ‘But I have someone I like.’

The reporters and cameramen looked in Qiao Tan Yuan’s direction. Qiao Tan Yuan was embarrassed, Quan Zheng Hao’s declaration wasn’t scripted. But she quickly composed herself and smiled at the audience.

‘Executive Qiao are you married?’ a reporter asked.

‘I’m...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘She’s single,’ Quan Zheng Hao interrupted. ‘I’m pursuing Executive Qiao.’

‘Oh...’ the audience said together.

‘Doesn’t CEO Quan and Executive Qiao look like an attractive husband and wife?’ a reporter asked.

‘Yes, yes...’ the audience said.

Qiao Tan Yuan picked up the microphone, and looked at the audience.

‘Today I have good news to announce,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I hope everyone here can spread the good news. Bai Hua Qiao’s stores are proud to announce they are collaborating with Zheng Quan’s company to develop a new product line. After the press conference, I organised a buffet for everyone to say thank you for coming here today.’

‘Oh...’ the audience said together and clapped.

Gu Jiao Wu sat in his seat, and silently watched Qiao Tan Yuan confidently introduce Zheng Quan company’s product samples. She was only momentarily flustered when a reporter asked her if she was married before composing herself, and directing the audience to the purpose she held the press conference. He didn’t see that side of her before. Lately he realised there were many sides to her that he didn’t see in the past. The woman on the platform was different to the woman in his distorted memories. Her confidence made her look more beautiful in his eyes.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t glance at Gu Jiao Wu once from the start to the end of the press conference. It wasn’t important if she purposely ignored him, because soon he would make her take the initiative to seek him.

Qiao Tan Yuan returned to her office after the press conference. She was about to close the door, but Quan Zheng Hao walked into her office.

‘Mr Quan, how could you joke insensitively during the press conference?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Joke?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked. ‘What did I joke about?’

‘You said I’m single and you’re pursuing me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t need to be experienced with men to see Quan Zheng Hao was a player.

‘Aren’t you single?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked. ‘Aren’t I pursuing you?’

‘I’m...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Quan Zheng Hao stepped closer to Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘I like you and I want to pursue you,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘A pity, I hate you and I’ll never accept being with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan hated cocky players like Quan Zheng Hao the most.

‘I’m not going to give up on you,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘Do you know how much I’m attracted to you?’

‘I’m sure Qiao Jie would have told you I’m a divorced woman,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘So what?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked. ‘As long as I like a woman, I don’t care if she’s divorced or married. I’ll find a way to be with her.’

‘I’m also a single mum,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘And you’re not worthy to be my daughter’s father.’

Quan Zheng Hao was surprised then he smiled brightly.

‘How can you be sure if you don’t give me a chance to prove I can be a good father?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked.

‘What’s important right now is I have work to do,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I won’t escort you out.’

Qiao Tan Yuan would never forget Quan Zheng Hao dared to setup a trap for Qiao Jie to fall into.

Quan Zheng Hao received a call, and reluctantly left Qiao Tan Yuan’s office. Immediately after, Qiao Jie ran into Qiao Tan Yuan’s office.

‘Big sister, you were right,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘Qiao’s company’s share price increased by two percent, and it’s still increasing.’

‘Um, it’s within my expectations,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Qiao Jie, go visit Zheng Quan’s company and check up on their progress.’

‘Yes, yes,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘I believe Zheng Quan’s company’s products will be ready for the market soon.’

Qiao Tan Yuan doubted she misjudged Quan Zheng Hao, she didn't believe he was a reliable person.

'Big sister, do you believe Quan Zheng Hao really likes you and wants to pursue you?' Qiao Jie asked.

'No, but it's not important,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Big sister doesn't think it's important but mum will think it's important,' Qiao Jie said. He pointed at Qiao Tan Yuan's phone. 'I bet it's mum calling you know.'

'Get back to work,' Qiao Tan Yuan said and answered her phone.

'Executive Qiao, the bank's representative, Mr Zhang called and said the bank cancelled the loan,' Miss Chen said. 'How is Qiao's company going to pay Zheng Quan's company the outstanding amount?'

Qiao Tan Yuan gripped the phone.

'What happened?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Mr Zhang didn't say why,' Miss Chen said.

'Um, I understand,' Qiao Tan Yuan said and hung up the phone.

Qiao Tan Yuan was suspicious why Zhang Hang approved the bank loan a day ago, but suddenly cancelled the loan.

Qiao Tan Yuan called Zhang Hang's work number, and asked him why the loan was cancelled.

'I'm sorry Executive Qiao,' Zhang Hang said. 'You'll need to find another bank for the loan.'

'Why?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'I'm sorry it's a problem I can't resolve,' Zhang Hang said.

Zhang Hang hung up the phone before Qiao Tan Yuan could ask him what the problem was.

Qiao Tan Yuan called other reputable banks, and she even offered twenty percent of Qiao's company's shares as a guarantee, but all the banks she called apologised and wouldn't tell her who pressured them to decline the loan.

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn't going to give up, she picked up her car key and drove to Zhang Hang's office.

End of Chapter Sixty

Related

Sixty-One



Chapter Sixty-One

Qiao Tan Yuan barged into Zhang Hang's office.

Zhang Hang signalled his secretary to close the door.

'Executive Qiao, what brings you here?' Zhang Hang asked and gestured for Qiao Tan Yuan to sit.

'I'm not staying long,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She was in no mood to sit. 'Tell me who's pressuring you to turn your back on ten percent of Qiao's company?'

'Executive Qiao, instead of coming here to interrogate me, why don't you think about who you offended,' Zhang Hang said.

'Who could I offend that's powerful enough to pressure you to cancel the loan?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Someone from Gu's company,' Zhang Hang said.

Gu's company? Qiao Tan Yuan immediately pictured Gu Jiao Wu's face in her head.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't doubt Gu Jiao Wu sabotaged her work so she would take the initiative to find him, and beg him to help her. He would blackmail her to give him Xiao Bao. She stormed out of Zhang Hang's office, and drove to Gu Jiao Wu's office.

At Gu Jiao Wu's office, Li Lam sat on the sofa opposite Gu Jiao Wu. She put a small gift on the coffee table.

'This is a small gift to say thank you for dropping me off at my work building,' Li Lam said.

Two days ago Li Lam's car broke down again, and Gu Jiao Wu's black car was

passing by while she was calling for road service.

‘You don’t have to thank me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said coldly. ‘If there’s nothing else, leave my office.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t bother to glance at the small gift.

‘Have you stopped loving me?’ Li Lam asked.

‘We have no relationship,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu loved Chu Da, not Li Lam.

‘No relationship?’ Li Lam asked. She stood to sit next to Gu Jiao Wu. ‘Aren’t you the man I gave my virginity to? The man who gave me a necklace for my birthday? The man who wanted to introduce his family to me, and marry me?’

‘Um, I’m the right man,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘A pity, you’re the wrong woman.’

Gu Jiao Wu had a photographic memory. Li Lam wasn’t Chu Da.

‘You’re breaking my heart,’ Li Lam said. She showed Gu Jiao Wu a phone strap. ‘Why won’t you believe me?’

Gu Jiao Wu was shocked to see Chu Da’s phone strap in Li Lam’s hand.

‘I thought it wouldn’t matter what I look like because you would still recognise me,’ Li Lam said.

Gu Jiao Wu composed himself and stood.

‘Miss Li, I have work to do,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Feel free to leave my office.’

‘Why won’t you believe me?’ Li Lam asked. ‘Jiao Wu, you’ve made me really sad.’

Li Lam’s face and voice resembled Chu Da’s face and voice. It confused Gu Jiao Wu’s heart.

Li Lam stood and held onto Gu Jiao Wu’s hand.

‘Jiao Wu, I love you,’ Li Lam said. ‘I never stopped loving you. I waited to become more confident and beautiful so I can come back to you. Is it because I’ve changed, you don’t love me anymore? Why don’t you love me anymore?’

Gu Jiao Wu clenched his hands, and stared at the face that looked like Chu Da’s

face.

Suddenly Li Lam hugged Gu Jiao Wu's waist.

'Jiao Wu I love you,' Li Lam said. 'I believed you would recognise me even though I've changed. Do you really don't love me? Did you forget all the promises you made me?'

The face, voice and fragrance that were similar to Chu Da's face, voice and fragrance in his memories, blurred his head. He remembered Chu Da's smile, and hugged the person in front of him.

'Why did you leave me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Li Lam bit her lips to make herself cry.

'Tell me why,' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

For more than four years, Gu Jiao Wu wanted to know why Chu Da left him without a word.

'I... I have a reason I can't say,' Li Lam said. 'I'm begging you not to ask me. You only need to believe the person I love is you.'

'Chu Da, why won't you tell me why?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I...' Li Lam said. She sniffed her nose, and thought of an excuse. 'Honestly I left you because I...'

In that moment Qiao Tan Yuan slammed the door opened.

'Gu Jiao Wu!' Qiao Tan Yuan called.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't expect to see Gu Jiao Wu hug Chu Da in his office.

'Executive Gu, I asked this lady to wait for me to inform you of her visit,' the secretary said. 'But she barged into your office before I could stop her.'

The secretary was confused why a beautiful woman in a blue dress would barge into Gu Jiao Wu's office, and why Gu Jiao Wu was hugging another woman who had visited Gu Jiao Wu's office before.

The secretary remembered a rumor Gu Jiao Wu was married. Was the beautiful woman in the blue dress his wife, and the other woman he was hugging was his mistress? She noticed he was glaring at her, and knew it was her cue to

leave.

Li Lam let go of Gu Jiao Wu, and stood next to him after the secretary left.

Gu Jiao Wu's head cleared, and he realised the person standing next to him was Li Lam, not Chu Da. He took a step back from Li Lam. He didn't want Qiao Tan Yuan to misunderstand he was in a relationship with Li Lam.

'Don't come here to find me again,' Gu Jiao Wu said coldly.

'I'm sorry I disturbed you while you're working,' Li Lam said. 'Honestly I was passing by, and I wanted to see you. Don't be angry.'

End of Chapter Sixty-One

Related

Sixty-Two



Chapter Sixty-Two

Angry?

Gu Jiao Wu wasn't angry at Li Lam. He was angry at himself for momentarily confusing Li Lam for Chu Da.

'I understand you need to work,' Li Lam said. 'We'll see each other another time.'

Gu Jiao Wu was looking at Qiao Tan Yuan, and didn't answer Li Lam. Li Lam accepted she failed again, and left before she made him angrier.

On the way out, Li Lam saw Qiao Tan Yuan at a close distance for the first time. She was shocked how beautiful and regal Qiao Tan Yuan was. One look, and she

knew Qiao Tan Yuan was from a rich family. The way Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Gu Jiao Wu was as if there was bad blood between Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu. She didn't want to be on the receiving end of Qiao Tan Yuan's animosity, and wisely left Gu Jiao Wu's office.

At first Qiao Tan Yuan stood frozen to see Gu Jiao Wu hug Chu Da in his office. She remembered seeing Gu Jiao Wu hug Chu Da at the reserve park and in Chu Da's home years ago. Then she berated herself for being surprised. It shouldn't be a surprise the person Gu Jiao Wu would always love was Chu Da. Why would Gu Jiao Wu choose to be with her when Chu Da was back? She suppressed the discomfort in her heart, and acted calm in front of Gu Jiao Wu.

Qiao Tan Yuan could curse Gu Jiao Wu from head to toes, and it wouldn't be enough to truly calm herself. Gu Jiao Wu toyed with her, and sabotaged Qiao's company to give Xiao Bao to Chu Da.

'Gu Jiao Wu!' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu took one step, and he was standing in front of Qiao Tan Yuan.

'What's wrong?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu sensed Qiao Tan Yuan wanted his blood.

Was Gu Jiao Wu playing dumb? Qiao Tan Yuan's stomach exploded with anger, and she slapped his cheek.

'Gu Jiao Wu, you're a despicable AH!' Qiao Tan Yuan cursed.

Gu Jiao Wu wasn't prepared for Qiao Tan Yuan's slap, but he held her hands to stop her slapping him again.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, what are you doing?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu wondered if Qiao Tan Yuan came to his office to slap him.

'You should be asking yourself, what you're doing,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Can you be any more despicable? Let go of me!'

'Qiao Tan Yuan, why are you acting crazy?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'That's right, I'm crazy,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was angry Gu Jiao Wu would harm his ex-wife because of

another woman.

‘What right do you have to threaten banks not to give Qiao’s company a loan?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu finally understood the real reason Qiao Tan Yuan came to see him at his office. He was disappointed, let go of her hands and looked at her coldly.

‘I don’t understand why you’re acting crazy,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan scoffed at Gu Jiao Wu acting dumb.

‘Today Zhang Hang cancelled Qiao’s company loan he approved yesterday,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘He said he was pressured by someone at Gu’s company. If that someone isn’t you then who else can it be?’

‘Gu’s company?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Qiao Tan Yuan, do you think if I wanted to sabotage Qiao’s company, I would leave such an obvious trail?’

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to admit Gu Jiao Wu was right.

Gu Jiao Wu pointed at his slapped cheek.

‘Do you think hitting someone will solve your problem?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘If it’s true then I should praise you.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t keep count how many times Qiao Tan Yuan slapped him. What’s important was she was a woman. If she was a man, she would have been dead the first time she slapped him.

‘You... it really wasn’t you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know what to believe.

‘I’m sorry I disappointed you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Did you slap me the moment you walked in here because you thought I sabotaged Qiao’s company?’

Qiao Tan Yuan was embarrassed. Apart from Gu Jiao Wu, she couldn’t think of who else would want to sabotage Qiao’s company.

‘Who else could it be but you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Why must it be me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘What motive do I have?’

‘You... because you wanted me to come see you and beg for help,’ Qiao Tan

Yuan said. 'Then you'll blackmail me to get custody of Xiao Bao.'

'Your logic isn't bad,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If it was really me, what do you plan to do?'

'I wouldn't give you the satisfaction by begging you for help,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'm confident I can help Qiao's company past this crisis. As for you, don't dream of using this opportunity to get custody of Xiao Bao.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan...' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan's chest was heaving from anger, she looked beautiful in the blue dress and memories of them together in his car turned him on.

'I'm curious, how will you help Qiao's company while in your angry state?' Gu Jiao Wu said asked.

'It's none of your business,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan doubted Gu Jiao Wu was the culprit. Even in her angry state, she knew with his IQ, he wouldn't leave an obvious trail for her trace back to him. Five hundred thousand dollars... where was she going to go find five hundred thousand dollars?

'Qiao Tan Yuan, how much do you need?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Gu Jiao Wu suspiciously. But she couldn't see signs he was lying about not knowing how much she needed. Then she remembered him hugging Chu Da before. She took a step back away from him, turned around and walked to the door.

Gu Jiao Wu pulled Qiao Tan Yuan into his arms, and he hugged her tightly so she couldn't leave.

'I can help you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'I don't need your help,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan would rather beg anyone else than begging Gu Jiao Wu, because she wanted to protect Xiao Bao.

The Qiao Tan Yuan in Gu Jiao Wu's arms was her favorite flower, a rose. She was beautiful and prickly. He remembered Quan Zheng Hao holding her waist in

the morning, and he didn't know why it made his heart uncomfortable.

'If you don't need my help then do you plan to ask him for help?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was unsure what Gu Jiao Wu meant.

'Gu Jiao Wu, do you know what you're saying?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu sounded jealous, but she knew it was impossible for him to be jealous because of her. She reasoned he was dissatisfied she didn't ask him for help.

'I said I can help you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't know why he was unhappy Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to turn to another man for help. She knew he would help her, but she refused his help. Did she think he wouldn't help Qiao's company in a crisis?

'I said I don't need your help,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Don't think you can make me beg you, and use this opportunity to blackmail me. I won't fall for you trick.'

Qiao Tan Yuan's accusations made Gu Jiao Wu's heart more uncomfortable.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, if I wanted to take our daughter away from you, why would I need to blackmail you?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

End of Chapter Sixty-Two

Related

Sixty-Three



Chapter Sixty-Three

Help?

Qiao Tan Yuan lost her faith in Gu Jiao Wu.

‘You’re wearing clothes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘But it doesn’t mean you’re a good person. You’re a wolf in sheep’s clothing, and...’

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips. He didn’t want to hear another insult from her.

Qiao Tan Yuan was surprised Gu Jiao Wu kissed her. But the image of him hugging Chu Da before replayed in her mind. She bit his tongue hard, and pushed him away from her. It didn’t calm her anger, she raised her hand to slap him again but he was prepared and held her hand.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan!’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu wondered if Qiao Tan Yuan had a slapping addiction.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you’re the most despicable person I’ve met!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You’re back together with Chu Da. What are you doing kissing me? You don’t mind contaminating yourself, but I mind!’

Qiao Tan Yuan only needed to think of Gu Jiao Wu kissing Chu Da before kissing her, and she would have the urge to splash sulfuric acid on his lips.

Gu Jiao Wu was confused, he wasn’t back together with Chu Da. He

remembered what Qiao Tan Yuan witnessed when she arrived in his office.

‘I didn’t kiss her,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘It’s none of my business,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Who knows what else you two would be doing besides kissing if I didn’t interrupt.’

Qiao Tan Yuan believed if Gu Jiao Wu could comfortably ravish her in his car, he would be even more comfortable sleeping with Chu Da in his office.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t know if he could defend himself. He admitted he confused Li Lam for Chu Da when he hugged Li Lam. He wasn’t certain if Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t enter his office if he wouldn’t have kissed Li Lam while in his confused state. How could he predict what he would do if circumstances were different? So he couldn’t confidently say to Qiao Tan Yuan he wouldn’t have kissed Li Lam.

Qiao Tan Yuan waited for Gu Jiao Wu to answer her. His silence made her angrier. She didn’t want to be in the same room as him for another second. She stomped on his foot, turned around and walked to her car.

Qiao Tan Yuan was wearing heels when she stomped Gu Jiao Wu’s foot. By the time he registered the pain, she disappeared from his office. For the first time seeing her run away from, he felt like he lost something important. He was frustrated and confused. The way she left him in an angry haze, he knew she wouldn’t come see him to ask for help without a push. He traced his lips, her sweet taste lingered on his lips.

Gu Jiao Wu sat behind his desk, and called his assistant. He was going to wait as many days it would take for Qiao Tan Yuan to come beg him for help.

In Qiao Tan Yuan’s car, she couldn’t shake off the pain and anxiety in her heart. She wouldn’t let herself beg an AH like Gu Jiao Wu. Five hundred thousand dollars... she didn’t expect there was a day she was desperate to find money within a day. She called Miss Chen and asked if any of the banks reconsidered. Miss Chen informed her none of the banks called her office phone number after she left her office. She looked at the time, and thought about Xiao Bao. Xiao Bao must be hungry so she sped home.

Qiao Tan Yuan arrived home, Xiao Bao was crying for her because she was at work most of the day. Xiao Bao stopped crying after she breast fed Xiao Bao. A

satisfied Xiao Bao fell asleep in her arms. She carried Xiao Bao back to the nursery, and asked Mrs Chu to watch over Xiao Bao while she worked in her study room.

In the study room, Qiao Tan Yuan called Qiao Jie.

‘Qiao Jie, let Zheng Quan’s company know there will a few days delay before receiving the outstanding amount,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Why?’ Qiao Jie asked. ‘Didn’t the bank approve the loan?’

‘Um, but there’s a minor hiccup,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She wasn’t in the mood to patiently explain to Qiao Jie. ‘Qiao Jie, I’ll explain later. Zheng Quan’s company receiving five hundred thousand dollars is enough to pay for their research and development costs. If Zheng Quan’s company refuses to wait a few days for the outstanding amount, tell them Qiao’s company is happy to terminate the contract and pay the cancellation penalty fee.’

‘Big sister...’ Qiao Jie said.

Qiao Jie wanted to ask Qiao Tan Yuan what happened, but she hung up the phone.

Qiao Tan Yuan called another four banks, but they gave her the same answer and wouldn’t approve the loan.

A few days past, Qiao Tan Yuan still couldn’t find a way to fund the outstanding amount. She was physically exhausted from working overtime for consecutive days. At night when she walked into her study room, her stomach ached, and she felt dizzy. It was like her body had no energy left, she staggered and would have fell on the floor if an arm didn’t support her back.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t need to look at Gu Jiao Wu’s face to know it was him. She took a step away from him, and suppressed her dizziness.

‘Are you sure you’re OK?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Um,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan would rather fall on the floor than let Gu Jiao Wu touch her again.

Gu Jiao Wu was worried to see Qiao Tan Yuan’s pale complexion.

‘Are you in pain?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I’m OK, stay away,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t have energy to stand, Gu Jiao Wu caught her before she fell on the floor.

‘You’re sick,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Stay away,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t need you to act like a good person.’

Gu Jiao Wu held onto Qiao Tan Yuan, he wasn’t going to let her fall. He glanced at the documents scattered on the desk and frowned.

‘Are you still looking for someone to loan you the money?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t know why Qiao Tan Yuan hated him enough not to ask him to help her.

‘It has nothing to do with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She didn’t want Gu Jiao Wu to know she couldn’t find someone to loan her the outstanding amount, because she didn’t want to give him ammunition to use against her. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, why are you so free to come to my home?’

Qiao Tan Yuan looked like a sick kitten who wanted to scratch Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes out, but he was more worried she would faint. He lifted her into his arms, and carried her outside.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, what are you doing?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want Gu Jiao Wu to carry her outside.

‘Put me down!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Mrs Qiao and Mrs Chu heard the commotion. They walked out of the nursery, and they were confused why Gu Jiao Wu was carrying Qiao Tan Yuan downstairs.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t notice Mrs Qiao and Mrs Chu, he quickly carried Qiao Tan Yuan to his car.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, where are you taking me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t open the passenger door or break the window.

Gu Jiao Wu ignored Qiao Tan Yuan, and sped to Ling Hu’s home.

‘Let me out!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

After Gu Jiao Wu parked, Qiao Tan Yuan recognised it was Ling Hu’s home. Gu Jiao Wu carried her to the front door, and the same man greeted them.

‘You two are lucky he’s home,’ the man said.

Gu Jiao Wu nodded his head, and carried Qiao Tan Yuan to Ling Hu’s inner courtyard.

‘Little fellow, you’re lucky I’m here,’ Ling Hu said and smiled. ‘I was about to head out. If you arrived later then you wouldn’t get to see me.’

Gu Jiao Wu put Qiao Tan Yuan down.

‘Can you examine her?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked Ling Hu. ‘She fainted before.’

‘You’re the one who fainted before,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was adamant she was only dizzy, and didn’t faint.

Ling Hu gestured for Qiao Tan Yuan to sit in front of the round table next to him. She remembered the bracelet he gave her, and thought it would be rude of her to reject his kindness. She sat next to him, and he checked her pulse.

Gu Jiao Wu sat on the other side of Qiao Tan Yuan. He waited anxiously while Ling Hu examined Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘It’s nothing to be worried about,’ Ling Hu said. ‘She’s over exerted her body. She shouldn’t put so much pressure on her body so soon after giving birth. After eating nutritious meals, and getting a proper rest, she’ll regain her health.’

‘Are you sure?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked Ling Hu. He remembered Qiao Tan Yuan’s pale complexion, and was scared Ling Hu was holding back. ‘There’s nothing else?’

‘Nothing else,’ Ling Hu said and looked at Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘How many days have you been lacking sleep?’

‘I’ve been busy working overtime for a few days,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Um, it explains why you’re feeling dizzy,’ Ling Hu said. ‘If you give your body a proper rest then the dizziness will go away.’

‘Thank you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to rest too. But how could she rest while Qiao's company was in trouble, and taking care of Xiao Bao at the same time?

'Even if you're busy, you should still eat,' Ling Hu said. 'Have you eaten dinner?'

Qiao Tan Yuan's stomach ached again. She was too busy working, and neglected her stomach.

Gu Jiao Wu saw Qiao Tan Yuan holding her stomach.

'Why didn't you eat dinner?' Gu Jiao Wu asked Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Who needs you to care?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was embarrassed, tired and hungry. She stood, and walked outside.

'Are you sure she's OK?' Gu Jiao Wu asked Ling Hu.

'She's overworked, not sleeping and not eating enough,' Ling Hu said. 'Your daughter is consuming most of the nutrients from her body. Take this herbal prescription, and get someone to prepare the herbal medicine for her. Don't worry, the herbs won't affect your daughter. You should take better care of her, and she'll be healthy again.'

'I understand,' Gu Jiao Wu said and accepted the prescription. 'Thank you.'

'You don't need to be courteous with me,' Ling Hu said. 'You better catch her before she escapes.'

'Don't worry, she can't escape,' Gu Jiao Wu said and chased after Qiao Tan Yuan.

Gu Jiao Wu caught Qiao Tan Yuan before she ran all the way home. He carried her to the car, and drove her somewhere to eat dinner.

'Gu Jiao Wu, haven't you played enough?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'What else do you want?'

'Dinner,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Even if you're angry, you still need to eat dinner.'

'A pity, I don't want to eat dinner with you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Seeing your face is enough to make me nauseous.'

Fifteen minutes later, Gu Jiao Wu parked the car. If he wanted to go east, Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to go west. She didn't want to eat dinner with him, and refused to get out of the car.

Gu Jiao Wu opened the front passenger door.

'Come out,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'No,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'If you take me home, I'll come out.'

'You're not coming out?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

End of Chapter Sixty-Three

Related

Sixty-Four



Chapter Sixty-Four

Side Story

Summary of Cheng Yi's Side Story:

Cheng Yi asked Fei Yan Niao to give Cheng Yi a mission. Fei Yan Niao showed Cheng Yi different weapons to trigger Cheng Yi's memory. Cheng Yi didn't remember his past, but remembered how to use the weapons.

Chapter Sixty-Four

Gu Jiao Wu carried Qiao Tan Yuan out of the car.

'Today you're wearing a dress,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If you want to give everyone a peep show, keep kicking your legs.'

Qiao Tan Yuan immediately stopped kicking her legs.

'Gu Jiao Wu, what do you want?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan suspected Gu Jiao Wu was in the mood to toy with her.

'Nothing out of the ordinary,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He carried Qiao Tan Yuan into the restaurant. 'Only an ordinary dinner.'

'I don't want to eat dinner with you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Sir, Madam, welcome,' a waiter said.

'You... put me down,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't put the embarrassed Qiao Tan Yuan down. He looked

around the crowded first floor, and couldn't find a free table.

'Is there a free table on the second floor?' Gu Jiao Wu asked the waiter.

'Sir, there's one table left,' the waiter said and acted like seeing a man carrying a woman into a restaurant was a common sight. 'Follow me.'

Qiao Tan Yuan felt the customers' eyes were looking at her. She didn't want anyone to recognise her so she buried her head into Gu Jiao Wu's chest.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt light in Gu Jiao Wu's arms, he effortlessly carried her upstairs. Because she buried her head into his chest, he could smell the usual rose shampoo she used to wash her hair.

In contrast Gu Jiao Wu's body scent made Qiao Tan Yuan sad. She thought about the rare times he held her in his arms. The first time was in the elevator on the day Xiao Bao was born, and the second time was when she twisted her ankle at the park reserved. During their marriage he never held her in his arms, slept with her or even paid attention to her. Why did he hold her in his arms, and slept with her after they divorced? She didn't know what the relationship between them was. But she was certain the Gu Jiao Wu holding her in his arms wasn't the same Gu Jiao Wu in the past, and she wasn't the same Qiao Tan Yuan in the past. She didn't want to love him anymore, she wanted to learn how to forget him and let go of him so they could live their separate lives.

Gu Jiao Wu felt Qiao Tan Yuan loosened her hold around his neck. He looked down at her vulnerable face, and he held her tighter.

After Gu Jiao Wu put Qiao Tan Yuan down on a seat, she surveyed their surroundings. Their table was in a corner next to a window, and the screens around their table gave them privacy.

A waitress gave Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan menus, and poured tea for them.

'Sir, Madam, what would you like to order?' the waitress asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to let Gu Jiao Wu order food for them. Unlike Gu Jiao Wu, Shen Cheng hired a chef to make delicious nutritious dishes for her after she gave birth to Xiao Bao. If Shen Cheng took her out to eat at a restaurant, Shen Cheng would order her favorite dishes. The rare times Gu Jiao Wu sat at the

same table with her at a restaurant while they were married, he would order for them two bowls of soups so he could eat quickly and get away from her faster.

Qiao Tan Yuan accepted Gu Jiao Wu didn't care about her so he wouldn't care about what she liked to eat. She would have stood, and left if she wasn't shocked by the words that came out of his mouth.

'I want to order the steamed fish on the menu,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'What nutritious dishes do you recommend?'

'The ginseng chicken soup, yam and blueberry sauce and cuttlefish soup are the most popular nutritious dishes on the menu,' the waitress said.

The waitress thought Gu Jiao Wu must have doted on Qiao Tan Yuan by the way he carried Qiao Tan Yuan so Qiao Tan Yuan didn't need to walk, and the way he thought carefully about what healthy dishes he should order for Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Um, add the ginseng chicken soup to our order...' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat frozen in her seat. Gu Jiao Wu was seriously checking the menu for nutritious dishes for her.

The waitress walked to the kitchen after Gu Jiao Wu chose another four nutritious meals.

Qiao Tan Yuan was more shocked to see the worried look on Gu Jiao Wu's face. Why would he be worried about her? Why did he care about her health?

Gu Jiao Wu was relieved Qiao Tan Yuan wasn't making a commotion. He watched her looking at him suspiciously. She sat quietly unlike the way she acted like an angry little girl throwing a tantrum outside. Her hair was messy, but she didn't look as pale as before. He was about to touch her face to see if she had a fever, but the waitress returned with their dishes.

Gu Jiao Wu nodded his head at the waitress, and scooped a bowl of ginseng chicken soup for Qiao Tan Yuan.

'The ginseng chicken soup will help boost your energy,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

The way Gu Jiao Wu was holding the steaming bowl of ginseng chicken soup almost made her face drop. Why did he look like he cared about her?

‘Gu Jiao Wu, do you have a terminal illness?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘What nonsense are you saying?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t think it was safe to eat the bowl of soup Gu Jiao Wu scooped for her.

‘I’m Qiao Tan Yuan, not Chu Da,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Of course you’re not Chu Da,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan pointed at the bowl Gu Jiao Wu was holding.

‘Oh... then did you suffer brain damage today?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan like she was crazy. It made her uncertain who the crazy one between herself and Gu Jiao Wu was.

‘Are you worried about me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Is it wrong for me to worry about you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Um, I’m Qiao Tan Yuan,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘The woman you hate the most. Why would you care about me?’

Qiao Tan Yuan doubted Gu Jiao Wu was aware he took her to see Ling Hu, and to eat dinner at the restaurant.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t understand why Qiao Tan Yuan was suspicious he cared about her.

‘You don’t need to win my favor,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘No matter how you act like you care about me, don’t dream about me giving Xiao Bao to you.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t understand why he cared about Qiao Tan Yuan either. But seeing her looking sickly made him worried about her. He didn’t know why she would rather overwork herself than come to him for help made him unhappy. She was a mother, yet she didn’t know how to take care of herself. He took her see Ling Hu to take away the uneasy feeling in his heart. But thinking about her not eating dinner upset him so he dragged her to the restaurant. He thought his heart would be at peace after he saw her eat a nutritious dinner. He didn’t expect she would be suspicious about him caring about her. What win her favor? Why would he need to win her favor?

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu lost his brain while he thought she lost her brain.

End of Chapter Sixty-Four

Related

Sixty-Five



Chapter Sixty-Five

Who's crazy?

'I don't need to win your favor,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Look at your sickly face. If you don't eat, where are you going to get energy? Do you want our daughter to lack nutrients like you? Do you want our daughter to be sickly like you?'

Qiao Tan Yuan understood why Gu Jiao Wu took her to see Ling Hu, and to eat at a restaurant. Gu Jiao Wu didn't care about her, he only cared about Xiao Bao.

'I don't starve Xiao Bao,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan breast fed Xiao Bao regularly. What did Gu Jiao Wu expect? Did he want her to be grateful she gave birth to his daughter? Was he saying if she wasn't his daughter's mother then he wouldn't care if she died in a ditch?

Qiao Tan Yuan lost her appetite. She stood and glared down at Gu Jiao Wu.

'Gu Jiao Wu, Xiao Bao is my daughter,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Of course I would take good care of Xiao Bao. You should mind your own business.'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't know when Qiao Tan Yuan would acknowledge he was Xiao Bao's father. He didn't want her to leave without eating dinner so he held her

hand.

‘Sit and eat dinner,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I’m not eating,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu was mistaken if he thought she was a submissive woman.

‘If you don’t sit and eat dinner, I’ll feed you dinner one mouthful at a time,’ Gu Jiao Wu threatened.

Qiao Tan Yuan remembered how Gu Jiao Wu fed her milk at the cafe. She was worried what he would do when they were sitting at a private table.

‘You... you wouldn’t dare,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Are you going to eat?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat, and picked up the bowl of soup. She ate a spoonful of soup, and burned her lips.

Gu Jiao Wu poured Qiao Tan Yuan a glass of water.

‘Drink the water,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t accept the glass of water in Gu Jiao Wu’s hand. She poured herself a glass of water, and drank a sip of water. Then she ignored him, and slowly ate the delicious soup.

Gu Jiao Wu scooped Qiao Tan Yuan another bowl of soup.

‘Eat another bowl of soup,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I don’t want to eat another bowl of soup,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu put the bowl of soup in front of Qiao Tan Yuan, and waited for her to eat it.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I’m not scared of you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Was there a time you were scared of me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan pretended she didn’t hear Gu Jiao Wu.

‘You scooped the bowl of soup then you should eat it,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘If you don’t want to eat another bowl of soup then eat the steamed fish and rice,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to eat with the Gu Jiao Wu who was pretending to be attentive. She put her bowl down, and stood.

‘I don’t have an appetite to eat,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You can stay here and eat.’

Gu Jiao Wu put down the bowl of rice he scooped.

‘You don’t have an appetite?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

How could Qiao Tan Yuan be full after one bowl of soup? Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t care if he didn’t think about how sickly she looked before. He held her hand, and pulled her onto his lap.

‘Let me go,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Are you full?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Are you joking?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu used chopsticks to feed Qiao Tan Yuan a piece of steamed fish.

‘Try the steamed fish,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan turned her head to the side. ‘I don’t want to eat.’

‘Are you sure you’re not going to eat?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Not eating,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu put the steamed fish in his mouth, and his lips moved closer to Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you’re crazy...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu used his mouth to transfer the steamed fish flesh into Qiao Tan Yuan’s mouth, and he thought the steamed fish tasted more delicious than usual.

‘Gu... mmm...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and swallowed the steamed fish flesh.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt Gu Jiao Wu’s hand slowly moved down her waist.

‘Your hand,’ Qiao Tan Yuan warned.

‘Are you going to eat?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked and smiled.

‘You... what do you want?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Nothing,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and stared at Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips.

Qiao Tan Yuan was trapped on Gu Jiao Wu’s lap, and she couldn’t avoid his lips.

‘Tastes delicious,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan heard the waitress’ footsteps, and jumped out of Gu Jiao Wu’s lap. She sat next to him, and avoided eye contact with the waitress while the waitress refilled their teapot.

The waitress acted like she didn’t see Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan kissing.

‘Can you give me another pair of chopsticks?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Yes sir,’ the waitress said.

The waitress quickly returned with a pair of chopsticks then she went to serve another table.

Gu Jiao Wu put the clean chopsticks in Qiao Tan Yuan’s hands.

‘Eat your dinner,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan quickly ate another bowl of rice to escape Gu Jiao Wu’s scrutinizing eyes.

‘Eat another bowl of soup,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I’m full,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t believe Gu Jiao Wu wanted her to eat another bowl of soup. Did he think she was a pig?

‘Full?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan must have looked like a scared pig. She ate another bowl of soup.

‘Enough, I can’t eat anymore,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Even if Qiao Tan Yuan was a pig, she couldn’t digest all the food she ate in one sitting.

Gu Jiao Wu was satisfied Qiao Tan Yuan ate enough. He paid for the dinner, and led her to the car.

‘Have you thought of a way to help Qiao’s company?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘You don’t need to worry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Even if Qiao’s company closes their doors, it’s none of your business.’

‘You being stubborn isn’t going to help Qiao’s company,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

End of Chapter Sixty-Five

Related

Sixty-Six



Chapter Sixty-Six

‘How is being stubborn going to harm me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t admit how her stubbornness to love Gu Jiao Wu in the past was still hurting her.

‘Keep your nose out of my business and let go of my hand,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu felt like the hand he was holding didn’t belong to his ex-wife.

‘I can help you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t understand why Qiao Tan Yuan was being stubborn. He would give her anything, all she had to do was open her mouth.

‘I don’t need your help,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

What help? Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu was a professional blackmailer.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, is admitting defeat that hard?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I don’t mind admitting defeat to anyone who isn’t you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s tightly. He was frustrated she wouldn’t let him help her.

Qiao Tan Yuan managed to pull her hand free, and strode to the taxi zone. The night was cold. She shivered in her dress while waiting for a taxi.

Gu Jiao Wu draped his jacket over Qiao Tan Yuan’s shoulders. She flung it back at him.

‘I’ll take you home,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I don’t need you to take me home and stop acting like you care,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu draped his jacket over Qiao Tan Yuan’s shoulders again.

‘Do you want to catch a cold and make our daughter sick too?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Daughter, daughter, daughter. Qiao Tan Yuan was certain in Gu Jiao Wu’s head he thought about Xiao Bao first while she was an afterthought.

‘If you don’t let me drive you home, I don’t mind carrying you home,’ Gu Jiao Wu threatened.

Qiao Tan Yuan conceded and sat in Gu Jiao Wu’s car. The drive back to her home was tensed. She jumped out of his car the moment she saw the front gate of her home. After she returned his jacket, she walked to her study room.

It was late, Gu Jiao Wu wondered if Xiao Bao was awake. He walked to the nursery, and was happy to see Xiao Bao smiling and playing with the colorful soft toys he bought her.

Mrs Chu thought Qiao Tan Yuan bought Xiao Bao’s new clothes and toys so she unwrapped the toys and dangled them above Xiao Bao to see which toys Xiao Bao loved most.

Gu Jiao Wu grabbed a toy out of Mrs Chu’s hand, and carried Xiao Bao in his arms. He gave the toy for Xiao Bao to hold, Xiao Bao’s grip was strong enough to hold the toy without dropping it. But Xiao Bao cried after she saw his face.

Mrs Chu took Xiao Bao from Gu Jiao Wu’s arms.

‘Xiao Bao don’t cry,’ Mrs Chu said. ‘Don’t worry we won’t pay attention to your daddy.’ Mrs Chu patted Xiao Bao’s back, and glared at Gu Jiao Wu. ‘Mr Gu, your daughter doesn’t want you to hold her. Stop making her cry.’

Gu Jiao Wu felt helpless. He didn’t know why Xiao Bao hated him no matter what he did to coax Xiao Bao. Mrs Chu refused to let him hold Xiao Bao again so he went to see Qiao Tan Yuan in her bedroom.

Qiao Tan Yuan was in her study room. She sought through the list of banks. Two banks haven't called her back. What was she going to do? Her second last resort was Shen Cheng. But she didn't want to ask Shen Cheng almost as much as she didn't want to ask Gu Jiao Wu for help. Then she remembered Zhang Chan, who owned a bank in the southern district. She and Zhang Chan used to go to spas together. She quickly dialled Zhang Chan's phone number, but Gu Jiao Wu took the phone out of her hand.

'Give back my phone,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'It's late, you should be resting,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu remembered Ling Hu recommended Qiao Tan Yuan take a proper rest or she would feel dizzy again. Didn't she know working late at night would make it hard for her to fall asleep?

'Gu Jiao Wu, can you stop playing the good person role?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'I can take care of Xiao Bao, and take care of myself. I want you to go.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Do you know you're running your body to the ground?'

'My body health is none of your business,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu returned Qiao Tan Yuan's phone, and walked outside because he didn't want to fight with her and make her more tired.

Qiao Tan Yuan was relieved Gu Jiao Wu stopped being glued to her, and let her have some peace. She dialled Zhang Chan's phone number again. Zhang Chan promised to give her an answer in the morning. She hung up the phone, and felt hopeful. But at night she had the same nightmare, she dreamt of Gu Jiao Wu snatching Xiao Bao.

In the morning, Qiao Tan Yuan was in a bad mood after a restless night.

'Tan Yuan, have you thought about letting your dad worry about Qiao's company?' Mrs Qiao asked. She hated seeing Qiao Tan Yuan worried sick about Qiao's company at the expense of Qiao Tan Yuan's help. 'Do you still want to go to Denmark or are you and Jiao Wu...'

'Mum, I'm a member of the Qiao's Household,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I don't

want dad to carry everything on his shoulders.'

Qiao Tan Yuan was adamant not to involve Gu Jiao Wu in her life.

Qiao Tan Yuan lost her appetite, and showered instead of eating breakfast. After she came out of the bathroom, her phone rang, it was Zhang Chan.

End of Chapter Sixty-Six

Related

Sixty-Seven



Chapter Sixty-Seven

At Qiao Tan Yuan's office.

Qiao Tan Yuan was disappointed Zhang Chan couldn't help her either. She threw a pen on the desk, and looked out the window at the autumn landscape. Shen Cheng was her last option before Gu Jiao Wu. She sighed, she couldn't use Shen Cheng again. She turned her chair around, and was surprised to see Quan Zheng Hao standing in her office.

'Who let you in?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Your manners are atrocious.'

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't see Miss Chen behind Quan Zheng Hao.

'I knocked and called you but you didn't hear me,' Quan Zheng Hao said.

'Why are you here?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Quan Zheng Hao sat opposite Qiao Tan Yuan. He thought she looked

sophisticated in her business suit, and her light makeup enhanced her beauty.

‘You look beautiful today,’ Quan Zheng Hao praised.

‘Did you come here to praise me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘No, I came to discuss rumors Qiao’s company is having a small funding problem...’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘Qiao’s company doesn’t have a funding problem,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Don’t worry, Qiao’s company will fulfil their contract obligations.’

Quan Zheng Hao nodded his head and smiled.

‘The truth is I didn’t come here because I’m worried Qiao’s company can’t meet the agreed payment terms,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘I’m here because I’m worried about you. It’s true what people say, an unhappy woman ages quicker.’

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t in the mood for jokes.

‘Mr Quan, I have work to do,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You should put your free time to good use, and help your company finalise the new products for marketing.’

‘Shooing me away already?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked. ‘You wound me.’

Suddenly Qiao Tan Yuan received an unexpected call from Zhang Chan. She was happy to hear Zhang Chan managed to pull strings, and Zhang Chan’s bank approved the loan.

‘You look happy,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was too happy that she forgot the annoying Quan Zheng Hao was in her office.

‘Yes, I’m happy,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Mr Quan, my happiness has nothing to do with you. I hate seeing your face. Leave my office now.’

‘But I really like you and I want to pursue you,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘A pity, I hate you and I don’t want you to pursue me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She ignored Quan Zheng Hao, and called Miss Chen. ‘Miss Chen, call all the managers and arrange a meeting time for them to report to me.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was annoyed Quan Zheng Hao was disturbing her during work.

‘I’ll leave if you promise to have lunch with me,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘I’ll be at home taking care of my daughter at lunch,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Then what about dinner?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked.

‘Mr Quan, I don’t have time to eat a meal with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’ll consider eating a meal with you after I see your company making profits for Qiao’s company.’

‘Wow, you live for money,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘If you won’t eat a meal with me until I make money for you, does that mean you won’t marry unless my net worth is more than Qiao’s company?’

‘Um, I’m money hungry and materialistic,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If my bad traits scare you then you should keep your distance.’

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t bother reasoning with the intolerable Quan Zheng Hao. She walked out of her office to find Qiao Jie.

Quan Zheng Hao watched Qiao Tan Yuan leave. He liked how she didn’t act like a weak clueless heiress like many of the women he met.

In the afternoon, Qiao Tan Yuan was happy to finish work early. She was looking forward to spending time with Xiao Bao at home. In her car, she turned on the ignition and was startled someone opened the passenger door.

‘Mr Quan, what are you doing sitting in my car?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘My car engine’s dead,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘Can you give me a lift?’

‘Get out of my car,’ Quan Tan Yuan said. ‘You can hail a taxi.’

‘It’s hard to get a taxi at this time,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘That’s your problem,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Not my problem. Get out of my car.’

‘Why are you cold blooded to someone who is collaborating with your company?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked.

‘Um, I’m cold blooded,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She took out two bank notes from her purse, and gave it to Quan Zheng Hao. ‘Take the money. It’s enough for you to take two trips to the airport by taxi. Get out of my car.’

Quan Zheng Hao saw the bank notes and laughed.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I realised I like you more by the day,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Quan Zheng Hao was mentally challenged. She was in a good mood enough to be charitable.

‘Where do you want to go?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Your home,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘I want to ask your parents’ permission to marry you.’

‘What a sad joke,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If you don’t give the address where you want to go, I’ll call the cops to drag you out of my car.’

‘OK, you win,’ Quan Zheng Hao said and gave Qiao Tan Yuan an address.

Qiao Tan Yuan was surprised Quan Zheng Hao gave her an address of luxury display homes advertised everywhere on TV, online, newspapers and radio.

Qiao Tan Yuan stopped her car outside a luxury building complex.

‘Executive Qiao, a client asked me to look at the display homes here,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘It’ll be a big help if I have another set of eyes.’

‘I’m busy,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I heard the homes here are a good investments,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘Why don’t you take a look with me? Who knows, you may find a home you like. It’s close to your company too.’

The Qiao Mansion had three floors so Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t think about moving out before. But she wanted to spend more time with Xiao Bao. It would be easier for her to commute between work and home, and to spend more time with Xiao Bao if she bought a home near her office.

A while later, a female real estate agent saw an attractive young couple walk into her office. She thought Quan Zheng Hao was a handsome man, and assumed Qiao Tan Yuan was his wife.

‘Sir, what style of home are you and your wife looking for?’ the agent asked.

‘I’m not his...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘My wife and I are looking for an apartment with three bedrooms,’ Quan Zheng

Hao said.

Qiao Tan Yuan rolled her eyes. If Quan Zheng Hao wanted to act crazy, she would let him act crazy on his own while she looked for a suitable home for her and Xiao Bao.

‘Can you show me luxury apartments with high ceilings and a good city view?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked the agent.

‘Big sister, all the apartments in this area are luxury apartments,’ the agent said. ‘The apartments are close to parks, schools, transport, hospitals and shopping malls. I can take big sister and your husband for a tour of some of the luxury apartments on sale.’

‘Um,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and followed the agent.

The agent showed Qiao Tan Yuan and Quan Zheng Hao the most expensive apartments.

At an apartment with three bedrooms, Qiao Tan Yuan inspected the building structure and fixtures.

‘When is the earliest settlement date?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked the home owner.

‘My family and I are building a house,’ the home owner said. ‘Our house is scheduled to be built by May next year. But for the right price, we can move out to a rental home.’

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at the city view, the agent wasn’t joking. The apartment was close to facilities, and there was an amusement park close by where she could take Xiao Bao when Xiao Bao was a little older.

Quan Zheng Hao watched Qiao Tan Yuan examine the apartment seriously, and he smiled. He thought she treated everything too seriously.

Outside the apartment complex, Gu Jiao Wu had a scheduled inspection. But he stopped his car when he saw Qiao Tan Yuan’s red car that her parents gave her for her birthday parked in front of one of the apartment complexes Gu’s company invested in. Did she want to buy a home?

Gu Jiao Wu got out of a car, and a male real estate agent recognised him.

‘Executive Gu, if there’s anything you need you can ask me,’ the agent said.

‘Um, is the owner of that red car here to see the display apartments?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘That’s right,’ the agent said. ‘She and her husband are here to look at apartments on sale.’

Husband? Gu Jiao Wu frowned, he didn’t hear news about Qiao Tan Yuan eloping with another man.

‘Executive Gu, follow me, I’ll show you around,’ the agent said.

‘Um,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu followed the agent to inspect the quality of the new display apartments.

Upstairs, Qiao Tan Yuan was annoyed to be referred to as Mrs Quan. But Quan Zheng Hao would interrupt her if she tried to correct the agent’s and home owners’ assumptions. Luckily the beautiful apartments the agent showed her counteracted Quan Zheng Hao’s crazy act.

Qiao Tan Yuan put the apartment brochures in her bag, and thanked the agent.

‘I’ll think about buying one of the apartments you showed me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Next time I’ll bring my family here to have another look.’

The agent gave Qiao Tan Yuan a business card.

‘Mrs Quan, we only have a couple of apartments left on sale in this area,’ the agent said. ‘I hope you won’t take too long to decide.’

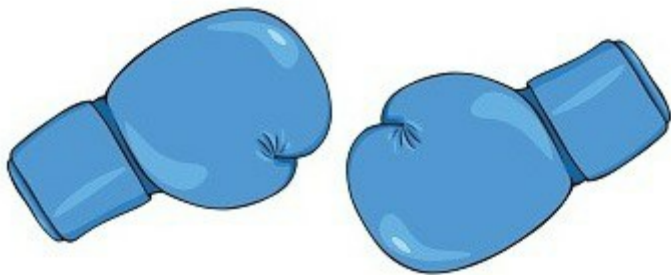
Quan Zheng Hao wrapped an arm around Qiao Tan Yuan’s shoulder, and smiled at the agent.

‘Don’t worry, my wife and I will make a decision soon,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

End of Chapter Sixty-Seven

Related

Sixty-Eight



Chapter Sixty-Eight

‘Behave,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan pushed Quan Zheng Hao’s arm off her shoulder. To her, he was annoying but to outsiders like the agent, they thought he was playful.

‘I am behaving,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. He wrapped an arm around Qiao Tan Yuan’s shoulder again. ‘I listen to everything you say. You told me to buy a home so I’m buying a home. When you tell me to work, I work. How can I be better behaved?’

Qiao Tan Yuan pushed Quan Zheng Hao’s arm off her shoulder again.

‘Whether you buy a home or work has nothing to do with me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Wife? Qiao Tan Yuan would need to be mentally challenged as Quan Zheng Hao to be his wife.

‘Wife, don’t be angry,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘I’m sorry I was busy working today, and I couldn’t take you shopping. I promise I don’t have a mistress. I was really late coming home last night, because I was working overtime. If you don’t believe me, you can come to my company and check the security footage. There’s nothing shady about my relationship with my secretary either. Don’t be angry at me anymore.’

‘Mr Quan, do you need to go to the hospital?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was certain Quan Zheng Hao was mentally challenged.

‘Why would I look at another woman when I have a beautiful wife?’ Quan

Zheng Hao asked. He hugged Qiao Tan Yuan. 'Believe me, there's only you in my heart. I promise I don't have a mistress.'

Qiao Tan Yuan dug her fingernails into Quan Zheng Hao's hands, and she smiled at the envious agent.

'Um, you have a beautiful wife but you flirt with every woman you see,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Do you think that's good behavior?'

'I wouldn't dare flirt with another woman,' Quan Zheng Hao said. He was scared of the fierce Qiao Tan Yuan's fingernails that were killing his hands. 'Wife, believe me.'

'OK, I believe you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She pinched Quan Zheng Hao's cheek hard. 'Can we go home now?'

Quan Zheng Hao feared his hands would fall off before he returned home. Qiao Tan Yuan was indeed a thorny rose.

'OK, let's go home,' Quan Zheng Hao said.

Qiao Tan Yuan kept smiling at the agent. She was about to turn around when someone pulled her away from Quan Zheng Hao, and hugged her from behind.

Qiao Tan Yuan turned her head around, and saw Gu Jiao Wu glaring at Quan Zheng Hao. Why was Gu Jiao Wu at the apartment complex? Did Gu Jiao Wu want to buy a home?

Quan Zheng Hao recognised Gu Jiao Wu from the press conference. He sensed Gu Jiao Wu wasn't an ordinary man.

'Let go of my wife,' Quan Zheng Hao said.

Gu Jiao Wu narrowed his eyes at Quan Zheng Hao. He wouldn't let Qiao Tan Yuan marry someone like Quan Zheng Hao. He led Qiao Tan Yuan outside, and away from Quan Zheng Hao.

Quan Zheng Hao ran, and stood in front of Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Wife, are you going to leave me here stranded?' Quan Zheng Hao asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was stuck between her ex-husband, and an annoying unwanted suitor. She freed herself from Gu Jiao Wu, and stood far away from Gu Jiao Wu

and Quan Zheng Hao.

‘Wife, let’s go home,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

Qiao Tan Yuan ignored Quan Zheng Hao, and walked outside.

The agent didn’t know which of the handsome men Qiao Tan Yuan’s husband was. But she hoped Qiao Tan Yuan would decide to buy an apartment.

When Qiao Tan Yuan reached her car, she was angry to see Quan Zheng Hao dared to open the passenger door.

‘Mr Quan, have you joked enough?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘You can find your own way home.’

‘Joke?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked. He braced his chest, and acted heart broken. ‘I’m truly wounded. I wasn’t joking before.’

‘Quan Zheng Hao, don’t waste my time,’ Qiao Tan Yuan warned. ‘Go find your own way home.’

‘If you’re going to be charitable, you should be charitable to the end,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘If you’re kind enough to drive me here then you’re kind enough to drive me home too.’

‘You-’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu stood next to Qiao Tan Yuan, held her waist and glared at Quan Zheng Hao.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, why are you here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She pushed Gu Jiao Wu’s hand off her waist. ‘Are you buying a home here?’

‘Buy a home?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. He glanced up at the apartment Qiao Tan Yuan inspected. ‘Do you want to move out?’

‘None of your business,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘That’s right,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘We’re getting married, and buying a home to live together. Our marriage bed would fit nicely in our new home.’

Marriage bed? Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t pleased to hear the words coming out of Quan Zheng Hao’s mouth. He was unhappier Qiao Tan Yuan was keeping her distance from him. Did Qiao Tan Yuan think he would let her find Xiao Bao

another father?

‘Wife, if you liked the apartments we saw, I’ll buy two floors and turn it into one apartment to make a higher ceiling,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘I’m not-’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Are you his wife?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked Qiao Tan Yuan.

Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t believe he hadn’t seen Qiao Tan Yuan for a couple of days, and she eloped with a man like Quan Zheng Hao.

‘Who I marry has nothing to do with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said to Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu pulled Qiao Tan Yuan into his chest.

‘If you want to find step-dad for our daughter then you need to ask me first,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Quan Zheng Hao realised Gu Jiao Wu was Qiao Tan Yuan’s ex-husband who wouldn’t let go of her even though they were no longer married.

Quan Zheng Hao pulled Qiao Tan Yuan out of Gu Jiao Wu’s embrace.

‘You must be Qiao Tan Yuan’s ex-husband,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘You two are divorced. Who she chooses to be with has nothing to do with you.’

Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t stand to see another man holding Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Let her go,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘She’s my wife,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘What right do you have to tell me to let go of her? If you hug my wife again, I’ll give you a beating!’

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t stand Quan Zheng Hao. But she was curious why Gu Jiao Wu was acting jealous. She didn’t push Quan Zheng Hao away immediately, because she wanted to see what Gu Jiao Wu would do after being provoked by Quan Zheng Hao.

Gu Jiao Wu wanted to make Quan Zheng Hao wish Quan Zheng Hao didn’t provoke him. He pulled Qiao Tan Yuan back to him with one hand, and punched Quan Zheng Hao’s face with his other hand.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan protectively against his chest. She didn’t expect him to actually hit Quan Zheng Hao.

‘I didn’t hit you but you dare to hit me,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

End of Chapter Sixty-Eight

Related

Sixty-Nine



Chapter Sixty-Nine

Side Story

Summary of Cheng Yi’s Side Story:

Fei Yan Niao gave Cheng Yi a listing of people to assassinate in another attempt to trigger Cheng Yi’s memories.

Chapter Sixty-Nine

Fight?

Quan Zheng Hao wasn’t scared of Gu Jiao Wu. He thought Gu Jiao Wu was distracted when Gu Jiao Wu pulled Qiao Tan Yuan away from him so he aimed a punch at Gu Jiao Wu’s face. He didn’t expect Gu Jiao Wu would react so quickly, and punched his face.

‘Ah!’ Quan Zheng Hao cried out and fell on the ground.

By the time Quan Zheng Hao got off the ground, Gu Jiao Wu had dragged Qiao Tan Yuan to Gu Jiao Wu’s car. He touched his swollen face, it was bleeding. He was the Quan Household’s heir. Who did Gu Jiao Wu think he was to hit him? He vowed to take revenge on Gu Jiao Wu, and make Qiao Tan Yuan his woman.

Qiao Tan Yuan was shocked Gu Jiao Wu hit Quan Zheng Hao, because it was

the first time she saw Gu Jiao Wu hit another person. Before she could decide who to help, Gu Jiao Wu had dragged her to his car and drove off.

Qiao Tan Yuan kicked the passenger door.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, let me out!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Where are you taking me?’

Gu Jiao Wu was too angry to speak, and chose to silently drive.

‘What about my car?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s car was unlocked. What if a thief broke into her car?

Qiao Tan Yuan was scared to see Gu Jiao Wu accelerated from sixty miles to one hundred miles per hour.

‘Gu Jiao Wu!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You’re speeding like a maniac. Stop the car!’

Qiao Tan Yuan held onto the door handle. She didn’t dare to jump out of the car while Gu Jiao Wu drove like he was in a car race. He swerved the car left and right to manoeuvre between the cars on the road.

Suddenly Gu Jiao Wu braked. If Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t holding onto the door handle, she would have hit her head. She was about to curse Gu Jiao Wu, but he jumped out of the car, slammed his door shut and opened her door.

Qiao Tan Yuan recognised it was an apartment complex owned by Du Lei Xin. It was famous for the nightclub and... Jacuzzi spa hot tubs.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t get a chance to ask Gu Jiao Wu why he brought her to Du Lei Xin’s building, because he held her hand tightly, and dragged her inside.

The concierge greeted Gu Jiao Wu. Gu Jiao Wu nodded at the concierge, and took Qiao Tan Yuan straight to the elevator. Du Lei Xin gave him an apartment upstairs for his exclusive use.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, why are you being a maniac?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Why did you take me here? Let go of me!’

Gu Jiao Wu pressed the floor level of his apartment, and the elevator shot up to his floor. Qiao Tan Yuan scratched his hand, but he didn’t let go of her.

‘Let go of me!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

The elevator doors opened, and Gu Jiao Wu pulled Qiao Tan Yuan to his

apartment. He opened the front door, and led them inside his apartment.

‘Gu Jiao Wu!’ Qiao Tan Yuan called.

Gu Jiao Wu slammed the front door shut, and locked the front door. He turned Qiao Tan Yuan around, pressed her back against the locked door and kissed her lips. He captured her hands, and his lips didn’t let go of her lips for her to tell him to release her.

The city lights twinkled under the dark sky outside while Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan in the dark apartment. He didn’t need light to seek her tongue, and taste her sweet mouth.

A while later, Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips for them to breathe.

‘Do you want to marry him?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

What? Qiao Tan Yuan was still dazed from Gu Jiao Wu’s kiss. She didn’t know what he meant.

‘Are you sure you want to marry a wimp who was knocked out after one punch?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

One punch? Qiao Tan Yuan finally remembered what happened before.

‘You... how could you be so irrational and hit someone?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘So what if I hit him?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan would have walked out if the door behind her wasn’t locked. She doubted the man holding her was Gu Jiao Wu. The Gu Jiao Wu she knew didn’t brawl even if he was provoked.

‘Why did you behave like such a Neanderthal?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Neanderthal?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

End of Chapter Sixty-Nine

Related

Seventy



Chapter Seventy

‘Neanderthal?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘If you’re not a Neanderthal then who is?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘What right do you have to hit someone? Who do you think you are? You’re only my ex-husband...’

Gu Jiao Wu lifted Qiao Tan Yuan up against the door, wrapped her legs around his waist and kissed her.

‘I’ll show what a Neanderthal looks like,’ Gu Jiao Wu whispered in Qiao Tan Yuan’s ear.

Gu Jiao Wu turned Qiao Tan Yuan around, carried her to a bed and ripped off her clothes...

In the middle of night, Qiao Tan Yuan fell asleep after Gu Jiao Wu exhausted her body. She left her phone in her bag, which was still in her unlocked car so her sleep wasn’t disturbed.

Gu Jiao Wu was satisfied after three rounds with Qiao Tan Yuan. He thought about their first time in his car. His car was too cramped, and Qiao Tan Yuan had an ankle injury so he held back. But on a spacious bed he didn’t need to hold

back. He could take Qiao Tan Yuan in any position... he stopped himself from thinking about how he moulded his body against her body otherwise he would want another round. He turned on the ceiling light, and looked at her sleeping face. Her eyelashes looked like two tiny fans. His kiss marks were on her milky soft body. He stroked her bare shoulder, and both his libido and stomach woke up. He reluctantly let go of her, and got out of bed.

The apartment Du Lei Xin gave Gu Jiao Wu had three bedrooms. He walked out of the master bedroom to a guest room, and called the front desk to deliver food to his apartment. Then he had a soothing hot shower. He wrapped a towel around his waist, walked out of the bathroom and heard a door knock. A young man delivered the food he ordered, and left. He returned to the master bedroom, Qiao Tan Yuan was still asleep. He sat on the bed, and smiled to see her relaxed sleeping face.

‘Tan Yuan...’ Gu Jiao Wu called. ‘Wake up and eat a meal.’

Qiao Tan Yuan pouted her lips, rolled over on the bed and continued to sleep. Just looking at her body made him feel like a hormonal boy. He realised he would always have an insatiable appetite for her.

Gu Jiao Wu stood, and let Qiao Tan Yuan sleep a little longer. He walked to the living room, and ate his portion. He heard another knock at the door, and frowned. He checked the master bedroom, luckily the knock didn’t wake Qiao Tan Yuan up. Afterward he walked to the door, and was surprised to see Du Lei Xin standing behind the door.

‘What is it?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Du Lei Xin looked at the towel wrapped around Gu Jiao Wu’s naked body then he looked over Gu Jiao Wu’s shoulder.

‘I heard you brought a woman here,’ Du Lei Xin said.

Du Lei Xin was curious who the woman was. It was the first time Gu Jiao Wu brought a woman to the apartment he gave Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Is there a problem?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘No problem,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘OK, I admit I’m curious. I want to see who’s the special woman that you made an exception for by bringing her here.’

‘No,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t let Du Lei Xin step into the apartment.

‘OK, if you’re not going to tell me then I won’t ask,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘Later you can bring your woman to the master bathroom, and have a good time in the Jacuzzi.’

Gu Jiao Wu saw Du Lei Xin’s sly smile, and closed the door.

Gu Jiao Wu returned to the master bedroom, sat on the bed and Qiao Tan Yuan stirred awake. She opened her eyes, and looked blankly at the ceiling. Then she looked around the room, and saw Gu Jiao Wu’s wide grin. She immediately sat upright on the bed, and vivid memories of their bodies joining floated in her head. Her body ached too much for her to sit so she laid back down on the bed again.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and raised her hand to slap Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu caught Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand.

‘You still have energy?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘It appears I didn’t keep my promise by showing you what a Neanderthal I can be.’

‘You... AH!’ Qiao Tan Yuan cursed.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s chest was heaving from anger. She glared at Gu Jiao Wu, and noticed he was staring at her exposed breasts. She blushed, and pulled the bedsheet over her body.

Gu Jiao Wu smiled at the way Qiao Tan Yuan covered her breasts that he had memorised.

‘Are you hungry?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Do you want to eat something?’

‘Stay away from me!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know what she and Gu Jiao Wu were thinking. How could they make the same mistake, and tumble together in bed?

Qiao Tan Yuan looked around the bed for her clothes... her ripped clothes on the floor were reflected in her eyes. She felt another wave of body aches, and wanted to submerge her body in hot water. She wrapped the bedsheet around

her naked body, and got out of bed. Her limp body staggered forward, and Gu Jiao Wu wrapped an arm around her waist before she fell onto the floor.

‘Let go of me!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘What do you want to do?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Shower,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Let go of me!’

‘You want to shower?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked and smiled.

Gu Jiao Wu remembered Mr Little Du Demon’s advice. It was a good opportunity for him to test out the Jacuzzi for the first time with Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘What do you want?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan sensed the bright gleam in Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes would prolong her body aches. She ran outside the master bedroom. But he caught her, the bedsheet fell on the floor and carried her into the master bathroom. When her hands touched his hot skin, she realised he was naked under the towel.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, put me down!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘If you still have energy, let’s have another round together,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Another round? Qiao Tan Yuan feared for her aching body. Gu Jiao Wu put her down in the Jacuzzi, and turned on the tap. He started another round with her before the tub was full of hot water.

After Gu Jiao Wu took full advantage of the Jacuzzi to pleasure Qiao Tan Yuan and himself, he dried their bodies, wrapped a towel tightly around her body and a towel around his waist. Then he carried her to the sofa in the living room.

‘What do you want to eat?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at the plates of food on the coffee table then she looked out the window at the dark night sky. She remembered her car was left unattended with her bag and phone. It was past midnight, and she was worried about Xiao Bao.

‘Take me home!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Even if I take you home now, Xiao Bao would be asleep,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Eat a meal first.’

‘How can you be so blase?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Didn’t Gu Jiao Wu know how to be embarrassed? Qiao Tan Yuan was in no mood to eat the food Gu Jiao Wu ordered for her.

‘Take me home!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Um, I’ll take you home if you don’t mind walking outside in your attire,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t have her bag or house keys. If Gu Jiao Wu drove her home, she would need to wake up her family. She wouldn’t know where to hide if her parents saw her and Gu Jiao Wu half naked together.

Qiao Tan Yuan was angry, but her stomach was hungrier. She tried to pick up one of the plates of food on the coffee table, and failed because she didn’t have enough energy. Gu Jiao Wu picked up a plate of food for her, and fed her. She didn’t thank him for feeding her, it was his fault her energy was depleted.

End of Chapter Seventy

Related

Seventy-One



Chapter Seventy-One

Escape.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought about how to escape Gu Jiao Wu after the meal. She couldn't ask Du Lei Xin to take her home, Du Lei Xin and Gu Jiao Wu were in the same boat.

Qiao Tan Yuan avoided looking below Gu Jiao Wu's waist. Their bodies were separated by flimsy towels on the sofa.

A full stomach helped Qiao Tan Yuan cleared the seductive mist out of her head. She retraced what happened before she and Gu Jiao Wu ended up in bed together. She drove Quan Zheng Hao to see apartments, and Gu Jiao Wu appeared out of nowhere looking angry. Gu Jiao Wu punched Quan Zheng Hao's face, and Gu Jiao Wu drove her to Gu Jiao Wu's apartment... Gu Jiao Wu! She understood why Gu Jiao Wu brought her to his apartment, he didn't one anyone to become Xiao Bao's step-dad. Gu Jiao Wu would do anything to sabotage her chance of marrying another man, including sleeping with her.

'Gu Jiao Wu, you AH!' Qiao Tan Yuan cursed. 'Who gave you permission to touch me? What right do you have to touch me?'

Gu Jiao Wu watched Qiao Tan Yuan's changes in facial expressions then suddenly she had an outburst. Her skin was still moist from their shared bath, she looked beautiful and he was enjoying the afterglow of their coupling. Why did she ruin it by accusing him of not having the right to be with her?

'I don't have the right?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Then who has the right? That little

white rabbit?’

Little white rabbit? Qiao Tan Yuan would have laughed if she wasn’t angry at Gu Jiao Wu.

‘That’s right, any man has the right except for you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You should remember your status. You’re my ex-husband. Gu Jiao Wu, we’re divorced. You don’t have the right to touch me.’

‘So what if we’re divorced?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘We can remarry each other. I want us to get back together.’

‘Get back together?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Who wants to get back together with you? What about Chu Da?’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t understand why Qiao Tan Yuan mentioned Chu Da. Chu Da had nothing to do with his and Qiao Tan Yuan’s relationship.

‘What has Chu Da got to do with us?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to escape from Gu Jiao Wu. She was foolish once, she wasn’t going to be foolish again. There was no way she would accept a man who had another woman in his heart again, especially a man she loved. She foolishly thought if she was Gu Jiao Wu’s wife, she could wait how many years it took for him to notice her, think of her and love her. Their failed marriage showed her it wasn’t enough to want something, and do everything in her power to obtain it. Something was unattainable by force... like a person’s heart. She didn’t have Gu Jiao Wu’s heart so she wanted to let go of him. But Gu Jiao Wu slept with her even though he didn’t love her. Gu Jiao Wu saw her only as a worthless booty call, she was nothing to him.

Qiao Tan Yuan took a deep breath. She was determined to end things with Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I know what your agenda is,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You’re back together with Chu Da, and you want to take Xiao Bao. You think the world revolves around you. I’m telling you, you’re mistaken. No matter how invincible you are, you can’t make the earth orbit a different direction. I’ll never give Xiao Bao to you, and I won’t degrade myself to love a person who doesn’t love me again. Gu Jiao Wu, stop dreaming.’

‘Back together with Chu Da?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘I’m not back together with Chu Da.’

‘Can you deny the person you truly love is Chu Da?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Can you say the person you’ve been missing in your heart for years isn’t Chu Da? Can you say Chu Da isn’t the person you dream of every night, wishing you can be together with her again?’

Gu Jiao Wu admitted he did want to find Chu Da. But he didn’t want to get back together with Chu Da. Too many things have happened since Chu Da left him. He doubted he could live with Chu Da like he did in the past. The reason he wanted to find Chu Da was to get closure. He wanted Chu Da to tell him why Chu Da left him and disappeared without a trace.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s heart was on a high a moment ago, but a moment later it was dropped into the cold abyss. Knowing the truth was one thing, hearing the truth only solidified the pain. Why did she still hold onto the minuscule hope there was a room for her in Gu Jiao Wu’s heart? Gu Jiao Wu sleeping with her, and acting like he cared for her did awaken the minuscule hope. But the painful truth left her hopeless, Gu Jiao Wu didn’t love her.

‘Gu Jiao Wu... let me go,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I can’t give you Xiao Bao. If you want to see Xiao Bao, I’m willing to compromise. My limit is you can see Xiao Bao twice a month.’

Qiao Tan Yuan finally believed one myth in trashy magazines, men use their bottom halves to think so a man didn’t need to love a woman to sleep with a woman. Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t an exception. The only reason Gu Jiao Wu didn’t sleep with other women during their marriage was because he valued reputation. He didn’t want his private affairs to affect his public image. They weren’t married anymore, but no one would could accuse him of being a player if he slept with his ex-wife. In his eyes she was someone convenient to use to satisfy his physical desires.

‘You’re back together with Chu Da, but how can you sleep with me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Aren’t you worried Chu Da will misunderstand your heart, and break up with you again?’

Gu Jiao Wu was in deep thought, he only heard the last question Qiao Tan

Yuan asked him and shook his head.

‘She won’t misunderstand,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll explain about us to her.’

If Chu Da came back, Gu Jiao Wu would explain his relationship with Qiao Tan Yuan to Chu Da. He was certain even if Chu Da came back, he wouldn’t get back together with Chu Da because he wanted to be with Qiao Tan Yuan. He and Qiao Tan Yuan have a daughter together, and he didn’t want to be with any woman except Qiao Tan Yuan. Did he want to be with Qiao Tan Yuan because of Xiao Bao? He didn’t know why he wanted to be with Qiao Tan Yuan, but he was certain Xiao Bao wasn’t the only reason.

‘Explain?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

What was there for Gu Jiao Wu to explain to Chu Da? Qiao Tan Yuan could picture he would explain to Chu Da, he slept with her to get her to give Xiao Bao to Chu Da.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, go to hell!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan had loved Gu Jiao Wu enough. How long did he expect her to let him mistreat her for?

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you’re truly a despicable AH!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and slapped Gu Jiao Wu’s cheek.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan!’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Why did you slap me?’

‘An AH like you deserve to be slapped,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Don’t look for me or touch me again. If you don’t want Chu Da to misunderstand then stay away from me. I told you, I’m not your personal prostitute. When you’re hungry, go find Chu Da. The other day you and Chu Da were cosy with each other. Gu Jiao Wu, you disgust me.’

End of Chapter Seventy-One

Related

Seventy-Two



Chapter Seventy-Two

Hungry?

Gu Jiao Wu wasn't starved. He only wanted to sleep with Qiao Tan Yuan. He hated seeing another man hold Qiao Tan Yuan. When he saw Quan Zheng Hao hold Qiao Tan Yuan, and heard Quan Zheng Hao talking about a marriage bed with Qiao Tan Yuan, he exploded. He didn't want another man to see how beautiful Qiao Tan Yuan looked when she was pleased.

For the first time in Gu Jiao Wu's thirty years of living, he initiated a fight with another person because he couldn't stand another man touching Qiao Tan Yuan. He hated hearing Qiao Tan Yuan mention another man's name while she was together with him, and he wasn't going to let their daughter call another man father. Qiao Tan Yuan belonged with him, he wouldn't let another man take Qiao Tan Yuan away from him.

Gu Jiao Wu was processing his thoughts so he didn't hear everything Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu hugged Qiao Tan Yuan tightly.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, I don't see you as my personal prostitute,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'You... let go of me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to feel Gu Jiao Wu's hand on her back, because she didn't want to think about how close their bodies were and how far apart their hearts were.

'Do you think I would kiss you like this if I thought of you as my personal

prostitute?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu tenderly kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips, and slowly deepened the kiss.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know how she was supposed to end things with Gu Jiao Wu if she wanted to believe him when he kissed her.

Gu Jiao Wu pushed Qiao Tan Yuan onto the sofa, and took off their towels... after their bodies peaked together again, she was too tired to escape and fell asleep.

At sunrise, Qiao Tan Yuan woke up on the bed instead of the sofa. It was the first time she didn’t return home after Xiao Bao was born. She was worried about Xiao Bao, and worried her family would have reported her missing. She quickly showered, and cursed Gu Jiao Wu when she saw new kiss marks on her body.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked naked into the living room, because there were no clean towels left. She didn’t know where Gu Jiao Wu disappeared to. But she found a new outfit including a jacket in her size laid on the sofa. She dressed, and didn’t feel grateful Gu Jiao Wu gave her a new outfit since it was only right he compensated for ripping her clothes last night.

Qiao Tan Yuan was satisfied her new clothes fit her, and it was a similar style to her ripped clothes. After she dressed, she noticed breakfast was set out on the coffee table and Gu Jiao Wu left her a note, ‘I’m at work, I’ll eat dinner with you tonight.’

‘Go to hell!’ Qiao Tan Yuan mumbled at the Gu Jiao Wu’s note. ‘Who wants to eat dinner with you?’

Qiao Tan Yuan ripped Gu Jiao Wu’s note to pieces while picturing ripping off his head. There was no urgency for her to go to work so she decided to go home to see Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked to the front door, opened it and was surprised to see Du Lei Xin’s hand in mid-air like he was about to knock on the door.

Qiao Tan Yuan was embarrassed she was caught in Gu Jiao Wu’s apartment.

‘Lei Xin, why are you here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Me?’ Du Lei Xin asked. ‘I’m here to see big brother.’

‘He’s not here,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

If Gu Jiao Wu escaped to work, why did Du Lei Xin have to appear?

‘Oh, a pity big brother is gone,’ Du Lei Xin said innocently.

Du Lei Xin purposely waited for Gu Jiao Wu to drive to work so he could knock on Gu Jiao Wu’s apartment door, and see who Gu Jiao Wu’s special woman was.

‘It’s nothing important... do you need a lift?’ Du Lei Xin asked.

‘I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want an awkward ride home with Du Lei Xin.

‘It’s not easy to find a taxi here,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘Aren’t we considered friends?’

Du Lei Xin didn’t consider Qiao Tan Yuan as Gu Jiao Wu’s wife when they were married. But he saw the change in Gu Jiao Wu, and suspected if they remarried, he would respect her as if she was his big sister-in-law.

‘OK, as long as I’m not inconveniencing you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘No trouble at all,’ Du Lei Xin said and led Qiao Tan Yuan to his car.

‘Do you want to go to the Qiao Mansion?’ Du Lei Xin asked.

‘Um,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Du Lei Xin drove in the direction of the Qiao Mansion.

‘How’s Xiao Bao?’ Du Lei Xin asked. ‘I haven’t seen her since she was one month old.’

‘Xiao Bao is healthy,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and beamed proudly. ‘She’s a good baby. She eats, sleep, eats and sleep.’

‘That’s good to hear,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘Are you thinking of getting back together with big brother?’

‘I haven’t decided yet,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said diplomatically.

‘Really?’ Du Lei Xin said. He focused on the road. A moment ago the sky was clear, but a moment later it was raining. ‘You’re the first woman big brother brought to his apartment in my building.’

‘You... you bring women there for him?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘No,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘You should know big brother well. Do you think he’s the type of man that would let me bring women to serve him?’

Qiao Tan Yuan knew Gu Jiao Wu better than Du Lei Xin knew Gu Jiao Wu. But she didn’t want to admit Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t sleep with the kind of women Du Lei Xin hired.

‘Tan Yuan, you don’t understand big brother as deeply as you think,’ Du Lei Xin said.

Du Lei Xin like everyone else, he knew Qiao Tan Yuan loved Gu Jiao Wu. But Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t understand some things about men. If Qiao Tan Yuan had stopped to think about what Gu Jiao Wu wanted instead of forcing Gu Jiao Wu to accept her love, perhaps she and Gu Jiao Wu’s first marriage wouldn’t have failed.

‘Really?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

If Du Lei Xin said the same thing to Qiao Tan Yuan years ago, she would have disagreed with Du Lei Xin. But lately she discovered she didn’t understand Gu Jiao Wu as deeply as she thought. He had many secrets he kept from her. She especially didn’t understand his heart. Last night when he kissed her tenderly, and pleased her body slowly on the sofa, she wanted to believe he cared about her. She vaguely remembered he carried her to bed, and he hugged her while they were sleeping together. Last night was the first peaceful sleep she had for years, she didn’t have a nightmare and slept to sunrise. She didn’t know what had invaded his brain for him to act like he cared about her. The only rational explanation was he wanted Xiao Bao.

‘Are you thinking big brother wants to be with you because of Xiao Bao?’ Du Lei Xin asked.

‘If Xiao Bao isn’t the reason, why do you think he suddenly changed one hundred and eighty degrees?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Xiao Bao is one of the reasons big brother wants to be with you...’ Du Lei Xin said.

Du Lei Xin knew Gu Jiao Wu was the type of man who wouldn’t turn his back

on his own daughter.

‘But if big brother isn’t attracted to who you are, he wouldn’t even glance once at you,’ Du Lei Xin said.

Du Lei Xin believed in the world there were two types of men. The first type of men could sleep with women they didn’t love. The second type of men could only sleep with women they loved. He knew Gu Jiao Wu belonged to the second type.

‘Should I feel privileged I get to be the mother of his daughter?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘If I wasn’t the mother of his daughter, he would have continued to move on with his life like I didn’t exist.’

End of Chapter Seventy-Two

Related

Seventy-Three



Chapter Seventy-Three

Side Story

Summary of Cheng Yi's Side Story:

Fei Yan Niao lied to Cheng Yi about receiving a lucrative contract. Fei Yan Niao gave the mission to Cheng Yi. The mission was for Cheng Yi to kill Zheng Jia Ju.

Chapter Seventy-Three

A second chance.

'You're being unfair,' Du Lei Xin said. 'Yes, big brother mistreated you in the past. But can't you see he's changed?'

'I can see,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan admitted Gu Jiao Wu had changed a lot. He didn't disrespect and underestimate her like he did in the past. He didn't look at her like he hated her guts, and he wasn't cold toward her. But she was frustrated he changed for Xiao Bao's sake. She would rather he looked down on her than cared about her because of Xiao Bao. He wouldn't want to be with her if Xiao Bao wasn't in the picture. She didn't want the empty title of Mrs Gu again. If Gu Jiao Wu didn't love her, he wouldn't hesitate to divorce her after he secured custody of Xiao Bao and she would be left with nothing.

Du Lei Xin could neutrally see Gu Jiao Wu's perspective, and Qiao Tan Yuan's perspective because he wasn't in the eye of the storm with them. Perhaps Gu Jiao Wu hadn't figured out what was in Gu Jiao Wu's heart. But it would be a better outcome if he didn't interfere in their love life.

Du Lei Xin parked the car, and Qiao Tan Yuan opened the passenger door.

‘Tan Yuan, if big brother is willing to take the first step, it means in his heart there is you,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘In the middle of you two is yours and big brother’s daughter. If you still love big brother, give him a second chance. If you don’t love big brother anymore, forget I said anything.’

Qiao Tan Yuan stood where Du Lei Xin’s car parked for a while before she walked into the Qiao Mansion.

‘Tan Yuan, where were you last night?’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘I called and texted your phone. But you didn’t pick up or reply. Even if you’re not worried about me worrying about you, you should think about Xiao Bao.’

‘Mum, how is Xiao Bao?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Last night aunty gave Xiao Bao a bottle of milk, but she didn’t want to drink,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘Xiao Bao cried herself to sleep.’

‘I’ll go see Xiao Bao now,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Mrs Qiao held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand to stop Qiao Tan Yuan walking upstairs.

‘Xiao Bao is still sleeping,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘Explain to me where you were last night.’

‘I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Did Lei Xin drive you home?’ Mrs Qiao asked. ‘Tan Yuan, what are you doing? One minute it’s Shen Cheng, and the next minute it’s Lei Xin. What do you want?’

‘Mum... it’s not what you’re thinking,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’ll go upstairs to see Xiao Bao.’

‘Tan Yuan...’ Mrs Qiao called.

Mrs Qiao sighed. She wasn’t in charge of Qiao Tan Yuan’s heart, and could only support Qiao Tan Yuan’s decision.

In the nursery, Xiao Bao was awake and was happy to see Qiao Tan Yuan. Qiao Tan Yuan breast fed Xiao Bao, and played with Xiao Bao until midday. Then Qiao Tan Yuan drove to work in a spare car.

When Qiao Tan Yuan walked into her office she was annoyed to see Quan Zheng Hao. If she didn't give Quan Zheng Hao a lift, and if Quan Zheng Hao didn't provoke Gu Jiao Wu then nothing would have happened between Gu Jiao Wu and her last night. She would have cursed Quan Zheng Hao if she didn't feel guilty about Gu Jiao Wu punching Quan Zheng Hao's face. A bruise was visible on Quan Zheng Hao's face.

'Mr Quan, what are you doing here?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked coldly.

'I came here to receive my reward,' Quan Zheng Hao said. He put Qiao Tan Yuan's car key on the desk. 'Yesterday I looked after your car, and cleaned your car for you too. How are you going to thank me?'

'You said you drove my car,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Your reward is you got to drive my car free of charge.'

Quan Zheng Hao put a palm over his heart, and looked pitiful.

'How can you be so cold blooded?' Quan Zheng Hao asked. 'Yesterday I received a punch because of you.'

'You shouldn't have joked I was your wife then you wouldn't have been punched,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'I called you my wife the whole time we were looking at apartments,' Quan Zheng Hao said. 'I didn't hear you protesting.'

'Mr Quan, I don't have time to joke,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I have work to do. You should go-'

'Go make money for Qiao's company,' Quan Zheng Hao said. 'Between us isn't there anything else to talk about besides work?'

End of Chapter Seventy-Three

Related

Seventy-Four



Chapter Seventy-Four

‘I’m sorry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s ran out of patience, but she stayed calm.

‘Besides work, I have nothing to say to you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Go and let me work.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, is he your ex-husband?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked. ‘Why is he clinging onto you?’

‘None of your business,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Leave my office.’

‘I’m right,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘Of course it’s my business. Look at my face. He nearly destroyed my good looks. I need to find him to ask for compensation.’

‘Quan Zheng Hao!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If I’m not mistaken, it was you who tried to punch him first when you thought he was distracted.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was angry at Gu Jiao Wu, but she wasn’t blind. She saw Quan Zheng Hao’s failed ambush.

‘Of course I would try to punch him first,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘He stole my wife. I have the right to protect what belongs to me.’

‘Quan Zheng Hao!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Who’s your wife?’

‘You,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I like you. I don’t care you’re divorced, and have a daughter. I want you to be my woman, marry me and be my wife.’

‘No chance,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You’re not the type of man I like. I won’t ever be with you. You should give up.’

‘There’s no give up in my dictionary,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘If I’m not the type

of man you like then is he the type of man you like? If he is then why are you two divorced?’

‘Has nothing to do with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If you’re not going to leave, I’ll leave.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan,’ Quan Zheng Hao said and held Qiao Tan Yuan’s arm. ‘Have dinner with me tonight.’

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Don’t you want your bag?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked. ‘Your bag is with me.’

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If you like my bag, you can keep my bag. I don’t have time to joke with you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan pulled her arm out of Quan Zheng Hao’s hold, and attended work meetings. When she returned to her office she was relieved the mentally challenged Quan Zheng Hao wasn’t in her office.

After work Qiao Tan Yuan filed the documents on her desk, and was annoyed Quan Zheng Hao came back to pester her.

‘Why did you come back?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘To take you to dinner,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. He gave Qiao Tan Yuan back her bag. ‘This is yours.’

‘Thank you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan reached for her bag, and Quan Zheng Hao grabbed her arm.

‘I looked after your car and bag,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘Is it too much to ask you to eat one dinner with me?’

Qiao Tan Yuan glanced at Quan Zheng Hao’s hand on her back.

‘Quan Zheng Hao!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Let go of me.’

‘No,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘If you call me husband, I’ll let go of you.’

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan lifted her foot to stab her heel into Quan Zheng Hao foot, but he avoided her heel.

‘Are you trying to kill your husband?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked.

‘Quan Zheng Hao!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Let go of me!’

‘No,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘If you kiss me or call me husband, I’ll let go of you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan hit Quan Zheng Hao’s arms to get him to let go of her. She stopped when she heard footsteps. She looked over Quan Zheng Hao’s shoulders, it was Gu Jiao Wu who looked like he wanted to kill Quan Zheng Hao.

Quan Zheng Hao sensed someone was glaring at his back, he turned around and smiled at Gu Jiao Wu.

‘What a coincidence,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘Every time I want to kiss my wife, you show up.’

Gu Jiao Wu narrowed his eyes, and glared at Quan Zheng Hao’s hand on Qiao Tan Yuan’s back.

‘Let of her!’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘No!’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘Yesterday I was unlucky, and you got to punch me. But I’m not scared to fight you.’

Quan Zheng Hao hugged Qiao Tan Yuan so she couldn’t escape.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan’s outfit. She was wearing the clothes he bought for her, and he was glad his estimate of her body measurements were right.

‘Come here,’ Gu Jiao Wu said to Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t move. She didn’t forget what happened between her and Gu Jiao Wu last night.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan!’ Gu Jiao Wu called.

Quan Zheng Hao pulled Qiao Tan Yuan back a step back, but their backs touched the desk.

‘She won’t go with you,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘She’s my woman, and under my protection. You need my permission to touch her.’

Gu Jiao Wu glared at the deluded Quan Zheng Hao. How could Qiao Tan Yuan

be Quan Zheng Hao's woman when he and Qiao Tan Yuan slept together in their bed the whole night? Yesterday, he should have punched Quan Zheng Hao's deluded face several times. He pulled Qiao Tan Yuan's arm, but Quan Zheng Hao refused to let go of Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn't impressed Gu Jiao Wu and Quan Zheng Hao were using her to play tug-a-war. Did they see her as an object? She pushed Quan Zheng Hao into the desk, and escaped.

'Enough!' Qiao Tan Yuan said and gripped her bag.

Wife? Qiao Tan Yuan wasn't anyone's wife.

'You!' Qiao Tan Yuan said to Quan Zheng Hao. 'Stop being deluded. I'm not your wife!'

'You!' Qiao Tan Yuan said to Gu Jiao Wu. 'We're divorced, stay away from me.'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to repeat last night's mistake. The person inside Gu Jiao Wu's heart was Chu Da. If he didn't love her, he should stay away from her.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked out of her office without looking back.

Quan Zheng Hao was surprised Qiao Tan Yuan left on her own. He planned for her to use him to get rid of Gu Jiao Wu. But she didn't, and he found her more intriguing.

'Wife, wait for me!' Quan Zheng Hao said. He smiled smugly at Gu Jiao Wu, and chased after Qiao Tan Yuan. 'Did you forget about eating dinner together?'

Gu Jiao Wu froze on the spot, and watched Qiao Tan Yuan and Quan Zheng Hao running away. In the morning he had made plans to eat dinner with Qiao Tan Yuan to discuss their relationship. But Qiao Tan Yuan looked like she was upset with him. He shook his doubts out of his head, and chased after Qiao Tan Yuan.

At the elevators, Qiao Tan Yuan regretted she didn't take the stairs.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, don't leave me,' Quan Zheng Hao said. 'I really like you.'

'I really hate you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Quan Zheng Hao do you know what you're doing?'

‘I know,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘I’m building a successful business to start a family. I like you. If I marry you, my life will always be interesting.’

‘I hate you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m not going to be with you. You should give up.’

‘Don’t be so heartless,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘If you don’t give us a chance, how will you know if you really hate me? If you marry me, you’ll see I’ll be a good husband to you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan scoffed. She was about to tell Quan Zheng Hao that he wasn’t good husband material. But she remembered how the way Gu Jiao Wu kissed her on the sofa last night affected her, and wondered if another man kissed her the same way if she would still be affected.

‘Kiss me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Quan Zheng Hao was surprised, but he quickly nodded his head.

‘I’ll happily kiss you,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

Quan Zheng Hao’s lips barely touched Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips when Gu Jiao Wu punched his face.

‘Ah... you dare punch me again?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked.

Gu Jiao Wu was angry at Qiao Tan Yuan for letting Quan Zheng Hao kiss her.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, why did you hit him?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘You’re too much.’

When Gu Jiao Wu reached the elevators he heard Qiao Tan Yuan ask Quan Zheng Hao to kiss her. Didn’t he satisfy Qiao Tan Yuan enough last night? Was that why she wanted to look for another man?

Gu Jiao Wu wanted to vent his anger on Quan Zheng Hao. He aimed another punch at Quan Zheng Hao’s face. Quan Zheng Hao dodged his punch, and aimed a punch at his eye but he moved to the side to avoid the punch. Then he kicked Quan Zheng Hao’s chest, and Quan Zheng Hao fell on the floor.

‘Stop fighting!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Quan Zheng Hao propped his aching body up, but Gu Jiao Wu had dragged Qiao Tan Yuan into an elevator.

End of Chapter Seventy-Four

Related

Seventy-Five



Chapter Seventy-Five

Behind closed doors.

‘You’re a brute!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘What right do you have to hit someone?’

Inside the elevator Gu Jiao Wu loomed over Qiao Tan Yuan, but she wasn’t intimidated.

‘Why did you ask him to kiss you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. He braced his palms on the wall, and caged Qiao Tan Yuan between his arms. ‘You dared to ask him to kiss you.’

‘So what?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘It has nothing to do with you. Don’t forget who you are. You’re only my ex-husband.’

‘Ex-husband?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked and his lips moved closer to Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips.

Qiao Tan Yuan turned her head to the side, and Gu Jiao Wu’s lips kissed her cheek.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s waist, and kissed her lips to tame his anger. The elevator doors opened, Qiao Tan Yuan pushed Gu Jiao Wu off her and some of her employees entered the lift.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t kiss Qiao Tan Yuan in front of her employees, but he held her wrist and stood next to her in the elevator.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s employees sensed the tension between Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan. They were relieved when the elevator doors opened to the ground floor.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked outside, Gu Jiao Wu didn’t let go of her wrist. She couldn’t curse Gu Jiao Wu in front of her employees so she turned around to curse him softly, but her nose hit his hard chest.

‘Ouch...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and rubbed her sore nose. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, let go of me.’

Gu Jiao Wu silently dragged Qiao Tan Yuan to his car.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, go somewhere else to act crazy,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Stay away from me.’

Gu Jiao Wu buckled Qiao Tan Yuan in his car, and sped off.

‘Stop the car and let me out,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t a member of the Qiao Household if she let Gu Jiao Wu do as he pleased with her.

‘Gu Jiao Wu!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan grabbed the steering wheel, she wasn’t going to let Gu Jiao Wu drive her anywhere except home.

‘Are you crazy?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu regained control of the steering wheel. He glanced at Qiao Tan Yuan like she was crazy. Didn’t she know it was dangerous to grab the steering wheel while he was driving?

‘Yes I’m crazy,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘It was your fault I didn’t return home last night. Did you know Xiao Bao was hungry, and cried herself to sleep last night? What are you doing? Do you want your daughter to die of hunger?’

Gu Jiao Wu suddenly braked, and the drivers behind his car honked.

‘Why aren’t you driving?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Why aren’t you taking me wherever you want to take me? Why aren’t you letting your daughter cry at home, and die of hunger?’

Gu Jiao Wu was confused why he spent the night with Qiao Tan Yuan, and didn’t think about their daughter’s welfare. Their daughter was a young baby, and Qiao Tan Yuan was still breast feeding their daughter. He didn’t want their daughter to cry, and die of hunger so he took a U-turn and drove them to the Qiao Mansion.

Xiao Bao was growing bigger by the day. Qiao Tan Yuan worried in a couple of months when her breasts stopped producing milk, she couldn’t use the same excuse to deal with Gu Jiao Wu.

At the Qiao Mansion, Qiao Tan Yuan got out of Gu Jiao Wu’s car and walked straight to the nursery. Xiao Bao saw Qiao Tan Yuan, and immediately raised her small hands toward Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan carried Xiao Bao in her arms, and all her anger melted away. She carried Xiao Bao to her bedroom to breast feed Xiao Bao while Gu Jiao Wu silently followed them.

‘Go outside,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said to Gu Jiao Wu.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t hear what Gu Jiao Wu was mumbling, and Xiao Bao was rubbing her face on her chest. She sighed, took off her jacket, unhooked her bra and pulled down her dress. Xiao Bao quickly drank her breast milk.

‘Pervert,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said to Gu Jiao Wu.

‘It’s nothing I haven’t seen before,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t need to say he did more than look at Qiao Tan Yuan’s breasts to make her blush. She shook her head to forget about last night. She looked down at Xiao Bao who was still hungry, and pouting small lips. Qiao Tan Yuan supported Xiao Bao’s head on her other arm to let Xiao Bao drink milk from her other breast.

After Xiao Bao was full, she didn’t want to sleep and her small hands played with Qiao Tan Yuan’s dress.

Qiao Tan Yuan ignored Gu Jiao Wu’s gaze, and held Xiao Bao’s small hands to stop Xiao Bao from pulling her dress.

‘Xiao Bao, Xiao Bao...’ Qiao Tan Yuan called.

Xiao Bao heard Qiao Tan Yuan calling her name, and laughed happily. Her small hands pulled Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand into her small mouth.

Qiao Tan Yuan gently pulled her hand out of Xiao Bao’s small mouth, and shook her head.

‘No Xiao Bao,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You can’t eat mummy’s hand.’

Xiao Bao made baby gibberish sounds, and tried to put Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand back in her small mouth. But Gu Jiao Wu gently held Xiao Bao’s hand. Xiao Bao pouted small lips, and ignored Gu Jiao Wu’s hand.

‘You can go,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said to Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu gently carried Xiao Bao in his arms. Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to injure Xiao Bao and let him carry Xiao Bao.

‘Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu called softly.

Xiao Bao cried, and stretched her small arms in Qiao Tan Yuan’s direction.

‘Give back my daughter,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu gently held Xiao Bao’s hand, but she kept crying. He didn’t know why she hated him holding her.

‘Xiao Bao don’t cry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and gently patted Xiao Bao’s back. ‘Let daddy hold you.’

Xiao Bao didn't understand Gu Jiao Wu was her daddy. She cried louder, and looked pitifully at Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Xiao Bao don't cry,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Look, your daddy is holding you. I'm your daddy.'

Gu Jiao Wu thought coaxing his daughter was harder than being at work.

Xiao Bao sniffed her nose, looked closely at Gu Jiao Wu's face and cried softer.

Gu Jiao Wu's mood improved after Xiao Bao cried softer.

'Xiao Bao, I'm your daddy,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Can you say daddy? Daddy...'

Gu Jiao Wu gently swung Xiao Bao's hand back and forth, and anticipated her calling him daddy.

Daddy? Qiao Tan Yuan thought it would be a miracle if Xiao Bao could talk. Xiao Bao was only a couple of months old. Did Gu Jiao Wu actually believed Xiao Bao would open her mouth, and call him daddy?

'Enough,' Qiao Tan Yuan said to Gu Jiao Wu. Her heart ached to hear Xiao Bao's soft cries. 'My daughter hates you holding her. Give back my daughter.'

End of Chapter Seventy-Five

Related

Seventy-Six



Chapter Seventy-Six

Daddy.

‘Our daughter doesn’t like me holding her because she doesn’t recognise I’m her daddy yet,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘She’ll stop crying after she understands I’m her daddy.’

Gu Jiao Wu smiled after Xiao Bao stopped crying in his arms.

Qiao Tan Yuan scoffed, and dismissed Gu Jiao Wu’s words.

‘My daughter stopped crying because she’s too tired to cry anymore,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Xiao Bao is my daughter too,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Xiao Bao is my daughter,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t care if she was half naked, she wasn’t going to let Gu Jiao Wu steal Xiao Bao.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to let go of Xiao Bao. If Xiao Bao finally stopped crying in his arms, it meant if he carried her more often she would understand he was her daddy.

Xiao Bao saw Qiao Tan Yuan’s hands, and cried loudly when Gu Jiao Wu didn’t let Qiao Tan Yuan hold her.

‘Xiao Bao don’t cry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Give back my daughter,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Can’t you see she’s crying?’

Qiao Tan Yuan took Xiao Bao from Gu Jiao Wu’s arms, and gently patted Xiao Bao’s back.

‘Xiao Bao, it’s mummy,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Xiao Bao don’t cry. Be good for mummy.’

Xiao Bao stopped crying, and Qiao Tan Yuan sat on the sofa and held Xiao Bao protectively in her arms.

‘Do you see now?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked Gu Jiao Wu. ‘My daughter doesn’t need you. You can go.’

Gu Jiao Wu looked at his empty arms and felt sad. Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to see him, and Xiao Bao didn’t want him to hold her. His nephews were almost two months old, they let him hold them and they smiled at him. But why did Xiao Bao hate him, and didn’t let him hold her?

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t leave, he sat on the sofa next to Qiao Tan Yuan. He gently held Xiao Bao’s hand, but Xiao Bao ignored him and played with Qiao Tan Yuan’s dress.

‘Our daughter stopped crying,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Let me hold her for a while.’

‘Do you want my daughter to cry again?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Go. Don’t stay here and scare Xiao Bao.’

Scare Xiao Bao? Gu Jiao Wu knew he had a handsome face. Why would his face scare Xiao Bao?

‘Our daughter isn’t scared of me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan ignored Gu Jiao Wu, and carried Xiao Bao to the nursery for Mrs Chu to watch over Xiao Bao while she showered.

When Qiao Tan Yuan returned to her bedroom, Gu Jiao Wu was still in her bedroom.

‘Why didn’t you leave?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu caged Qiao Tan Yuan against the door.

‘Get off me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan acted like Gu Jiao Wu's proximity didn't affect her.

'Before did you ask the little white rabbit to kiss you?' Gu Jiao Wu whispered in Qiao Tan Yuan's ear.

Gu Jiao Wu only needed to think about how Quan Zheng Hao would have kissed Qiao Tan Yuan if he didn't run to the elevators in time, and the discomfort in his heart would bubble.

'Yes, I asked him to kiss me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You have no right to interfere. Quan Zheng Hao isn't the only man who kissed me. Shen Cheng kissed me too. Who do you think you are? Gu Jiao Wu, we're divorced. I can kiss or sleep in any man's bed without needing your permission.'

Gu Jiao Wu creased his brows. Shen Cheng kissed Qiao Tan Yuan? He didn't want to think about other men kissing Qiao Tan Yuan. He held Qiao Tan Yuan's waist, and kissed her fiercely. Her lips belonged to him, and only he had the right to see her beautiful face when she orgasmed.

Qiao Tan Yuan had no room to escape. She was trapped between Gu Jiao Wu's body and the door. His kiss made her heart race. He pulled down her underpants, inserted his fingers into her and caressed her. She bit her lips, and swallowed her moan. He withdrew his fingers, hastily pulled down his pants and thrust hard into her.

'Um...' Qiao Tan Yuan moaned softly.

'Mum asked me to tell you to come downstairs to eat dinner,' Qiao Jie asked from outside the door. 'Big sister... are you OK?'

Qiao Tan Yuan's hand covered her mouth. She didn't want Qiao Jie to hear her moans of pleasure.

Gu Jiao Wu squeezed Qiao Tan Yuan's breast, thrust harder into her and bit her hand that was covering her mouth.

'Big sister...' Qiao Jie called.

'Open your mouth and answer him,' Gu Jiao Wu whispered.

Qiao Tan Yuan's soft inner walls tightened around Gu Jiao Wu's cock. She bit her tongue while her body vibrated with pleasure.

‘Um... I’ll come... down soon... um...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu withdrew, and thrust deep inside Qiao Tan Yuan. He bit her wrist, and she pressed her hand tighter against her mouth to stop moans escaping her mouth. He held her by the waist, and carried her to the bed. The moment her back touched the bed, he thrust into her trembling tightness, withdrew and ejaculated on her stomach.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan on the bed until their breathing became steady again. Then he reached for tissues, cleaned their bodies and pulled up his pants.

‘Did you enjoy the thrill of not getting caught?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan glared at the Gu Jiao Wu’s satisfied grin. Thrill? If Qiao Jie had pushed the door open, she would be too embarrassed to look at Qiao Jie in the eye again. Lucky Xiao Bao didn’t cry or Mrs Chu would have carried Xiao Bao into the room.

‘Gu Jiao Wu go to hell!’ Qiao Tan Yuan cursed.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan’s embarrassed face and smiled.

‘Shouldn’t you dress and go downstairs?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Qiao Jie and your parents are waiting for you to eat dinner.’

‘You... AH!’ Qiao Tan Yuan cursed.

Qiao Tan Yuan blushed, got out of bed and changed into a clean dress.

Gu Jiao Wu walked downstairs first. Qiao Jie was playing games on his phone, and Mr and Mrs Qiao were watching the news at the dining table while waiting for Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Jie, Mr and Mrs Qiao were surprised to see Gu Jiao Wu, but they didn’t object to him eating dinner with them.

After Qiao Tan Yuan was satisfied her clothes covered Gu Jiao Wu’s bite marks, she walked downstairs to eat dinner.

‘You... why are you here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked Gu Jiao Wu.

‘What took you so long?’ Mr Qiao asked. ‘Everyone’s waiting for you to eat dinner.’

‘Dad, I’m here now,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu had driven home. She ignored him and sat down. But he sat down next to her.

‘Who gave you permission to sit?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Go home and eat dinner.’

‘Tan Yuan...’ Mrs Qiao warned. ‘Don’t be rude. Jiao Wu is welcome to eat dinner here.’

‘Mum...’ Qiao Tan Yuan sulked.

Mr and Mrs Qiao glanced at Gu Jiao Wu’s bite marks on Qiao Tan Yuan’s neck and hand.

‘Everyone eat,’ Mr Qiao said.

Qiao Jie wanted to stand up for Qiao Tan Yuan, but Mr Qiao gave him a warning look to use his mouth to eat dinner.

Everyone listened to Mr Qiao and ate dinner.

‘Jiao Wu, I heard you’ve been managing Gu’s company for a couple of months now,’ Mr Qiao said.

‘Yes uncle,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Do you plan on staying here for good?’ Mrs Qiao asked.

‘Yes aunty,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Aunty, uncle, I plan to remarry Tan Yuan.’

Qiao Jie scoffed and Mr and Mrs Qiao were speechless.

‘Who wants to marry you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked coldly.

End of Chapter Seventy-Six

Related

Seventy-Seven



Chapter Seventy-Seven

Marriage.

‘Tan Yuan...’ Mrs Qiao said.

Qiao Tan Yuan closed her mouth.

‘Jiao Wu, uncle and I watched you grow up and love you like we love Qiao Jie,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘I can give you my blessing to marry Tan Yuan. But I want you to ask your heart one thing first. Do you want to marry Tan Yuan because of Xiao Bao or do you want to marry Tan Yuan because you want to spend the rest of your life with Tan Yuan?’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t understand what Mrs Qiao was asking him. Wasn’t spending his life with Qiao Tan Yuan, and giving Xiao Bao a family the same thing?

Mrs Qiao saw the confusion in Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes, and understood he didn’t know his true heart yet.

‘Jiao Wu, have you made a decision?’ Mrs Qiao asked.

‘Aunty, I’ve made my decision,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Gu Jiao Wu!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Who wants to marry you? Who wants to live the rest of their life with you? There’s no chance I’ll give you my daughter, and I won’t live the rest of my life with you! Stop dreaming!’

Mrs Qiao pulled Qiao Tan Yuan’s arm.

‘Tan Yuan, go upstairs and check on Xiao Bao,’ Mrs Qiao said.

‘Mum...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Aunty needs to eat dinner too,’ Mrs Qiao said.

Qiao Tan Yuan glared at Gu Jiao Wu, and walked upstairs.

Gu Jiao Wu was more worried about Mrs Qiao’s look of disapproval than Qiao Tan Yuan sulking.

‘Jiao Wu, the truth is Tan Yuan isn’t the only one with reservations,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘Even if Tan Yuan agrees to be with you because of Xiao Bao, I wouldn’t give you my blessing to marry Tan Yuan. How can I give my blessing when you don’t know what your heart wants? You need time to figure out why you want to marry Tan Yuan. Is it Xiao Bao or Tan Yuan who you want to spend the rest of your life with?’

‘Aunty, what’s the difference?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Mr Qiao patted Mrs Qiao’s hand to calm her.

‘Jiao Wu, go home and think about what’s the difference before you come see Tan Yuan again,’ Mr Qiao said.

‘But...’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Don’t think no one wants to marry big sister,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘Big sister has a long line of men waiting for her to give them a chance.’

‘Qiao Jie!’ Mrs Qiao warned. ‘Jiao Wu, go home and think about what marriage means to you. After you thought about everything carefully, you can come back.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to upset Mr and Mrs Gu and reluctantly stood.

‘Uncle, aunty, I’ll go home first,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll come back to see Xiao Bao and Tan Yuan soon.’

After Gu Jiao Wu left, Mr and Mrs Qiao sighed.

‘Why is someone intelligent and successful so clueless when it comes to love?’ Mrs Qiao asked.

‘He takes after his dad,’ Mr Qiao said and shook his head. ‘We shouldn’t interfere, and let them make their own decisions.’

‘Interfering?’ Mrs Qiao asked. ‘I’m only worried Tan Yuan will be hurt again.’

Mr Qiao kept quiet. He didn't need to say Qiao Tan Yuan had been hurting since the divorce. She suffered a difficult pregnancy, balancing work and home life on her own. What did anyone from the Gu Household do to support Qiao Tan Yuan? Nothing.

'Dad, mum, I think we shouldn't let him come here anymore,' Qiao Jie said. 'I'll hire security to guard the front gate, and instruct them not to let him in.'

'Qiao Jie!' Mr Qiao said. 'If you took your work duties seriously then your big sister and niece would be living a peaceful life in Denmark by now. And don't open your mouth to speak nonsense again otherwise I'll kick you to a remote place for you to start your own company.'

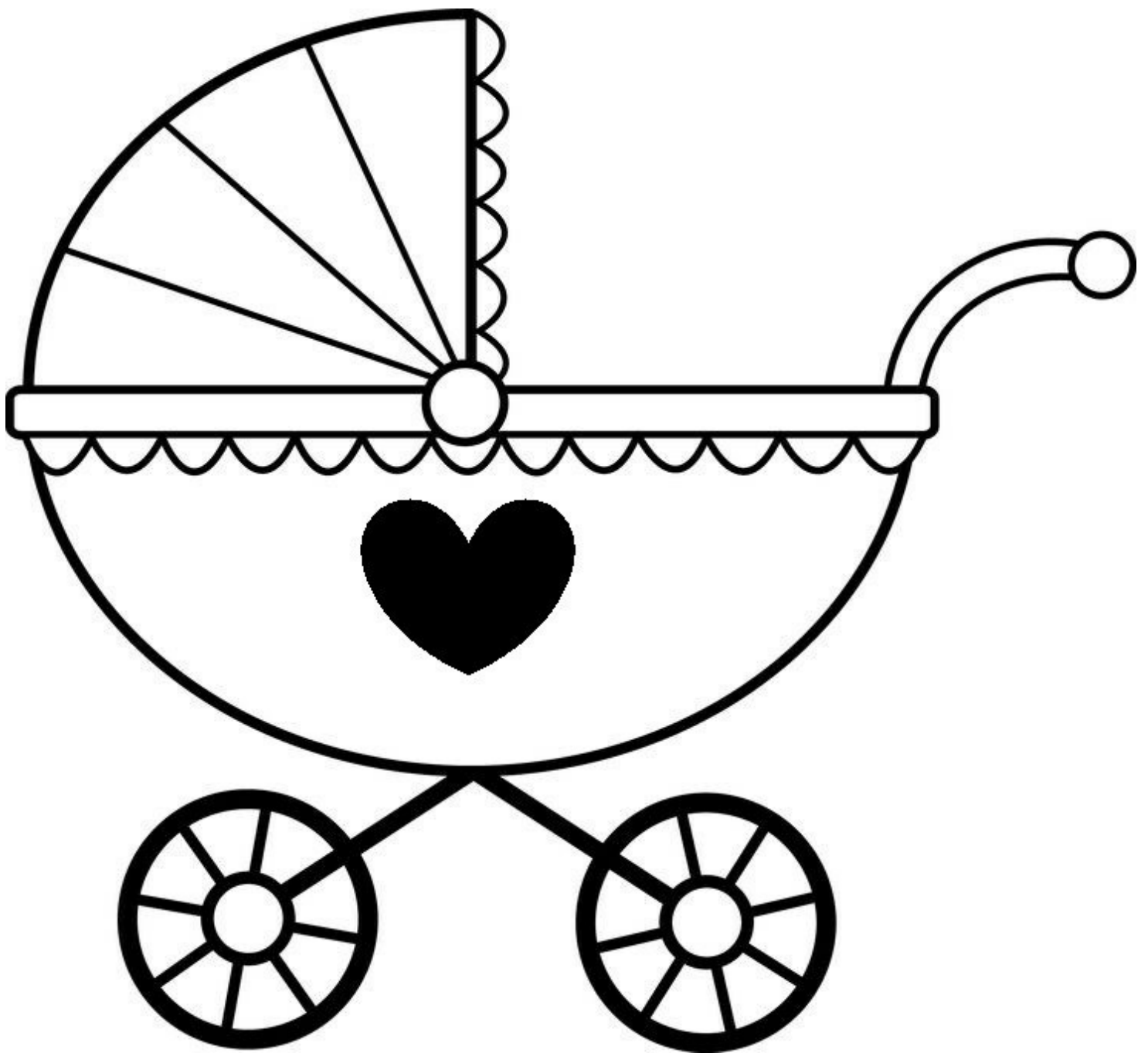
'OK, I won't say nonsense,' Qiao Jie surrendered. 'I'll go out.'

Qiao Jie strode outside, and Mr and Mrs Qiao shook their heads. Mr and Mrs Qiao wished they had at least one child that didn't make them worry about them. But Mr and Mrs Qiao hoped Gu Jiao Wu would think about why he wanted to marry Qiao Tan Yuan, and make the right decision.

End of Chapter Seventy-Seven

Related

Seventy-Eight



Chapter Seventy-Eight

Side Story

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju's Side Story:

Cheng Yi's back in town. Cheng Yi secretly followed Zheng Jia Ju to the Gu Mansion. Zheng Jia Ju was visiting the twins. Cheng Yi saw the twins looked similar to Gu Jiao Wu, and wrongly assumed Gu Jiao Wu didn't acknowledge Zheng Jia Ju's son because Zheng Jia Ju was Gu Jiao Wu's mistress instead of Gu Jiao Wu's wife.

Cheng Yi took Zheng Jia Ju and Zheng Jia Ju's son to a secret location. Zheng Jia Ju hoped Cheng Yi came back because he regained his memories. But Cheng Yi held a gun to Zheng Jia Ju's head, and told her he came back to kill her.

Zheng Jia Ju agreed to let Cheng Yi to kill her on the condition he won't kill their son. She would forgive Cheng Yi killing her, but she wouldn't forgive him if he killed their son.

Cheng Yi shot Zheng Jia Ju's arm. Zheng Jia Ju thought Cheng Yi shot her head, kissed him and told him she didn't hate him.

Chapter Seventy-Eight

On the weekend.

It was a sunny day. Qiao Tan Yuan carried Xiao Bao into the pram, and took Xiao Bao for a stroll around the front garden of the Qiao Mansion. Toy bells were dangled from the top of the pram. The wind blew past them, the toy bells chimed and Xiao Bao laughed. Qiao Tan Yuan smiled, stroked Xiao Bao's happy face with one hand and Xiao Bao played with her other hand.

Gu Jiao Wu walked through the front gate of the Qiao Mansion, and saw Qiao Tan Yuan's dazzling smile that was brighter than the sun.

Qiao Tan Yuan sensed someone staring at her, she looked around and her smile disappeared when she saw Gu Jiao Wu.

'Why are you here?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'To see Xiao Bao,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu smiled at Xiao Bao who looked adorable in the pram.

Qiao Tan Yuan saw Gu Jiao Wu stretching his hands to carry Xiao Bao, and frowned.

'Stop,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Do you want Xiao Bao to cry?'

'If I hold Xiao Bao often, she won't cry anymore,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan stood in front of the pram.

'Xiao Bao is my daughter,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You can go.'

‘Be reasonable, Xiao Bao’s my daughter too,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Your daughter?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Did you carry her for nine months in your stomach? Did you give birth to her? Did you breast feed her, changed her nappies, bathe her and comfort her in the middle of the night?’

‘You’re not being fair,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was a man, not a woman. How could he give birth to Xiao Bao?

‘Fair?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Have you treated me fairly? You haven’t done anything to take care of Xiao Bao, but you want to take Xiao Bao away from me? Don’t you think you’re acting like a swindler?’

‘Xiao Bao wouldn’t exist without me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan blushed. ‘You... don’t know how to be embarrassed.’

Gu Jiao Wu pulled Qiao Tan Yuan down onto a seat, sat next to her and smiled at Xiao Bao.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I’m serious,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I want us to get back together.’

‘Get back together for Xiao Bao’s sake?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Although Gu Jiao Wu was unsure why he wanted to be with Qiao Tan Yuan, he nodded his head.

‘For Xiao Bao’s sake,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan took a deep breath. She couldn’t keep staying in limbo with Gu Jiao Wu.

‘I don’t want to,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want Gu Jiao Wu to be with her for Xiao Bao’s sake.

‘Why can’t you be reasonable?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I am being reasonable,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu was unhappy to see Qiao Tan Yuan acting cold toward him. Didn’t she say to him she loved him? Why didn’t she want to get back together with him? He looked at her lips, the same sweet lips he kissed thoroughly last night. Thinking about them together in her bedroom aroused him.

Qiao Tan Yuan recognised the lust in Gu Jiao Wu's eyes. She sat further away from him to avoid his arms.

'Gu Jiao Wu, keep your hands to yourself,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She thought Gu Jiao Wu wanted to see Xiao Bao, and conveniently sleep with her too. 'Stay far away from me.'

Gu Jiao Wu successfully held Qiao Tan Yuan's waist the second time. He kissed her lips, and his warm hands caressed her body. But her heart felt empty, he wanted to be with her for Xiao Bao's sake.

'Gu Jiao Wu...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan laid her hands on Gu Jiao Wu's chest. She looked sadly at Xiao Bao.

'You said you want to be with me for Xiao Bao's sake,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'But you don't have to be with me for Xiao Bao's sake. I'll give you what you want. I'll give Xiao Bao to you.'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't believe Qiao Tan Yuan would give up Xiao Bao that easily.

'You can have Xiao Bao on one condition,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'm still breast feeding Xiao Bao. When I stop breast feeding Xiao Bao, you can take Xiao Bao back to the Gu Household.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu said.

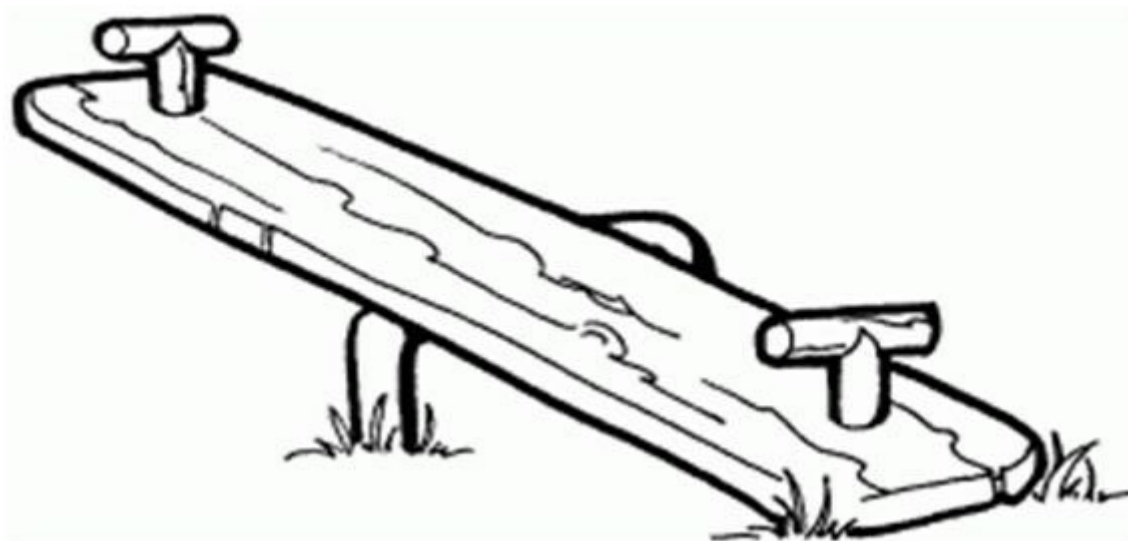
Gu Jiao Wu didn't expect Qiao Tan Yuan would agree to give him Xiao Bao.

'I'm giving you what you want,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You can go now. Don't bother me anymore.'

End of Chapter Seventy-Eight

Related

Seventy-Nine



Chapter Seventy-Nine

On the losing side.

Qiao Tan Yuan lost everything to Gu Jiao Wu. Whether it was a battle of wits or her heart. He didn't love her. She couldn't endure returning to a hollow marriage life with him again. If he wanted Xiao Bao, she would give him what he wanted. She was tired of always losing to him. She was tired of him lusting for her body while bruising her heart.

Qiao Tan Yuan could deny many things. But she couldn't lie to herself, she still loved Gu Jiao Wu. If he continued to spend time with her, she would cave and agree to marry him to give Xiao Bao a family. But if she married him again, he would turn her back on her the moment Xiao Bao returned to the Gu Household. He wouldn't look at her again like how he didn't look at her during their first marriage.

'Gu Jiao Wu, in a couple of months you'll get to take Xiao Bao back to the Gu Household,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You can go.'

Gu Jiao Wu sat still. He didn't know why he didn't want to leave Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan carried Xiao Bao in her arms.

'Gu Jiao Wu, you don't have to force yourself to get back together with me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'm giving you Xiao Bao. You can be with anyone you want

to be with. Are you satisfied?’

Qiao Tan Yuan carried Xiao Bao back to the nursery. For the first time in her life, her shoulders felt light. She looked at Xiao Bao’s frowning face, and small hands holding her blouse.

‘Xiao Bao don’t be fooled,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and smiled. ‘Of course mummy loves you, and needs you. Don’t worry, mummy isn’t giving you away.’

Qiao Tan Yuan lied to Gu Jiao Wu so he would stop bothering her for a couple of months.

Qiao Tan Yuan expected in a couple of months, Zheng Quan’s company’s products would be ready for the market and if successful then she didn’t need to worry about Qiao’s company making a substantial loss. Afterward she would raise Xiao Bao in Denmark.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked out the window, watched Gu Jiao Wu leave and smiled. She was going to show him in this world, he couldn’t get everything he wanted.

Later at the Gu Household’s front garden, Gu Jiao Wen was wishing his two demon sons were two angel daughters instead. His sons cried all day, whereas if he had daughters, they would be adorable and good. Not like his sons crying in the twin pram. He heard a car driving into the driveway. He turned around, and saw Gu Jiao Wu returning home.

‘Big brother, why are you home?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked. He thought Gu Jiao Wu left early in the morning to work on the weekend. ‘Aren’t you working today?’

‘It’s the weekend,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wen knew something was troubling Gu Jiao Wu, because Gu Jiao Wu was a master workaholic. He gestured for Gu Jiao Wu to sit on a bench with him, and Gu Jiao Wu helped push the twin pram to the bench.

Gu Jiao Wu smiled at his nephews, and eased some of his frustrations and confusion.

‘Why are you alone with the twins,’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Where’s Tan Pan Ting?’

‘She’s shopping with my mum,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

Gu Jiao Wu was envious of Gu Jiao Wen. Gu Jiao Wen was a happy family man.

‘Is something on your mind?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked. He rarely saw Gu Jiao Wu look so lost. ‘Do you want to talk about it?’

Gu Jiao Wu shook his head. He didn’t know what was wrong with him. Didn’t he get what he wanted? Qiao Tan Yuan promised him in a couple of months he could take Xiao Bao back to the Gu Household... why was he unhappy? He watched Gu Jiao Wen play with the twins, and didn’t know why he felt like he failed to keep his own family together.

‘What does marriage mean to you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wen heard Gu Jiao Wu’s question, and understood who was on Gu Jiao Wu’s mind.

‘A marriage is about two people loving each other, and holding hands together for the rest of their lives,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

‘Love?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘When you married Tan Pan Ting, you didn’t love her.’

‘I didn’t love Pan Ting when I married her but I love her now,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t understand Gu Jiao Wen’s contradictory explanation.

‘Marriage means something different to each person,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. ‘Before I married Pan Ting, my goal was to find someone I could live with. After marrying, and living with Pan Ting, my concept of marriage changed. I fell in love with Pan Ting. Getting married to live with someone, and marrying for love are two different things. Big brother, ask yourself if you want to marry Tan Yuan to give Xiao Bao a family or is it because you want to spend the rest of your life with Tan Yuan.’

Gu Jiao Wen’s question was the same question Mrs Qiao asked Gu Jiao Wu. It made Gu Jiao Wu even more confused.

‘When I first married Pan Ting, I was good to her out of obligation as a husband,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. ‘But now I’m good to her because I love her, and I want her to be happy.’

‘You love her and want her to be happy?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Um, I love her,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. ‘Big brother, I can say confidently after being with Pan Ting, I have no interest in another woman.’

Gu Jiao Wu silently stood, walked to his bedroom and mauled on Gu Jiao Wen’s words.

On the night of Tong Shang Wen’s birthday celebration, the guests were merry except for Gu Jiao Wu drinking and brooding in a corner.

Du Lei Xin sat next to the brooding Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Big brother, what’s wrong?’ Du Lei Xin asked. ‘Not in the mood to dance?’

‘No interest in dancing,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Since Gu Jiao Wu last saw Qiao Tan Yuan, he wasn’t interested in doing anything.

The birthday man, Tong Shang Wen dressed in a white suit, held his girlfriend’s hand and walked to Gu Jiao Wu’s corner.

‘Big brother, can’t you pretend to look happy at my birthday party?’ Tong Shang Wen asked.

‘Happy birthday,’ Gu Jiao Wu said gloomily.

‘Thank you,’ Tong Shang Wen said. He looked at the equally miserable Du Lei Xin, and frowned. ‘Do you two need to mope in a corner like this? Go mingle with the guests, and act like you’re having a good time while you two are here.’

Du Lei Xin didn’t see Gu Jiao Mai at the party, and didn’t want to stay at the party either. In the morning he offered to escort Gu Jiao Mai to the party, she said she would go on her own but he knew she wouldn’t come.

Gu Jiao Wu thought if Xiao Bao didn’t like him, what was the point of taking Xiao Bao back to the Gu Household? He didn’t want Xiao Bao to be unhappy like him.

‘Big brother, it’s my thirtieth,’ Tong Shang Wen said. ‘At least help me greet the guests.’

Gu Jiao Wu gestured for Tong Shang Wen to let him sit in peace.

Tong Shang Wen sighed, and walked his girlfriend back to the dance floor.

Du Lei Xin went somewhere to call Gu Jiao Mai to ask her where she was.

A while later Li Lam arrived at the party. She wore a white evening gown, and held a matching white clutch. She spotted Gu Jiao Wu alone in a corner, and approached him.

‘Oh, it’s you,’ Li Lam said.

Gu Jiao Wu looked up, and was surprised to see Li Lam.

‘You were invited?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Executive Tong invited my dad, but he’s busy and asked me to come on his behalf,’ Li Lam said.

Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t interested in small talk with Li Lam. He stood to walk away from her.

‘Wait, can you help me with something?’ Li Lam asked.

‘What?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘My dress... I accidentally teared my dress while getting out of the car,’ Li Lam said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t notice the small hole on Li Lam’s dress until she pointed to the hole.

‘I can’t mingle with the guests if I’m self-conscious about my dress,’ Li Lam said. ‘Can you ask someone to bring me a sewing kit?’

Gu Jiao Wu thought Li Lam was bothersome. The small hole was on the bottom layer of her dress.

‘Sit down,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘What?’ Li Lam asked and sat down.

Gu Jiao Wu teared off the bottom layer of the dress beneath Li Lam’s knees.

‘Done,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘What?’ Li Lam asked and stood.

Li Lam looked at the white dress fabric in Gu Jiao Wu’s hand then she looked at

her evening gown turned into a mini dress. But she was grateful it looked like a brand new dress.

‘You’re impressive,’ Li Lam praised and smiled. ‘Thank you.’

‘It’s nothing,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Do you mind being my dance partner?’ Li Lam asked.

Li Lam’s smile resembled Chu Da’s smile in Gu Jiao Wu’s memories. He heard footsteps, and didn’t answer. When he turned around, he saw Qiao Jie escort Qiao Tan Yuan into the function room.

End of Chapter Seventy-Nine

Related

Eighty



Chapter Eighty

White.

Qiao Tan Yuan saw Gu Jiao Wu holding a white fabric that matched Chu Da's mini dress, and she forced herself to smile. She made the right decision. Since she told Gu Jiao Wu she would give Xiao Bao to him, he didn't look for her.

Qiao Jie glared at Gu Jiao Wu when he realised what Gu Jiao Wu was holding.

'Big sister, let's go,' Qiao Jie said.

'Um,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked away from Gu Jiao Wu without looking back so she didn't see him frown.

'I'll walk you to the dance floor,' Gu Jiao Wu said coldly to Li Lam.

'Thank you,' Li Lam said.

Li Lam didn't know what relationship Gu Jiao Wu had with the beautiful woman. But she was happy she wore a white dress, which complemented Gu Jiao Wu's black suit.

On the way to the dance floor, Qiao Tan Yuan took off her coat and an usher hung her coat with the other guests' coats and jackets.

Tong Shang Wen and his girlfriend were chatting with clients when they saw Qiao Tan Yuan and Qiao Jie walked toward them.

'Welcome,' Tong Shang Wen said. His eyes swept over Qiao Tan Yuan's dress, and he was impressed. 'Tan Yuan, tonight you look beautiful.'

'Thank you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She gave Tong Shang Wen a birthday gift.

‘White suits you. Happy birthday. I hope you don’t throw away my small gift.’

‘Who would dare?’ Tong Shang Wen asked. ‘Even if you give me grass, I’ll still be happy.’

‘How can I give you grass on your thirtieth?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She smiled at Tong Shang Wen’s girlfriend. ‘Uncle and aunty must be happy their son is ready to settle down.’

Tong Shang Wen looked around, and was relieved Mr and Mrs Tong weren’t within hearing distance.

‘Don’t say nonsense,’ Tong Shang Wen said. ‘People may misunderstand.’

‘Big sister, I’ll go greet some guests,’ Qiao Jie said.

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded and Qiao Jie ran off.

‘Shang Wen, I’m going to find a seat to take a rest,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I was serving my little princess until she fell asleep before coming here.’

‘Um, I’ll come find you when the entertainment starts,’ Tong Shang Wen said.

Qiao Tan Yuan picked up a glass of juice from a waiter’s tray, and sat on seat. She saw Gu Jiao Wu escort Chu Da toward the dance floor, and her mood dampened. She was grateful she didn’t believe Gu Jiao Wu’s lies. Seeing Gu Jiao Wu with Chu Da confirmed he acted like he cared about her to get Xiao Bao. Even if she was going to die, she wouldn’t give him Xiao Bao.

‘Why don’t you go up to him and slap him?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked up. Quan Zheng Hao wore a white suit with a black bow tie. He looked at her dress and smiled at her.

‘Mind you own business,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I am minding my business,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘I was invited here.’

Qiao Tan Yuan hadn’t seen Quan Zheng Hao for several days. He recovered his handsome face.

‘Miss Beautiful, will you dance to this song with me?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t in the mood to dance, and she didn’t want to dance with Quan Zheng Hao either.

‘She’s not going to dance with you,’ Gu Jiao Wu interrupted.

Quan Zheng Hao looked at Li Lam standing next to Gu Jiao Wu, and thought it would provoke Qiao Tan Yuan to dance with him.

‘I didn’t ask you to dance,’ Quan Zheng Hao said to Gu Jiao Wu. ‘Besides, how do you know she doesn’t want to dance with me?’

‘I believe she’s not interested in dancing with you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said while looking at Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Really?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked. ‘You know her that well?’

‘Who said I don’t want to?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Of course I want to dance with him.’

Qiao Tan Yuan stood, and linked arms with Quan Zheng Hao.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked past Gu Jiao Wu. Who did he think he was? He brought Chu Da to the party, and wanted to interfere in her business too.

‘Let’s dance,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and smiled at Quan Zheng Hao.

‘My pleasure,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

Quan Zheng Hao smiled smugly at Gu Jiao Wu, and went to dance with Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘If you don’t mind, will you be my dance partner for this song?’ Li Lam asked.

Gu Jiao Wu wanted to decline, but he saw the way Quan Zheng Hao was dancing closely with Qiao Tan Yuan and he accepted.

Although Gu Jiao Wu danced with Li Lam, his eyes focused on Qiao Tan Yuan. He admitted the white dress did suit Li Lam, but in his eyes Qiao Tan Yuan looked beautiful in the tight fitting red dress. If Li Lam was a white lily then Qiao Tan Yuan was a beautiful red rose.

Gu Jiao Wu watched Quan Zheng Hao danced in rhythm with Qiao Tan Yuan, and he didn’t know why the discomfort in his heart bubbled again. He purposely led Li Lam closer to Qiao Tan Yuan, and waited for Quan Zheng Hao to twirl Qiao Tan Yuan. When Quan Zheng Hao twirled Qiao Tan Yuan, he twirled Li Lam, and switched dancing partners. The discomfort in his heart eased when he held Qiao

Tan Yuan in his arms.

‘Did you give our daughter to me because you want to be with the little white rabbit?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘It has nothing to do with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said coldly. ‘You have the right to bring Chu Da here. Why wouldn’t I have the right to dance with who I want to?’

‘Chu Da?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. He glanced at Li Lam. ‘Qiao Tan Yuan, she’s not Chu Da.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She wasn’t blind, she saw Chu Da’s face clearly. ‘Don’t you think you’re being selfish and egotistical? I don’t interfere in your relationship with another woman. You should return the favor, and not interfere in my relationship with another man.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan!’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

The discomfort in Gu Jiao Wu’s heart returned, and he tightened his hold on Qiao Tan Yuan’s back.

‘Do you think I would let you be with another man?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want Qiao Tan Yuan to dream of another man either.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to waste her breath with Gu Jiao Wu. She pushed his chest away from her.

‘Are you in a rush to go back to the little white rabbit?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to explain anything to the unreasonable Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Whether I want to go back to the little white rabbit or not is my business,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, have you forgotten? I’m not your dance partner for this song. Your dance partner is over there.’

End of Chapter Eighty

Related

Eighty-One



Chapter Eighty-One

Direction.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to point at Chu Da, but Gu Jiao Wu held her hand, twirled them around a dancing couple and off the dance floor.

‘I won’t give you an opportunity to go back to the little white rabbit,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s back, and led her to the elevators. Qiao Tan Yuan looked over her shoulders. Quan Zheng Hao and Li Lam were stuck behind other dancers, Qiao Jie, Tong Shang Wen and Hu Zui Ren were chatting with guests. No one noticed Gu Jiao Wu was taking her away from the party.

When the song ended, Quan Zheng Hao searched for Qiao Tan Yuan. He was angry Gu Jiao Wu had taken Qiao Tan Yuan away from the party. In the future, he wasn’t going to let Gu Jiao Wu take Qiao Tan Yuan again.

Upstairs, Qiao Tan Yuan recognised Gu Jiao Wu took her to his apartment where they spent the night together. She immediately turned around to open the door and escape. Gu Jiao Wu locked the door, and carried her to the bed. He laid on top of her, and she felt their hearts racing. There was no retreat. He kissed her lips before she could protest, she didn’t want to be drawn back into his lies. She lifted her knee to kick him, he was prepared for her attack and

scissored his legs around her legs.

Qiao Tan Yuan moved her head side to side to avoid Gu Jiao Wu's lips. He held her head, and seduced her with his lips.

'You're mine,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu pulled Qiao Tan Yuan's strapless red dress down. It was something he wanted to do the moment he saw her arrive at the party.

'Stop,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't wear a bra under her dress, her breasts were exposed.

Gu Jiao Wu's hands rubbed Qiao Tan Yuan's soft breasts. The thought of another man seeing Qiao Tan Yuan naked made him crazy.

'Gu Jiao Wu!' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Stop! Your Chu Da is waiting downstairs for you!'

Chu Da? It was the first time Gu Jiao Wu didn't want hear or think about the name Chu Da. He didn't want Qiao Tan Yuan to misunderstand.

'She's not Chu Da,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He bit Qiao Tan Yuan's shoulder. 'Qiao Tan Yuan, how can you think of another person in a time like this?'

'Gu Jiao Wu!' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to think about other people when she was with Gu Jiao Wu. But she needed to think about other people to protect herself from believing Gu Jiao Wu's lies again.

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan's lips while undressing them.

'I won't give you time to think about another person,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu wanted Qiao Tan Yuan to only think about him the way he only thought about her when they were intimate with each other.

Qiao Tan Yuan was lost in Gu Jiao Wu's kiss. He pulled her body up, and didn't leave any part of her body untouched.

In the middle of the night, Qiao Tan Yuan opened her eyes. She didn't know how many times her body, and Gu Jiao Wu's body peaked together. But she panicked when she felt his erection rubbing against her bottom.

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s body ached everywhere above and below her waist.

Gu Jiao Wu heard Qiao Tan Yuan’s tired tone of voice, and smiled. He hugged her tightly from behind.

‘Are you tired?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan heard the smugness in Gu Jiao Wu’s tone of voice, but she was too tired to curse him.

‘Do you want more?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked and turned Qiao Tan Yuan’s body around to face him.

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan gathered her weak energy, and put her hands on Gu Jiao Wu’s chest. Her body wouldn’t cope if his body penetrated her body again so soon.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, stay away,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu’s body could kill Qiao Tan Yuan’s body through extreme pleasure.

Gu Jiao Wu spared Qiao Tan Yuan, wrapped her arms around his waist, and hugged her tightly.

‘Sleep,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan closed her eyes, she needed sleep to let her body rest.

In the morning, Qiao Tan Yuan had a good night sleep but her body was still recovering from Gu Jiao Wu’s physical prowess.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s limp arms drupe, and she felt warm skin under her arms. She opened her eyes, Gu Jiao Wu was sleeping soundly. In another person’s eyes, his sleeping face looked angelic but in that moment she thought he had a hateful face. He didn’t know she lied to him by promising to give him Xiao Bao. But if he believed he got what he wanted, why wouldn’t he let her go? If she wasn’t someone important to him, why did he continue to act like he cared about her?

Qiao Tan Yuan wondered if it was Gu Jiao Wu’s male pride that couldn’t accept seeing her with another man. Regardless why, it didn’t change the truth, he was an AH. She didn’t want to be in the same bed as him. She got out of bed, and her

legs were limp too. His arm braced her waist to stop her from falling, pulled her back to bed and his body snuggled her body. She turned her head around to look at him, and was surprised to see gentleness in his eyes. It was the first time he looked at her that way.

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan's dazed face was loveable, and he bit her loveable lips.

'Gu Jiao Wu!' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You're too much! What right do you have to do this to me?'

'What did I do to you?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan's embarrassed face, and didn't understand what she meant.

'You... you...' Qiao Tan Yuan said. Gu Jiao Wu wasn't embarrassed, but she was so she turned her back on him. 'What right do you have to touch me? Can't you see you're too much?'

'Too much?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. He turned Qiao Tan Yuan around to see her face. 'I can't see.'

'You...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Qiao Tan Yuan,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He looked at Qiao Tan Yuan sincerely, and held her hand. 'Let's get back together.'

'Gu Jiao Wu!' Qiao Tan Yuan said. Those words only made her nauseous. 'Who wants to get back together with you? Stop dreaming. I told you I won't get back together with you. You can go to hell.' She paused to breathe. 'I'm giving you Xiao Bao. What else do you want?'

'This isn't about Xiao Bao,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was unclear why he wanted to be with Qiao Tan Yuan, but he was certain he didn't want her to be with another man.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, can you give us another chance?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Can we start again?'

Qiao Tan Yuan was confused by Gu Jiao Wu's strong warm hand holding her small hand.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I realised I can’t let you go,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I want to start again with you.’

‘You... what are you saying?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She thought she was hallucinating. Was Gu Jiao Wu joking? ‘Today isn’t April Fools’ Day.’

‘Of course it’s not,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. It wasn’t even April. He was being serious. ‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I want to get back together with you not only for Xiao Bao’s sake, I also truly want to be with you.’

‘To be with me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She couldn’t believe what she heard. ‘Are you saying you love me? Is that why you want to get back together with me?’

‘Love?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘If seeing you with another man makes me jealous, and if I’m only interested in you means I love you then I love you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was shocked to hear Gu Jiao Wu say he loved her for the first time. If during their marriage they were lying in bed together, and he held her hand while saying he loved her then she would faint with happiness.

End of Chapter Eighty-One

Related

Eighty-Two



Chapter Eighty-Two

Heart.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, do you know what you’re saying?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Do you know who I am? I’m Qiao Tan Yuan! The person you hate the most. If you hate me then why are you saying you love me?’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, in the past you were a hateful,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I did hate you. But now I...’

‘Now you love me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Do you think I’ll believe you?’

‘Why don’t you believe me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Why should I believe you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, how can I believe you suddenly changed from hating me to loving me? If you were me, would you believe?’

‘Because now you’re different...’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He didn’t know what to say to make Qiao Tan Yuan believe him. ‘I did hate you in the past. But now it’s not the same. After Xiao Bao was born...’

‘Xiao Bao?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She picked up a pillow, and threw it at Gu Jiao Wu’s face. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, go to hell!’

Qiao Tan Yuan turned around to leave. Gu Jiao Wu turned her back around, and he pressed their warm chests together.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you AH!’ Qiao Tan Yuan cursed. ‘If you want Xiao Bao, I’m giving you Xiao Bao. Let me go!’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, listen to me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t know how Qiao Tan Yuan could be so impatient.

‘I’m not listening,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She covered her ears. ‘I don’t want to hear you say anything else.’

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan breathless so she would listen to him.

‘Now will you listen to me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s waist to stop her leaving.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I admit I hated you in the past,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘But after Xiao Bao was born, I saw different sides of you that surprised me like how you were willing to sacrifice your life to save Xiao Bao. There are many things I discovered about you that I don’t hate. In the past we didn’t understand each other, and I couldn’t let go of my hatred toward you. But now it’s different. Why don’t we give each other a chance to understand each other more, and perhaps...’

For the first time Qiao Tan Yuan understood Gu Jiao Wu’s thoughts by looking at his eyes. Her heart was overwhelmed with conflicting feelings. The pain of chasing Gu Jiao Wu, and the determination to let go of Gu Jiao Wu. Gu Jiao Wu’s confession was too surreal like she was dreaming.

‘Are you saying you want us to start again?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Yes,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Not because of Xiao Bao or anyone else. I want to start again, because I want to be with you, Qiao Tan Yuan.’

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Gu Jiao Wu’s broad chest, he held her hand on top of his heart. She was too shocked and confused to believe he wasn’t lying. She pulled her hand out of his hand, and he pulled her closer to him.

‘Let me go,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Are you agreeing to start again?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, what makes you think I need to get back

together with you if you open your mouth? You can't have everything. You say you love me, but it's a pity I don't love you anymore. I don't love you!

'You don't love me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't believe Qiao Tan Yuan didn't love him.

'Yes,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I don't love you. I don't love you...'

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan, and swallowed her lies. He held her waist, and pressed their bodies together.

'Do you love me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I hate you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Even if you use this way to force me to be with you, you'll gain nothing.'

'Oh?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'I'm going to keep using this way until you say you love me.'

What? Qiao Tan Yuan didn't get a chance to open her mouth. Gu Jiao Wu kissed her lips, spread her legs and entered her body.

'Do you love me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan's waist, pressed her back against the bedhead and moved in and out of her body.

'Ah... um... no...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu pushed Qiao Tan Yuan's body over the edge of climax.

'Do you love me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Um... um... put me down... no...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan held onto Gu Jiao Wu's shoulders. She didn't want to fall. Their bodies were still joined when he lifted her off the bed, and carried her toward the bathroom.

'Don't you want to bathe?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'If I let go, I'm scared you'll fall on the floor.'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't have a choice except let Gu Jiao Wu carry her to the bathroom. When he put her down in the Jacuzzi, she remembered what they did

together last time and blushed.

‘Stop!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m tired.’

Qiao Tan Yuan’s back, waist, legs and all her muscles were numb.

‘Stop?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. He turned on the tap, and smiled at Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘I’m only helping you take a bath.’

‘Really?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t believe Gu Jiao Wu was that generous.

‘Really,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu did help Qiao Tan Yuan have a bath after he extracted pleasure from her body.

Gu Jiao Wu carried Qiao Tan Yuan back to the bed after they bathed. He looked at the clothes he ripped on the floor, and reached for his phone.

‘Take a rest,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll call someone to bring new clothes.’

Qiao Tan Yuan had enough energy to pull the bedsheet over her body, and close her eyes.

Gu Jiao Wu walked to the living room, he called an assistant to deliver new clothes and breakfast to his apartment.

By the time the clothes and breakfast were delivered it was nine in the morning. Gu Jiao Wu returned to the master bedroom, and saw Qiao Tan Yuan was still sleeping.

‘Wake up and eat breakfast,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I want to sleep,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and waved her arms. ‘Don’t disturb me.’

‘If you don’t wake up, I’ll sleep with you,’ Gu Jiao Wu threatened. ‘I don’t mind sleeping with you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan heard Gu Jiao Wu’s threat, opened her eyes and Gu Jiao Wu’s lips were close to her lips.

‘Don’t you know how to be embarrassed?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘If you’re awake, eat breakfast,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu helped Qiao Tan Yuan wear his shirt from last night, and carried her to the living room. He only had a towel around his waist. She could picture what would happen on the sofa if she refused to eat breakfast. So she ate breakfast. It would be strange if she wasn't hungry after being kept active throughout the night, and early morning.

After breakfast, Gu Jiao Wu gave Qiao Tan Yuan new clothes in the master bedroom.

'Get dress and I'll drive you home,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan heard home, and she looked at the clock on the wall.

'Why didn't you tell me it's this late in the morning?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'You were still sleeping before,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If you don't get dress, you'll get home even later.'

'Gu Jiao Wu!' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to scratch Gu Jiao Wu's eyes out. How was she going to explain why she didn't return home last night to her family? It was the second time she spent the night with Gu Jiao Wu.

'It's nothing I haven't seen,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If you're going to stall, I don't mind helping you dress.'

'Who wants you to see?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan turned her back to Gu Jiao Wu, took off his shirt and changed into her new clothes. But she felt him staring at her body while she changed. She blushed, turned around and he was dressed immaculately.

'Let's go,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan's hand, and walked her to his car. In his car, she rubbed her eyelids. Last night Qiao Jie drove her to the party, but she was returning home in Gu Jiao Wu's car.

End of Chapter Eighty-Two

Related

Eighty-Three



Chapter Eighty-Three

Home.

‘What’s wrong?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Do you even need to ask?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘If you’re tired, take a nap,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll wake you up when you’re home.’

Qiao Tan Yuan closed her eyes, and napped.

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan looked angelic when she was sleeping unlike when she was awake.

Later Gu Jiao Wu stopped the car at the Qiao Mansion. He didn’t want to disturb Qiao Tan Yuan’s sleep so he carried her to her bedroom.

Mrs Qiao heard Qiao Tan Yuan’s bedroom door opened from the nursery. She walked out of the nursery, and was surprised to see Gu Jiao Wu carrying Qiao Tan Yuan to bed. She quietly walked into Qiao Tan Yuan’s bedroom, and watched Gu Jiao Wu tuck Qiao Tan Yuan in bed.

‘Jiao Wu... you and Tan Yuan...’ Mrs Qiao said.

‘Aunty, Tan Yuan and I are getting married,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Tan Yuan...’ Mrs Qiao said.

‘Tan Yuan agreed,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Mrs Qiao didn’t know what to say, and let Gu Jiao Wu walk to the nursery.

Mrs Chu had fed baby food puree to Xiao Bao who was more than four months old. Gu Jiao Wu watched Xiao Bao smile at the toys Mrs Chu was holding above Xiao Bao.

Gu Jiao Wu played with Xiao Bao for a while but she ignored him. He wasn't upset, because there would be more opportunities for him to bond with Xiao Bao after Qiao Tan Yuan live together with him again.

In the afternoon, Qiao Tan Yuan heard Xiao Bao cry. She woke up and walked into the nursery. Xiao Bao stopped crying when she held Xiao Bao in her arms. She looked at Xiao Bao's small face that looked like Gu Jiao Wu.

'Xiao Bao what should I believe?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know if Gu Jiao Wu loved her or if he lied to her. Lately he had changed, and treated her better. She thought what Du Lei Xin said was true, she didn't understand Gu Jiao Wu as deeply as she thought she did in the past.

Qiao Tan Yuan could see Gu Jiao Wu wouldn't lose anything by marrying her again. What if Gu Jiao Wu cast her aside after Xiao Bao was added to the Gu Household family register? She didn't know if she could forgive Gu Jiao Wu. It was hard for her to forget how much he hated her, and he didn't give them a chance during their first marriage. She didn't know if he lied to her about loving her to convince her to marry him again, because he truly wanted to give Xiao Bao a family.

Mrs Chu finished eating lunch. Qiao Tan Yuan was still tired, she let Mrs Chu play with Xiao Bao while she laid in bed to think about hers and Xiao Bao's future. She was older and wiser. She couldn't let Gu Jiao Wu use her love to take Xiao Bao from her. She remembered how Gu Jiao Wu held Chu Da closely last night. How could she believe he loved her when he had Chu Da? It made sense why he would lie to her about loving her. Chu Da was a teacher who loved children, but Chu Da couldn't have children. He wanted to marry her again so they would have more children together then he would divorce her again to give Chu Da children. She wasn't going to fall for his scheme. Soon she would raise Xiao Bao in Denmark.

In the evening, Gu Jiao Wu drove to the Qiao Mansion. He visited Xiao Bao in the nursery first. Xiao Bao cried in his arms again, and he reluctantly let Mrs Chu

hold Xiao Bao.

When Gu Jiao Wu walked into Qiao Tan Yuan's bedroom, she was sitting on the sofa reading a book about Denmark. He grabbed the book from her, and frowned.

'Are you still planning to go to Denmark?' Gu Jiao Wu asked and sat on the sofa next to Qiao Tan Yuan.

'It doesn't involve you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said and retrieved her book.

'Last night I confessed clearly to you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'My decision is clear too,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I told you I don't want to get back together with you. I don't want to live with you.'

'What's wrong?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't understand why Qiao Tan Yuan had her guard up.

'Nothing's wrong,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'It's you who has a problem.'

'What do you mean?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I mean I don't want to marry someone despicable like you again,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu froze on the sofa.

'What do you mean?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'You understand what I mean,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'The door is that way.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Last night you said you love me.'

'What love?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'You forced me to say I love you. Do you actually believe I love you?'

Gu Jiao Wu pulled Qiao Tan Yuan into his chest, and held her tightly.

'What happened?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Why are you upset with me?'

'Do you think I'm an idiot?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Do you think I'll believe you went from hating me to loving me?'

Gu Jiao Wu bit Qiao Tan Yuan's lips.

‘I didn’t lie to you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I don’t believe you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘All these years you’ve loved, and pined for Chu Da. How can you love Chu Da, and sleep with me? Can’t you see how despicable you are?’

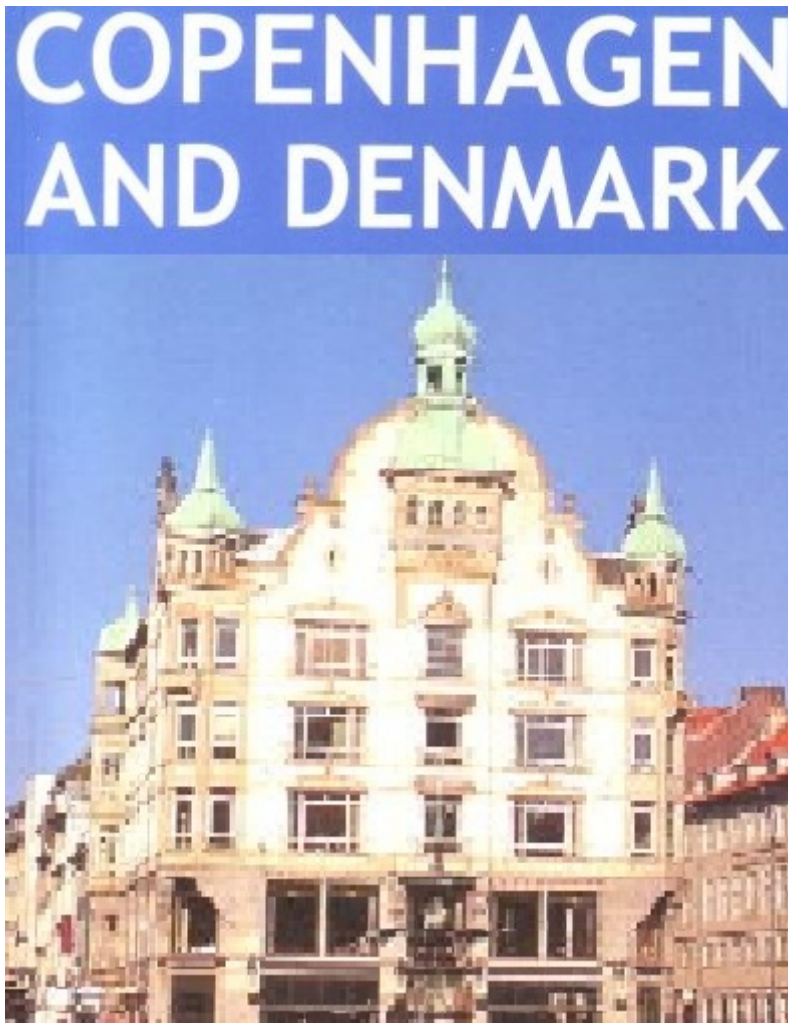
‘Qiao Tan Yuan!’ Gu Jiao Wu said and held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hands. ‘It’s not what you’re thinking. I’m not with Chu Da. You’re the only woman I’m sleeping with since our first marriage.’

‘Do you actually think I’ll believe your lies?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

End of Chapter Eighty-Three

Related

Eighty-Four



Chapter Eighty-Four

Third party.

‘It’s not what you’re thinking,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Why do you want to drag someone else into our relationship?’

Someone else? Chu Da was the thorn in Qiao Tan Yuan’s heart.

‘Chu Da isn’t someone else,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘She’s the woman you love. The woman who has your heart. Do you think I don’t know?’

Qiao Tan Yuan tried pushing Gu Jiao Wu off her, but he only held her tighter.

‘I’m being calm and reasonable,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Let go of me. Gu Jiao Wu, I won’t get back together with you. I’m Qiao Tan Yuan. I’m not going to degrade myself anymore. I want to find a love that belongs to me. I want a man who loves me, and only has me in his heart. I don’t want a man like you who is unfaithful, and has another woman in their heart. Now do you understand?’

Gu Jiao Wu didn't know why Chu Da's bright face had faded in his heart. He looked at the Qiao Tan Yuan determination on her face to leave him, and he held her tighter. Many thoughts ran through his head, and feelings in his heart that made it hard for him to get Qiao Tan Yuan to believe him.

'I don't know what to say to make you believe me,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Right now I can't say why I love you. But I can say right now in my eyes there is only you, and the person I'm holding is only you. I don't want to mention the past anymore, and the woman you saw last night isn't Chu Da.'

'If she's not Chu Da, why does she look like Chu Da?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'I think she's a suspicious person,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'She knows a lot about Chu Da's past, but I'm certain she's not Chu Da.'

'Are they sisters?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'No, I had her investigated,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Her name is Li Lam. The Li Household's heiress. My mum arranged a meeting for us to meet.'

'An arranged meeting?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Um,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'The last time you saw Li Lam and I together at the cafe was an arranged meeting my mum setup. I can promise you, Li Lam isn't Chu Da. If Li Lam is Chu Da, I would be with Chu Da by now, and you and I wouldn't be together.'

'Because Chu Da...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to say she knew Chu Da couldn't have children. She didn't know if Chu Da was alive after getting treatment.

'Why?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Because Chu Da isn't with you, you're using me as her substitute,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'If you find Chu Da, you'll be with her. In your heart there's only Chu Da. Let me go, and you can go to hell!'

'Qiao Tan Yuan, do you really believe I'm using you as someone else's substitute?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Even if I wanted a substitute, don't you think I would want to be with a substitute I like? Even if the substitute was Xiao Bao's mother, if I didn't like the substitute, don't you think I can force the substitute to

return Xiao Bao to the Gu Household?’

‘You wouldn’t...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I would,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘At least believe I can use more dirty tactics than you.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I can’t be with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Why?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I told you, I want to be with someone who truly loves me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You’re not capable of loving me.’

‘True love?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Right now I can’t promise you I know why I love you. But I want you to give us a chance to see if you’re the person I’ll love the most. Why won’t you give us a chance?’

‘There’s no point,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You’re not capable of loving me. You said I’m not the type of woman you like.’

‘If love can be controlled by the head then it wouldn’t be love,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Yes, you’re not the type of woman I like. But I can promise you right now I do like you even if you’re not the type I like. What’s really stopping you from giving us a chance?’

‘If you want me to give us a chance, I have one condition,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘When you can forget Chu Da, I’ll get back together with you.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan...’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Don’t call me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘We both know you married me to punish me. I don’t want to go back to the past. Today you can say you like me because of Xiao Bao. If tomorrow Chu Da comes back to you, you’ll be cold toward me like before. I can’t bear that kind of pain a second time. Gu Jiao Wu, if we’re not fated to be together, I rather not have you love me for a day. Having you love me for a day, and leaving me tomorrow, for me it’s more painful than death.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I promise you if I say I want to be with you even if Chu Da returns, I won’t leave you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Perhaps you won’t leave me, but your heart is with Chu Da,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu wouldn't know how he felt if he saw Chu Da again. But he was determined to find Chu Da to know why Chu Da left him, and get closure. He didn't want Qiao Tan Yuan to know he was still looking for Chu Da, because he didn't want Qiao Tan Yuan to misunderstand him.

While Gu Jiao Wu was distracted, Qiao Tan Yuan escaped his embrace and took several steps away from him.

'Gu Jiao Wu, you can't give me what I want,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'What you can give me, I don't want. If you sincerely like me then respecting my decision is the best way to show you like me.'

'Big sister, come downstairs to eat dinner,' Qiao Jie said from outside the door.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked downstairs with Qiao Jie. Gu Jiao Wu stared at the books about Denmark on the coffee table for a while before he walked downstairs.

When Gu Jiao Wu entered the dining room, he approached Qiao Tan Yuan but she changed to another seat far away from him. Qiao Jie, Mr and Mrs Qiao acted like they didn't notice the tension between Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Jiao Wu, sit and eat dinner with us,' Mr Qiao said.

'Uncle, aunty, I need to work overtime so I can't stay for dinner,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

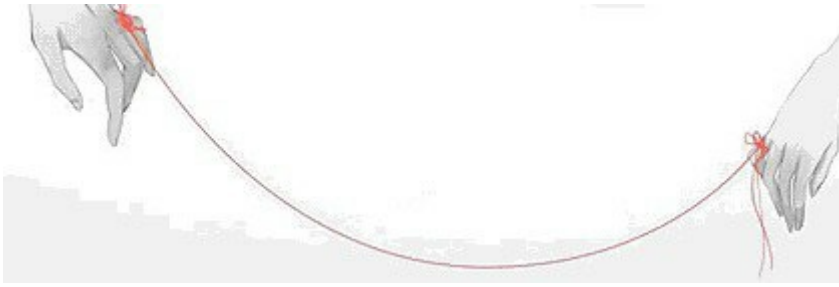
Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan, she was still upset with him. He knew if he stay, she wasn't in the right mind frame to listen to his explanation and believe him.

Qiao Tan Yuan watched Gu Jiao Wu leave, and she was surprised her heart left with him.

End of Chapter Eighty-Four

Related

Eighty-Five



Chapter Eighty-Five

‘What happened?’ Mrs Qiao asked.

‘Mum, I’m hungry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and picked up her bowl of food. ‘Let’s eat.’

‘Last night you and Jiao Wu...’ Mrs Qiao said.

‘Mum, dad, don’t talk about him,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘Big sister deserves better than him.’

‘Qiao Jie!’ Mr Qiao said. ‘Eat dinner.’

Outside the Qiao Mansion, Gu Jiao Wu received a call from Li Lam. He agreed to meet her at a restaurant to get answers.

At the restaurant, Gu Jiao Wu sat opposite Li Lam at a table.

‘What do you want?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Can’t I call you to eat a dinner with me?’ Li Lam asked.

Li Lam poured wine into a glass.

‘I’m not here to eat dinner with you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t impressed by the steak dinner set out in front of him. If he wanted to eat dinner, he would eat dinner with Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘I know,’ Li Lam said. ‘You came here because you want to ask questions. It’s only fair if I get to ask you questions too. I asked to meet you here, because I wanted to treat you a dinner to thank you for helping me at the party.’

‘I’m here because I want you to answer my questions,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I know what questions you want to ask me,’ Li Lam said. ‘If you want my answers, at least eat the slow cooked steak.’

Li Lam cut her steak and ate while Gu Jiao Wu didn’t touch the food or wine.

‘Where is Chu Da?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Don’t say you’re Chu Da.’

‘Why won’t you believe I’m Chu Da?’ Li Lam asked.

‘It doesn’t matter how much a person undergoes plastic surgery,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘They can’t hide who they are on the inside. I can feel you’re not Chu Da.’

Li Lam didn’t think she would lose to a feeling.

‘I’ll answer your question if you answer my question first,’ Li Lam said. ‘Who’s the woman you disappeared with last night?’

‘If I answer your question, will you tell me where’s Chu Da?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘After you find Chu Da, will you choose to be with Chu Da?’ Li Lam asked.

‘No, I won’t choose to be with Chu Da,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘If you don’t want to be with Chu Da, why do you want to find Chu Da?’ Li Lam asked. ‘You still haven’t answered my first question.’

‘The woman you saw last night is my wife,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Isn’t she your ex-wife, Qiao Tan Yuan?’ Li Lam asked.

‘My relationship with my wife has nothing to do with you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘But Chu Da has the right to know,’ Li Lam said. ‘If you loved Chu Da, how can you forget Chu Da so quickly and be with your ex-wife...’

A waitress interrupted, and she put the bill on the table.

‘I’ll pay for dinner,’ Gu Jiao Wu said to Li Lam. ‘I don’t have a habit of letting women pay for dinner.’

‘But you have a habit of breaking women’s hearts,’ Li Lam said. ‘Thank you for meeting me for dinner. In the future I won’t disturb you.’

‘Wait, you haven’t answered my questions,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Li Lam looked like she was withholding important news, but she left the restaurant without answering Gu Jiao Wu’s questions. He walked to his car, and

thought about what Li Lam meant when she said he had a habit of breaking women's hearts. Then he thought about Qiao Tan Yuan, and he wanted to see her so he drove back to the Qiao Mansion. But he stayed in his car outside the Qiao Mansion. He wondered what Qiao Tan Yuan was doing. Was Qiao Tan Yuan playing with their daughter or was she taking a bath? He remembered taking a bath with Qiao Tan Yuan last night, and he was immediately aroused.

Earlier, Qiao Tan Yuan booked new flight tickets to Denmark for her and Xiao Bao. Distance would help her forget Gu Jiao Wu, and he couldn't hurt her again.

When Qiao Tan Yuan heard a car outside her home, she walked to the window and saw Gu Jiao Wu's car. She didn't know why he came back late at night, and why he looked lonely from a distance. He didn't come inside her home like she expected, but drove off again. She shook her head, told herself to forget him and not to worry about why he looked lonely. If she had set her mind on moving on with her life then she needed to let go of the past.

End of Chapter Eighty-Five

Related

Eighty-Six



Chapter Eighty-Six

Roses.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat in her office reviewing the last couple of reports she had left before her departure date.

‘Beautiful red roses for a beautiful woman,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked up, and was annoyed to see Quan Zheng Hao.

‘Get rid of it,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I hate roses.’

Quan Zheng Hao sat opposite Qiao Tan Yuan, and put the red roses on her desk.

‘Do you hate roses or the giver?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked.

‘What’s the difference?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘There’s a significant difference,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘If you hate roses, I can replace them with your favorite flowers. If you hate the giver, my heart would be devastated.’

‘I hate the giver,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘No matter what you give me, I’ll hate it. Are you satisfied?’

‘Unsatisfied,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘Why can’t you see my sincerity? Besides, you owe me.’

‘What do I owe you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Have you forgotten you ditched me at the party to run off with another man?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked. ‘Don’t you think you’re too much?’

Too much? Qiao Tan Yuan put the report down.

‘I didn’t promise to go to the party with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘True, but you agreed to be my dance partner,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘Don’t you think you’re too much by leaving me in the middle of our dance?’

‘What do you want?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Eat a meal with me as an apology,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘After work I need to go home to be with my daughter so I don’t have time to eat with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Then I’ll come home with you and meet your daughter too,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘My daughter is scared of strangers,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘She only likes seeing people she is familiar with.’

Quan Zheng Hao laughed. ‘Tan Yuan, you’re an interesting woman. I’m going to marry you.’

‘A pity I won’t marry you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Why not?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked. ‘Is it because of your jealous ex-husband? The way he looked at me at the party was like he wanted to kill me. Why is he still clinging onto you?’

‘Quan Zheng Hao!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Leave my office!’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, don’t wait for roses to wilt,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘You need to appreciate roses when they’re fresh. You shouldn’t let go of your chance to be with me, because you won’t find a better man than me.’

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to vomit.

‘Have you heard of the saying modesty accompanies profit and arrogance precedes destruction?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Aren’t I allowed to be confident?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked.

‘Yes you can be confident,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Ask yourself who you are. You’re the heir of Quan’s company. You had a fall out with your father, because your father had found a fiancée for you. You don’t want your father to control

your work and private life. So you want to spread your wings, and start a company on your own without your father's money, which is why you looked for investors for Zheng Quan's company. You thought if you collaborate with Qiao's company, your father will stop underestimating you.'

'How did you find out about my family?' Quan Zheng Hao asked.

'Do you think I'm a fool?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Do you think one million dollars is petty cash? Would you carelessly give a stranger one million dollars? Do you think I would give you one million dollars without investigating who you are? Do you think getting Qiao Jie drunk to sign a contract then you can force me to do your bidding?'

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Quan Zheng Hao. 'You agreed to collaborate with me because of my old man. I thought you believed in my abilities. But you knew my old man would save me if I failed, and Qiao's company would recoup any losses from my old man.'

'Why else would I want to collaborate with you?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'You using dirty tactics to trap Qiao Jie is enough to deter me from collaborating with you. But I believe Mr Quan Senior wouldn't let his son drown so I...'

'Enough!' Quan Zheng Hao said. 'Qiao Tan Yuan, you're a cruel woman.'

'Cruel?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'If I was you, I would trap Qiao Jie too. But it doesn't mean I can forgive you for using my little brother. Yes, we're the same type of people who would do anything to get what they want. It's because we're the same type, which is why I won't fall for you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Quan Zheng Hao's distraught face, and decided to soften the blow.

'In the past I used many dirty tactics to get what I want,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'But now I know some things are unattainable regardless of how many tactics I use.'

Qiao Tan Yuan thought about everything she did to hang onto Gu Jiao Wu. In the end, she realised it was useless to hang onto Gu Jiao Wu because he didn't belong to her.

Quan Zheng Hao realised he underestimated Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, you didn’t hesitate to be cold blooded toward me,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘So what?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘I truly don’t like you. Why would I hesitate?’

Qiao Tan Yuan had no patience left to care about Quan Zheng Hao’s state of mind.

‘Leave my office,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I’m going to make Zheng Quan’s company a success,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘Is that so?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘OK, I’ll wait for that day to come.’

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Quan Zheng Hao’s redeeming trait was his determination to succeed on his own.

Quan Zheng Hao left, but another unwanted guest entered Qiao Tan Yuan’s office.

‘What are you doing here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu glared at the red roses on Qiao Tan Yuan’s desk.

‘Do you like red roses?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan glanced at the red roses that she didn’t have enough time to ask Miss Chen to get rid of them for her.

‘I hate roses,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘You’re lying,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu remembered Qiao Tan Yuan loved to use rose fragrant shampoos.

‘Hating roses is my business,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You’re not welcome at Qiao’s company.’

Gu Jiao Wu sat opposite Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, we need to talk,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I said everything last night,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘There’s nothing else I want to talk to you about.’

‘I thought you rejected me because you want to be with the little white rabbit

but now I know I was wrong,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'You are a cruel woman, you know how to knock a person down.'

Gu Jiao Wu had investigated Quan Zheng Hao, and knew who Quan Zheng Hao's father was. But he was surprised Qiao Tan Yuan would use Quan Zheng Hao's father's status against Quan Zheng Hao.

'I should thank you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I learned how to be cruel from you.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan, you make me suspect you're not the same woman who told me she loved me,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'The Qiao Tan Yuan who loved you is dead,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She looked directly at Gu Jiao Wu's eyes. 'You don't remember everything you said and did to the dead Qiao Tan Yuan. But I can clearly remember every word you said.'

'I admit I was a bad husband to you,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'But I wasn't the only one at fault.'

Qiao Tan Yuan laughed coldly.

'Gu Jiao Wu, you finally admit you're partly to blame for our failed marriage,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'If you know marrying me was a mistake then what are you doing here? Isn't it best if you and I move on with our separate lives?'

'I didn't deny I was I wrong...' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'You didn't,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I was wrong too. I shouldn't have drugged you, and used my parents to force you to marry me. Now I know the consequences of my mistakes. There's no reason left for you to be here.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu said and stood.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu would leave out of anger. But he pulled her up from her seat, and hugged her.

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan looked beautiful in her red outfit under a white jacket. But he hated the way she looked at him like she didn't love him anymore.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, I don't know what to say to make you believe me,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Can you forget about the past? Can you stop thinking about who was wrong or right? I'm asking you to give us a real chance to start over again.'

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Four years ago, I loved you and asked you to give us a chance. I begged you during our three year marriage to give us a chance. You didn’t give us a chance. What right do you have to ask me to give us a chance?’

‘Are you getting back at me for rejecting you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘You can say what you want,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘But I still won’t agree to give us a chance.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, what will it take for you to believe me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I’ll believe you if you stay far away from me and not appear in front of me anymore,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘No!’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t know how Qiao Tan Yuan could expect him to be separated from her after he realised how much he cared about her.

Qiao Tan Yuan pushed Gu Jiao Wu’s chest.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, if you kiss me again, I won’t forgive you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Why?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘I know you love me, and want to be with me.’

‘I don’t love you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I hate you kissing me, and I don’t want to be with you.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t know how to reason with Qiao Tan Yuan. He held her waist, and kissed her lips.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to be seduced by Gu Jiao Wu’s lies anymore. She kicked his leg, he let go of her and moved a step back.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, you kicked me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘So what if I kicked you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She stepped back from Gu Jiao Wu, and adjusted her clothes. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, I’m not your personal prostitute. I’m not going to let you toy with me anymore.’

‘Toy with you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Is that what you really think? Because I can feel you like me kissing you and...’

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to hear Gu Jiao Wu's brazen words.

'Am I wrong?' Gu Jiao Wu asked and pulled her back into his embrace.

'Gu Jiao Wu, it's true I like you kissing me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'But any other man can satisfy me not just you.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If you're not lying then why did you reject Quan Zheng Hao, and why didn't you marry Shen Cheng?'

Gu Jiao Wu received news Shen Cheng returned from an overseas trip. If Qiao Tan Yuan didn't love him then she would be with Shen Cheng or Quan Zheng Hao.

'I wouldn't hate Quan Zheng Hao's kisses,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'But I don't want to mislead Quan Zheng Hao that I want to be with Quan Zheng Hao. As for Shen Cheng, you and I know how much his family means to him. Shen Cheng's parents opposed me marrying Shen Cheng. Do you think Shen Cheng is the type of person who will turn his back on his family?'

Gu Jiao Wu tucked Qiao Tan Yuan's loose hair strands behind her ears.

'Didn't you say you'll be going home after work?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Um,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu let Qiao Tan Yuan go, she grabbed her bag and walked to the elevators. She acted like she didn't see him following her. When they were inside an elevator, he hugged her again and whispered sweet lies in her ear.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, you can like another man touching you but I hate another man touching you,' Gu Jiao Wu whispered. He kissed Qiao Tan Yuan's lips tenderly. 'Now you're the only woman I'm touching, and the only woman I want to touch.'

Qiao Tan Yuan blushed. She wondered why no one else was inside the elevator except for her and Gu Jiao Wu. She put her hands on his chest, and felt his heart racing like her heart.

'You don't need to tell me who you like...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan was being an adorable child sulking, and temporally upset with him. His tongue entered her mouth, and tasted her sweet mouth.

The elevator pinged, and the elevator doors opened. Gu Jiao Wu squeezed Qiao Tan Yuan's bottom, held her hand and walked her outside. She avoided eye contact with people in the lobby, because she didn't want anyone to see her flushed face.

Qiao Tan Yuan's embarrassment faded when she realised she was sitting in Gu Jiao Wu's car. He was holding her hand, and driving.

'I'll wait for you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Who wants you to wait?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Stop sulking like a child and believe me,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'There's a place I want to show you.'

'I don't want to go there,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I need to go home, and be with Xiao Bao. Let go of my hand, and concentrate on driving.'

'OK,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu smiled, and let go of Qiao Tan Yuan's hand. She didn't want his smile to affect her, she looked out the window. But she kept thinking about what he said before. She didn't know why she was happy to believe he only wanted to touch her.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't drive Qiao Tan Yuan far. He stopped in front of an apartment complex she recognised. When she got out of the car, she bumped into the same real estate agent she met last time.

'Mrs Quan, why are you here on your own?' the agent asked.

By the time Gu Jiao Wu locked his car, and caught up to Qiao Tan Yuan, he heard what the agent said and looked like he wanted to kill someone.

'I'm sorry,' Qiao Tan Yuan said to the agent. 'I'm not Mrs Quan. You can call me Miss Qiao.'

'Miss Qiao, have you made a decision?' the agent asked.

'I...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'I've made my decision to take her here,' Gu Jiao Wu said to the agent. 'You can go back to work. You don't need to follow us.'

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand, and led her to the top of the apartment complex.

‘You said you wanted to live on the thirty-second or the thirty-third floor,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I bought both floors for you. I contracted a construction company to join the two floors together. After it’s renovated, you can furnish everything here.’

‘You... I didn’t say I wanted to buy this place,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I know you want to live here,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘It has a city view, and a good childcare centre for Xiao Bao. I looked at the private schools nearby too. The private schools are suitable schools to educate Xiao Bao.’

‘I don’t want to live here and I didn’t plan to buy this place,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I promised my mum if I return to the city I wouldn’t move out,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Do you understand why I broke my promise to live here with you?’

Qiao Tan Yuan understood Gu Jiao Wu’s gesture to compromise, but it was too late.

‘I understand,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Then why won’t you believe me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘I brought you here, because I want to show you I’m serious about us. Qiao Tan Yuan, can we start again?’

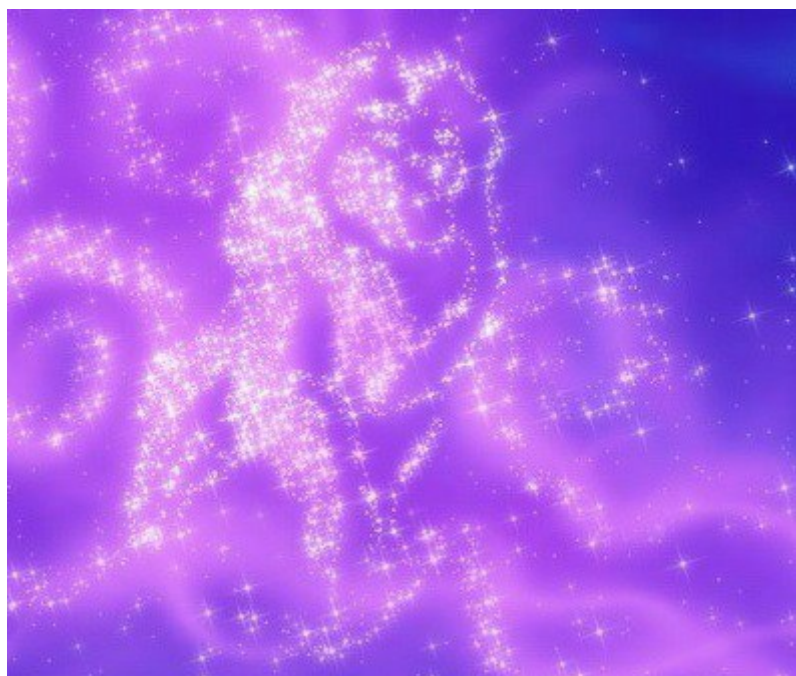
Qiao Tan Yuan was speechless for a while. She pulled her hand out of Gu Jiao Wu’s hand, and turned around to walk to the front door. He hugged her from behind, and his firm voice immobilized her.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I love you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

End of Chapter Eighty-Six

Related

Eighty-Seven



Chapter Eighty-Seven

Courage.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I love you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt caged by Gu Jiao Wu. His hard chest pressed against her back, and wind blew through the windows. She shivered. She didn’t know what to do about Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu felt Qiao Tan Yuan shiver. He let go of her, took off his jacket and draped it over her shoulders.

‘It’s cold today,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Why didn’t you wear warmer clothes?’

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want Gu Jiao Wu’s scent on her body, because his scent brought back too many painful memories.

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t ask if Gu Jiao Wu saying he loved her was real. She didn’t believe it herself.

‘What’s wrong?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan shook her head, and took off Gu Jiao Wu’s jacket. He put it back on her shoulders, and showed her around the apartment.

‘Upstairs is the same layout,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Next time I’ll take you to meet the architect, and you can ask the architect to make changes to suit your taste. It’s getting late, I’ll drive you home.’

Gu Jiao Wu walked Qiao Tan Yuan to the elevators. Inside the elevator his cologne, and natural body scent made her remember how she used to always want be near him. No other man had the same soothing body scent as him. He held her tightly in the elevator, and kissed her until the elevator doors opened.

The elevator doors opened, and Gu Jiao Wu led the blushing Qiao Tan Yuan to his car.

‘We’re husband and wife,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and smiled. ‘What’s there to be embarrassed about?’

‘Who wants to be husband and wife with you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘We have no relations with each other.’

‘Are you sure we have no relations with each other?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu opened the front passenger door for Qiao Tan Yuan, and walked to the driver seat. After they were sitting in his car, he locked the doors.

‘Soon you’ll be Mrs Gu,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Who wants to be Mrs Gu?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘There are men lining up to marry me. Do you think I can’t live without you?’

Gu Jiao Wu drove to the Qiao Mansion, and thought carefully before answering Qiao Tan Yuan’s question. He didn’t want to say in the past she said she’d rather die than let go of the title of Mrs Gu, because he wanted to start fresh with her. The less he mentioned their past the better.

‘You can live without me but I can’t live without you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know how to deal the drastic change in Gu Jiao Wu’s behavior. At least in the past she understood when he was unhappy and angry. But the Gu Jiao Wu driving her home, and telling her sweet lies was hard to understand.

Later when Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu entered the nursery, Xiao Bao was awake and hungry. Qiao Tan Yuan carried Xiao Bao to her bedroom, and she was

no longer surprised he followed her to her bedroom. But she always felt shy breast feeding Xiao Bao in front of him.

‘What are you staring at Mr Pervert?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘How do you know I’m a pervert?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Have you seen a pervert before?’

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought it was pointless talking to a thick face pervert. She looked down at Xiao Bao’s adorable small face, and wished Xiao Bao would be full soon. A while later Xiao Bao was full and burped. She held Xiao Bao’s small hand, and smiled at Xiao Bao.

Gu Jiao Wu saw Qiao Tan Yuan smiled at Xiao Bao like Xiao Bao was Qiao Tan Yuan’s world, and he thought even a fierce woman like Qiao Tan Yuan was gentle with their daughter.

Qiao Tan Yuan carried Xiao Bao to the nursery, and let Mrs Chu play with Xiao Bao. She returned to her bedroom, Gu Jiao Wu closed the door, and kissed her lips fiercely.

‘Whenever I watch you breast feed Xiao Bao, I want to kiss you like this,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you’re...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu bit Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, you’re mine,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Give us a chance.’

‘I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She did love Gu Jiao Wu, but it wasn’t enough. ‘I don’t have the courage to be with you anymore. Your constant rejection of me in the past made my courage disappear. Can you understand why I’m tired of waiting for you, and don’t have the courage to be with you?’

‘What if I won’t make you tired anymore?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘I want to give you a better life, and I don’t want you to be tired.’

Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t let Qiao Tan Yuan go. At night, he would wish Qiao Tan Yuan would always sleep in his arms. During the day, he would think about Qiao Tan Yuan. If he saw a mother holding a child, he would look twice to see if it was

Qiao Tan Yuan and he would be disappointed if it wasn't Qiao Tan Yuan. When Li Lam hugged him in his office, he felt indifferent to Li Lam. But it was different with Qiao Tan Yuan, in his heart he always wanted to hold Qiao Tan Yuan. He was willing to chase Qiao Tan Yuan until she accepted his love.

'No,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Gu Jiao Wu, you don't understand what it means to love someone. You can stop acting like you love me. I won't fall for your lies.'

'I'm acting like I love you?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

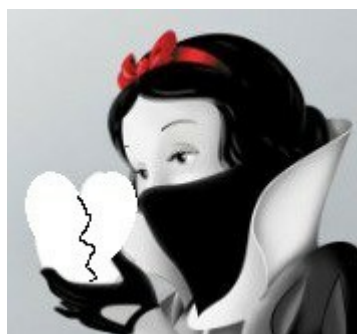
'What else do you call your sudden change?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'How many years have you hated me? Why would someone like you who hates me suddenly opens their mouth, and say they love me?'

'Why would I be acting like I love you?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'What's my motive?'

End of Chapter Eighty-Seven

Related

Eighty-Eight



Chapter Eighty-Eight

Motive.

‘Your daughter,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You want to take your daughter home, and give her a family.’

Daughter, daughter, daughter. Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t believe Qiao Tan Yuan thought he only wanted to be with her because of their daughter.

‘My motive is our daughter?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘What else?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu clenched and unclenched his hands.

‘At the start I wanted to be with you because of Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Now it’s not the same.’

‘Your reasons are your business, not mine,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and turned her head to the side.

‘Not your business?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s face, and kissed her lips. He grabbed her wrist before she slapped his cheek, and she glared at him to let her go.

‘Are you going to slap me every time I kiss you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Why can’t I slap you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu pushed Qiao Tan Yuan onto the bed, and laid on top of her.

‘Gu Jiao Wu!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Get off...’

Gu Jiao Wu showed Qiao Tan Yuan his feelings through his kiss.

‘You chased Chu Da away,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I don’t know why Chu Da left. But I know you were involved. I hated you for being selfish, and for drugging me. You know what I hate most is someone scheming against me. Did you think you would be an exception? You wanted me to marry you, and to give you the title of Mrs Gu. I married you, and you were my wife. You wanted me to love you, but I couldn’t love you. I admit I did hate you, and resented you. It’s all in the past. Qiao Tan Yuan, I’m saying this to you one last time, I want to marry you because I love you, it has nothing to do with our daughter or anyone else.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to make the same mistake to impulsively marry Qiao Tan Yuan for revenge or any other reason other than he loved her, and wanted to be with her.

‘Do you still think I want to marry you because of our daughter?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

How could Qiao Tan Yuan think rationally if Gu Jiao Wu was lying on top of her? She knew what answer he was anticipating to hear from her. But she couldn’t take a step back.

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’ll always believe you want to be with me because of Xiao Bao...’

Gu Jiao Wu bit Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips hard, let go of her and got off the bed.

‘The little white rabbit is a MF,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘But he’s right about one thing. Qiao Tan Yuan, you’re a cruel woman.’

Gu Jiao Wu left, slammed the door and drove home to let Qiao Tan Yuan and himself cool off.

Qiao Tan Yuan stayed in her bedroom, and slumped on the floor. She stared at the closed door. The same door Gu Jiao Wu pressed her back against, pleased her and forced her to say she loved him. She shook her head, but couldn’t clear out his parting words... ‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I love you... Qiao Tan Yuan, you’re a cruel woman... I love you...’

Qiao Tan Yuan buried her head between her knees, and couldn’t stop herself from crying. Did she cry because she regretted her decision? She laughed coldly,

and raised her head. She sniffed her nose, and wiped tears off her face. She didn't regret her decision. Marrying Gu Jiao Wu again would be another mistake.

Qiao Tan Yuan stood, and packed hers, and Xiao Bao's essential belongings into two boxes. Then she walked downstairs to find another box to pack Xiao Bao's favorite toys. On the way downstairs she looked out the window, and remembered the night Gu Jiao Wu parked outside her home but didn't come in. That night he looked lonely. She shook her head to stop thinking about him. She was married to him for three years. Their marriage was a nightmare that haunted her, and reinforced that he didn't love her. At most he liked her because of Xiao Bao.

A couple of days later, Qiao Tan Yuan was packing clothes, and a spare baby bag into suitcases on her bed.

Gu Jiao Wu barged into Qiao Tan Yuan's bedroom, and strode to her bed. His mood was dark as his black business suit. He glared at the packed boxes, and the suitcases in her bedroom.

'Are you going to Denmark?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan continued to pack.

'Answer me!' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu sat on the bed, and held her hands tightly like he wanted to break her hands so she couldn't pack again.

'My business has nothing to do with you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu gave Qiao Tan Yuan some space to think about accepting his marriage proposal. He didn't give her space for her, and Xiao Bao to leave him.

'If you want to go, you need to my agreement,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'What right do you have to tell where I can go or can't go?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Because I'm Xiao Bao's father and I love you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

End of Chapter Eighty-Eight

Related

Eighty-Nine



Chapter Eighty-Nine

Powder.

‘It’s not enough,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, you’re Xiao Bao’s father. But have you done anything to take care of Xiao Bao? You say you love me like you’re doing me a favor. If you make every decision for me then what’s the point of me being alive?’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to see the look of resentment in Qiao Tan Yuan’s eyes. He kissed her, and bit her lips until her lips bled.

‘Is it that hard for you to believe me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s silence gave Gu Jiao Wu the answer he didn’t want. He got out the bed, and stood in front of her.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, it’s up to you to choose to believe me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If you

need time to think, I'll give you time. But don't think I'll let you and Xiao Bao leave me.'

Gu Jiao Wu left, and Qiao Tan Yuan curled up on her bed. She touched her bleeding lips, and remembered the look in his eyes. If he was angry, he used to look at her with only anger. But before she saw heart break in his eyes. Impossible, he had a heart of stone and his heart wouldn't break because of her.

Qiao Tan Yuan berated herself. Gu Jiao Wu threw her away like a used tissue, and she shouldn't degrade herself again because he looked in her direction.

One week later, the Qiao family escorted Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao to the international airport.

'Tan Yuan, Xiao Bao is still a baby,' Mrs Qiao asked. 'Must you, and Xiao Bao move so far away?'

In the last week, Mr and Mrs Qiao could see Gu Jiao Wu was sincere about being a family with Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao. But if Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to be with Gu Jiao Wu then they would support Qiao Tan Yuan's decision.

'Mum, it's only a ten hour flight,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Tan Yuan...' Mrs Qiao said.

Mr Qiao pulled Mrs Qiao's shirt sleeve to signal her not to upset Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan hugged her family.

'Qiao Jie, you have to take good care of dad and mum while I'm not home,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Big sister, I'll take good care of dad and mum,' Qiao Jie said.

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded, and pushed Xiao Bao's stroller loaned by the airport through the international departure gate.

Outside the gate, Mrs Qiao cried while Mr Qiao comforted her.

'Mum, big sister and Xiao Bao isn't disappearing forever,' Qiao Jie said. 'We can visit them in Denmark when we're free.'

'Um,' Mr Qiao said. 'Let's go home.'

In the VIP room, Qiao Tan Yuan watched over Xiao Bao while Xiao Bao slept. She thought about everything that happened in the last week. Gu Jiao Wu visited her and Xiao Bao every day after work. He bought new toys for Xiao Bao to play with, and red roses for her. She didn't accept his red roses, but he would leave them on her vanity table. If she was in the nursery, he would hold Xiao Bao until Xiao Bao cried. If she was in her bedroom, she would ignore him and he would sit on the sofa to watch her prepare for bed before driving home.

Near boarding time, airport security guards asked Qiao Tan Yuan to step outside the VIP room to check her carry-on bag.

'Miss, we need to check your bag,' the first guard said.

'Why?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'We received a tip off there are illegal drugs in your bag,' the second guard said.

'I need to board soon and there are no drugs in my bag,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

The guards opened Qiao Tan Yuan's bag, and pulled out boxes of baby formula milk.

'What is this?' the first guard asked.

'It's my daughter's milk powder,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Don't break the seal.'

The guards punctured the seals, and took a sample.

'We need to run tests to check if you're smuggling cocaine,' the second guard said.

'I'm not a drug smuggler,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Give me back my belongings. I need to board the plane with my daughter.'

'Miss if this is cocaine then you'll be boarding a prison cell,' the first guard said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to stand outside the VIP room arguing with guards, and let them run tests. She walked back to the VIP room, and panicked. Xiao Bao was missing.

'Have you seen my daughter Xiao Bao?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked a clerk at the VIP counter.

‘No Miss,’ the clerk said.

‘How can you not see her?’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Her stroller was here in front of you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan searched everywhere for Xiao Bao around the VIP room. But there was no signs of Xiao Bao. She hated herself for being a negligent mother. It was her fault she lost Xiao Bao. She shouldn’t have left Xiao Bao alone in the VIP room. She was a bad mother.

A flight attendant instructed passengers departing for Denmark to board the plane over the speaker phone. But Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t going to board any plane, because her life would be meaningless if she couldn’t find Xiao Bao.

After running around the international departure gate like a crazy person, Qiao Tan Yuan grabbed a flight attendant.

‘My daughter... my daughter...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said in a panicked voice. ‘Call the police. Someone kidnapped my daughter, my Xiao Bao.’

End of Chapter Eighty-Nine

Related

Ninety



Chapter Ninety

Island.

The flight attendant escorted Qiao Tan Yuan to the airport security room, and a guard poured Qiao Tan Yuan a glass of water.

‘Miss, drink the water first then calmly tell me what happened and I’ll call the police,’ the guard said.

‘Yes, call the police... call the police,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan drank the glass of water in one gulp.

‘My daughter...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Suddenly the room spun, Qiao Tan Yuan felt dizzy and she collapsed on the floor.

When Qiao Tan Yuan woke up, her ears buzzed, her eyelids were heavy, her head ached and she thought she heard someone calling her. She opened her eyes. It was a strange bed, and she was lying under a white canopy. Her clothes were gone, she was wearing a T-shirt and apart from the bed there was only a small vase in the room.

Xiao Bao's small face appeared in Qiao Tan Yuan's head, and she forced herself to get out of bed.

'Xiao Bao... Xiao Bao...' Qiao Tan Yuan called.

Qiao Tan Yuan staggered to the door, it was locked. Who locked her in? Where was Xiao Bao? Could the person who locked her in a strange room be the same person who kidnapped Xiao Bao?

Qiao Tan Yuan heard footsteps, and adrenalin rushed through her body. She picked up the small vase, and waited behind the door. The door opened, and she threw the vase at the intruder's head. The intruder caught the vase, and captured her hands.

'Gu Jiao Wu... why are you here?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Why can't I be here?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan's head cleared, and she glared at Gu Jiao Wu.

'Where's Xiao Bao?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'What did you do to Xiao Bao? What do you want?'

'Don't worry, Xiao Bao is healthy and safe,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'AH!' Qiao Tan Yuan cursed.

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yuan's hands, and he put the vase on the floor. She raised her hand to slap him, he held her wrist, pulled her into his chest and kissed her lips roughly.

'You're despicable!' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Despicable?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'You agreed to let Xiao Bao return to the Gu Household, but you secretly tried to take Xiao Bao and leave me.'

'Tell me where Xiao Bao is,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Xiao Bao is at the Gu Mansion,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘My mum is taking good care of Xiao Bao.’

‘Impossible,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘How did you take Xiao Bao?’

‘Don’t worry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Tan Pan Ting has enough milk. Xiao Bao won’t starve. Besides Xiao Bao is almost six months old, she can stop drinking breast milk.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, how can you do this?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked and grabbed Gu Jiao Wu’s shirt. ‘Tell me, why you did this.’

‘I told you I’ll give you time to think,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘But you secretly planned to take Xiao Bao overseas with you. You provoked me to resort to this. Qiao Tan Yuan, if you can scheme to get what you want, I can do the same.’

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t understand why Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t let her go. Why was he wearing a white T-shirt and shorts on a cold day? She looked over his shoulders. Tall coconut trees and blue water... ocean?

‘Where am I?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Why is there an ocean outside? Why did you take me here?’

‘We’re on an island far away from home,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘What right do you have to take me here...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips, but he kissed her gently unlike how he kissed her before.

‘Come with me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll show you around the island.’

‘I’m not going anywhere until you give Xiao Bao back to me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was worried Xiao Bao would be scared at the Gu Mansion. What if someone mistreated Xiao Bao? What if Xiao Bao wouldn’t eat or drink without her?

‘If you’re worrying about Xiao Bao, you don’t need to,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘My mum wouldn’t let anyone hurt Xiao Bao, and I asked aunty Chu to help my mum to take care of Xiao Bao.’

Qiao Tan Yuan heard Mrs Chu's name, and she stood frozen. It made sense why Mrs Chu didn't want to come to the airport with her family. Mrs Chu told her there was no point saying goodbye, because Mrs Chu thought they would see each other soon. But she misunderstood Mrs Chu was cold blooded, and didn't love Xiao Bao like Mrs Chu pretended to love Xiao Bao for months. If Mrs Chu was at the Gu Mansion, it meant Gu Jiao Wu secretly planned to take Xiao Bao long ago.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan's hand, and took her outside. The sky was clear, and the sun shone brightly on them.

'It's too hot,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu sat on the sandy ground in front of the ocean. He patted the spot next to him, but Qiao Tan Yuan stood and scanned the island. There was no one else on the island.

'Where am I?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Why can't I see another person?'

'Why would there be other people?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'This is a private island.'

'A private island?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't care who owned the island. She only wanted to get off the island, and see Xiao Bao.

'Are you saying only you and I are on this private island?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'You! If it's just us two on the island, why did you lock me in?'

'I wanted to give you a little scare,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

End of Chapter Ninety

Related

Ninety-One



Chapter Ninety-One

Eat to live.

‘Were you really scared before?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Go to hell!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan aimed a kick at Gu Jiao Wu’s chest, he caught her leg, pulled her onto the sand and laid on top of her.

‘Let me go,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t want to stay here. Let me go home.’

Gu Jiao Wu sat up, and pointed at the ocean.

‘Go ahead,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If you swim in the right direction, you’ll reach the closest island.’

Qiao Tan Yuan sat up too, and stared at the deep wide ocean. She was worried what Gu Jiao Wu would do if he found out her plan to take Xiao Bao to Denmark. So she purposely chose to fly out on a week day.

‘Don’t you need to work?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘I took work leave,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘It made it convenient for me to follow you, and see if you dare run away.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, are you crazy?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘You can think what you like,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Except I plan to stay here for a week with you. What do you want to eat for dinner?’

‘I’m not eating,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t in a mood to eat, and sat still on the sand.

‘OK,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and walked back to the house.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at the tropical landscape, and many thoughts ran through her head. Why did Gu Jiao Wu bring her here, and left Xiao Bao at the Gu Mansion? She suspected the guards who accused her of smuggling cocaine were helping Gu Jiao Wu distract her. How did she get on the island without travelling documents? Who owned the island? Why did Gu Jiao Wu want to stay on the island alone with her?

After sunset, and Qiao Tan Yuan heard footsteps behind her.

‘Are you hungry?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘If you’re hungry, let’s eat dinner.’

‘I’m not eating,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wouldn’t die if she skipped a meal. But if Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t release her from the island, she couldn’t keep skipping meals. Her stomach rumbled. She stood, and followed Gu Jiao Wu back to the house.

The house was big enough for two people. There was the bedroom Qiao Tan Yuan was locked in before, a small kitchen, a dining room, a living room and a bathroom. She walked past the dining table of cooked food, and sat on the sofa in the living room.

‘Even if you’re angry, don’t starve your stomach,’ Gu Jiao Wu said from the dining table.

‘It’s my stomach and I’ll let it starve if I want to,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘The head of the closest island village took us here by boat from his island village,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘It took four hours by boat. I asked him to come get us in another six days.’

‘If you can contact him then you can ask him to come back tomorrow morning,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘He can take me back to his village, and I can fly home. Do you think I want to stay here, and eat your food?’

‘I can also ask him to come back in a month,’ Gu Jiao Wu threatened.

‘You’re crazy!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You want me to stay here with you for a month? What about Xiao Bao?’

‘Xiao Bao is safe at the Gu Mansion,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Xiao Bao is under my mum’s protection. She also has aunty Chu, Tan Pan Ting and my grandpa to take care of her. They all have experience in taking care of babies.’

‘You... don’t you need to work?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Aren’t you scared you’ll be fired if you stay here for a month?’

‘If I’m fired then I’m fired,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘It’s not a position I need.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, are you sure you don’t have a brain clot?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu scooped rice into two bowls.

‘Are you sure you don’t want to eat?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan watched Gu Jiao Wu eat heartily. After sleeping for a day, her stomach was empty. The food aromas made her head split into two, one side persuaded her to eat and the other side persuaded her to starve so Gu Jiao Wu would be forced to take her home.

‘You don’t have to eat,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘But as long as you’re alive, I’m not taking you home before the boat arrives.’

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Do you want to starve to death and not see Xiao Bao again?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s head conjured up an image of a pitiful orphaned Xiao Bao, and she immediately walked to the dining table. She sat opposite Gu Jiao Wu, and picked up the bowl of rice he scooped for her. She looked at the three dishes on the table. A plate of omelette, fried fish and fried vegetables.

‘Did you cook this?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t answer. If he didn’t cook dinner, there was no one else on the island who could cook.

‘You know how to cook?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't see Gu Jiao Wu cooked once during their marriage.

'Um,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I can cook simple dishes.'

Qiao Tan Yuan ate the vegetables first, it was delicious. She heard some people say simple dishes were the hardest to cook well. She didn't even know how to cook one bad simple dish. She wanted to ask Gu Jiao Wu when he learnt to cook. But Du Lei Xin's words popped into her head. Du Lei Xin was right, she didn't understand Gu Jiao Wu deeply. Gu Jiao Wu said the same thing as Du Lei Xin, she and Gu Jiao Wu understood little about each other.

'What are you thinking about?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'If you don't eat, the food will get cold.'

'Um,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan ate her bowl of rice, and put the empty bowl down because she lost her appetite.

'Since I cooked, it's only fair if you wash the dishes,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

End of Chapter Ninety-One

Related

Ninety-Two



Chapter Ninety-Two

First time.

‘Why do I have to wash dishes?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘You’re the one who brought me here.’

‘True,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If you live in Denmark with Xiao Bao, do you plan not to cook and wash dishes too?’

‘I... I will invite aunty Chu to come to Denmark,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘There’ll be times aunty Chu will be sick and take leave,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘What will you cook to feed Xiao Bao?’

‘I’ll take Xiao Bao out to eat,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Good idea,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘But there’s no aunty Chu or restaurants here so you need to wash dishes.’

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan stomped her foot, and walked to the kitchen.

Gu Jiao Wu sat on the sofa, and watched TV. It didn’t take him long to hear clank-clonk noises. But after he heard the sounds of plates breaking, he walked to the kitchen.

It was the first time Qiao Tan Yuan washed dishes in her life. After plates and bowls slipped out of her hands, she froze and didn’t know what to do.

Gu Jiao Wu glanced at the broken plates and bowls on the kitchen floor then

he looked at Qiao Tan Yuan's soapy hands.

'I remembered I asked you to wash dishes not break dishes,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Go away,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought knowing how to wash dishes wasn't a big achievement. She wasn't going to let Gu Jiao Wu mock her because she couldn't wash a couple of dishes.

'Don't move,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu grabbed a broom and dust pan then he swept the broken pieces off the floor. Afterward he stood behind Qiao Tan Yuan, and looked at the sink of overflowing bubbles.

'How much dishwashing detergent did you use?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'About one third of the dishwashing bottle,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu was speechless. He pulled the sink plug, and showed Qiao Tan Yuan how to wash dishes.

'You only need to use a little dishwashing detergent,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Soak the dishes, scrub food scraps off the dishes, rinse the dishes and stack them on the tray to dry. Then you can use them the next day.'

Gu Jiao Wu noticed Qiao Tan Yuan didn't move from her spot. He stood behind her, and helped washed her soapy hands.

Qiao Tan Yuan was flustered by Gu Jiao Wu's closeness, and by the way his hands lightly rinsed soap off her hands.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't see Qiao Tan Yuan's red face. He dried his hands, and helped her dry her hands too.

'Today I gave you a demonstration,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Tomorrow you'll wash dishes on your own.'

'I...' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She took her hands out of Gu Jiao Wu's hands. 'Who wants to wash dishes? I told you I hate being in the kitchen the most. I want you to take me home.'

'I'm sorry,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I left our phones at the village. If you want to go

home, you'll need to wait for the villagers' boat returning in the week.'

'Gu Jiao Wu, you left the phones there on purpose!' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu turned Qiao Tan Yuan around to face him, and he kissed her frowning lips.

Qiao Tan Yuan's breasts were engorged, and she realised she hadn't breast fed Xiao Bao for more than a day. Gu Jiao Wu massaging her breasts helped ease the pain, but also expressed breast milk too so she pulled his hands out of her T-shirt.

'Gu Jiao Wu, keep your hands to yourself,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu felt milk on his palms, and knew Qiao Tan Yuan's engorged breasts were causing her discomfort.

'Does your breasts hurt?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'You... what nonsense are you saying?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu pointed at Qiao Tan Yuan's wet T-shirt.

'Your T-shirt's wet,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Oh,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan ran to the bedroom to express milk.

'Gu Jiao Wu, go outside,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'I can help you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu took off his clothes, and stepped closer to Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Stay away,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She stepped back, and her legs touched the bed. 'I don't need your help.'

Gu Jiao Wu pulled Qiao Tan Yuan onto the bed, and took off her clothes. He sucked her nipples to help her express milk while his hand fondled between her legs. When she discharged on his hand, he entered her wet passageway.

In the middle of the night, Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yuan's exhausted body.

'AH!' Qiao Tan Yuan said and turned her back to face Gu Jiao Wu.

‘If you’re not tired, I can help relieve your body again,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan had starved Gu Jiao Wu for a week so he had no trouble satisfying them the rest of the night.

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan closed her mouth. If she cursed Gu Jiao Wu again, she wouldn’t get any sleep.

‘Do you want to take a bath?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘No, I want to sleep,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew Gu Jiao Wu’s idea of bath involved more than water.

Gu Jiao Wu got out of bed and walked to the bathroom. Qiao Tan Yuan closed her eyes, but couldn’t sleep because her body was sticky and sweaty. She put on her T-shirt, and walked outside but bumped into him at the door.

‘Where are you going?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was weary of what was underneath the towel around Gu Jiao Wu’s waist.

‘Taking a bath,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I can help you take a bath,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and smiled.

‘I don’t need your help,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan ran to the bathroom, and realised she forgot to bring clean clothes to change into. She walked back to the bedroom, and didn’t see Gu Jiao Wu in the bedroom. She opened the wardrobe, and found a suitcase of her clothes inside. She grabbed night clothes, and walked back to the bathroom.

After she bathed, she walked outside the house to look for Gu Jiao Wu. He had put two white portable reclining chairs on the sandy beach. She walked to him, and laid on the vacant chair next to him. She looked up the night sky with him, and was mesmerised by the bright twinkling stars.

‘It’s a beautiful night view here unlike the smoky city,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘If this is a private island, how come you’re allowed to come here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Do you like it here?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘You didn’t answer my question,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘If I told you I own this island, would you believe me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘You’re joking,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at her surroundings. The house was a tiny shell compared to the rest of the forest on the island. She didn’t believe Gu Jiao Wu would burn all his money on a big island.

‘Um, I’m joking,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘This island belongs to a friend.’

‘A friend?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan only met a couple of Gu Jiao Wu’s friends. There was a lot she didn’t know about Gu Jiao Wu like how he became friends with Ling Hu, and someone who owned an island.

‘How did you meet your friend?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu sat up and looked at Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘If you’re curious about my life, does that mean you’ve decided to accept my proposal?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought about everything that happened. Her panic when she thought she and Xiao Bao were kidnapped, and why Gu Jiao Wu brought her to the island.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, if you brought me here to convince me to change my mind then you can keep dreaming,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Four years ago, I didn’t take you on a honeymoon,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I brought you here to make up for not taking you on a honeymoon.’

‘If you feel you owe me then you can marry another woman and let me free to marry another man,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, is it that hard for you to believe me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t believe you now, and I won’t believe you in the future.’

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to provoke Gu Jiao Wu enough to make him leave. But there was nowhere for him to leave to on the island. He sat on her chair, pulled her onto his lap.

‘Seven days,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If after staying with me here for seven days you still won’t change your mind then I’ll let you leave.’

‘Really?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Yes,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If in seven days you won’t believe me then I’ll take you home.’

‘What about Xiao Bao?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Xiao Bao... will return to the Qiao Mansion with you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You can’t break your promise,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Um, I promise,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘But I have one condition.’

‘What condition?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘For seven days you can’t say no to me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan blushed.

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘If for seven days you don’t say not to me, I promise to take you home,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

End of Chapter Ninety-Two

Related

Ninety-Three



Chapter Ninety-Three

Coconut.

‘Do I have a choice?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘I’m trapped here with you. What else can I choose?’

‘You’ll make me happy if you willingly choose to stay here with me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes looked sincere under the stars. Although she didn’t have a choice, she didn’t want to give anything to let him gloat.

‘Don’t be too happy,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m stuck here for seven days. Don’t think I want to be with you for seven days. I don’t want to be with you even for one day.’

Qiao Tan Yuan thought if she and Gu Jiao Wu were in the city, he would walk away out of anger. But on the island he only held her, and smiled at her.

‘If you had said no, you’ll still be here with me for seven days,’ Gu Jiao Wu whispered in Qiao Tan Yuan’s ear.

Qiao Tan Yuan was fed up with Gu Jiao Wu not caring about her opinions.

‘Whether seven days or seven months, I won’t change my mind,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan stood, and walked to the bedroom. Gu Jiao Wu happily followed

her to the bedroom.

At dawn, Qiao Tan Yuan woke up and couldn't see Gu Jiao Wu on the bed next to her. Last night she tried kicking him off the bed but failed. He surprised her by only holding her and sleeping.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked to the wardrobe, and looked for cooler clothes in the suitcase. She had packed warm clothes for Denmark so she chose a shirt and pants then she rolled the sleeves and hem up. Her stomach rumbled again, because she didn't eat enough last night. When she entered the dining room, there was a bowl of congee waiting for her. She knew he made the congee, but she was too hungry and ate the whole bowl.

After breakfast Qiao Tan Yuan took a walk along the beach to look for Gu Jiao Wu. She couldn't find him for a long time, and was worried if he could kidnap Xiao Bao then he wouldn't hesitate to leave her on the island by herself. She was relieved when she spotted Gu Jiao Wu swimming in the ocean. She knew he could swim, it was how good he swam like a fish that amazed her. He got out of the water in only swimming trunks, and she blushed.

'You're awake,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Um,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You... know how to swim.'

'What do you think?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan realised she stated the obvious. It was Gu Jiao Wu's glistening chest under the bright sunlight that dazzled her. She looked at the ocean to avoid his eyes.

'Do you want to swim?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I don't have swimmers,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'In the bathroom cupboard are swimmers and snorkelling gear,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If you want I can take you snorkelling.'

'Where can we snorkel?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu pointed to a rocky area nearby.

'Over there is a deep rock pool,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I can take you there to see tropical fish.'

‘Rock pool?’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She wanted to say yes, but she didn’t want to make Gu Jiao Wu happy. ‘I’m not interested.’

Gu Jiao Wu was disappointed Qiao Tan Yuan was being uncooperative.

‘Why are you looking at me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I didn’t say I wanted to be here.’

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s waist, and spun her back against a coconut tree.

‘You... want do you want?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘What do you think?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan turned her head to side to avoid Gu Jiao Wu’s lips.

‘If you’re hungry, go find something to eat,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Keep your hands to yourself. Who am I to you?’

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hot face.

‘You’re my woman,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan put her hands on Gu Jiao Wu’s wet chest.

‘Stay away from me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t want you to get my clothes wet.’

‘If your clothes are wet then you don’t need to wear them,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu endured only holding Qiao Tan Yuan to sleep last night. He had woken up early in the morning, saw her beautiful face on his chest and wanted to wake her up to have a pleasurable morning in bed together. If she wasn’t tired, he wouldn’t have let her sleep, and he wouldn’t have went swimming to cool off.

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s soft lips, his hand dived into her pants and her body tensed.

‘Not here,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘We’re outside in the open.’

‘Why not?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘The fresh air is good for us.’

What fresh air? Qiao Tan Yuan held onto Gu Jiao Wu’s shoulders, and he made

her gasp for air for a long time.

In the afternoon, Gu Jiao Wu carried Qiao Tan Yuan to the living room, and he went to cook in the kitchen.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat on the sofa, and thought about how to escape. If she stayed on the island for as long as Gu Jiao Wu wanted, she was worried she would be deliriously happy, forget about starting a new life and cave to be with him. She knew him well enough to know he would keep a backup phone to call someone in an emergency. It was a matter of finding where he hid the phone. She thought about the concealed small office connected to the bedroom, and believed it was a good place to hide a phone.

Gu Jiao Wu set the table, and searched around the house to call Qiao Tan Yuan to eat. He found her snooping around the office, and knew what she wanted to find.

Qiao Tan Yuan closed another drawer, and felt someone staring at her back. She turned around, and was nervous Gu Jiao Wu caught her.

‘You... why are you here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘To call you to eat,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘What are you doing here?’

‘Nothing,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I was looking for something to kill time.’

‘Opening drawers to kill time?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s face turned red from being caught. She walked to the kitchen, but Gu Jiao Wu held her arm at the door.

‘Are you looking for a phone?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

End of Chapter Ninety-Three

Related

Ninety-Four



Chapter Ninety-Four

Pinky.

‘Aren’t I allowed to find a way to leave this island?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Did you ask for my opinion before you trapped me here? Can you understand I don’t want to be here? I hate seeing you.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t take Qiao Tan Yuan’s bait.

‘Go and eat,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yuan’s arm, and walked to the dining table.

Qiao Tan Yuan was tired of Gu Jiao Wu treating her like a toy. For years she wished he would look her way, but he didn’t care about how she felt. Suddenly he took leaps to be close to her. It made her hate reliving the same insecurities, she wanted to stop worrying about when he would leave her again.

Qiao Tan Yuan slowly walked to the dining table.

‘Do you plan to be like this for the remaining six days?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I’ll promise to stay if you promise me one thing,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘What?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘You won’t touch me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I won’t try to escape if you promise you won’t touch me.’

‘Escape?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If you touch me, I’ll only believe you’re using my body.’

‘Do you think I would touch you if I didn’t love you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu loved Qiao Tan Yuan. If he didn’t love her, he wouldn’t desire her.

‘If you love me then you need to respect me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If you do everything your way, it’s not respecting me.’

‘OK,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘We’ll stay here together for seven days like we agreed. I won’t touch unless you let me. Satisfied?’

‘Um,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She held up her pinky. ‘You have to keep your promise.’

‘I’ll keep my promise,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t believe Qiao Tan Yuan wanted him to pinky swear with her like children. He hooked her pinky, and thought about ways to get her to let him sleep with her.

After Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan ate, she washed the dishes. She was frustrated the dishes didn’t listen to her, slipped out of her hands and onto the floor again. She had used a little dishwashing detergent like he showed her last night. She looked out of the kitchen, and was happy he didn’t hear the dishes breaking. She crouched to pick up the broken pieces, but a hand held her wrist from behind her.

‘Don’t move,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu quickly swept the broken pieces into the dust pan, and threw them into a bin.

‘You’re impressive,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Didn’t I show you how to wash dishes last night?’

Gu Jiao Wu’s teasing tone sounded like Qiao Tan Yuan should know how to wash dishes as easy as she listened to the weather, it made her upset.

‘I told you I don’t know how to do housework,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You shouldn’t force me to do housework.’

Gu Jiao Wu swiftly washed, and dried the dishes.

‘Even a pig can learn how to do something this simple,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You’re a pig!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan hated being in the kitchen. She held up her swollen hands.

‘Look at my hands,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I hate cooking and cleaning. My hands will swell.’

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan’s red swollen fingers.

‘I’m not forcing you to cook,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I only asked you to wash dishes.’

‘I hate washing dishes too,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I hate cooking and cleaning. If you can’t accept I hate doing housework, you can look for someone else.’

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s wrist, led her to the living room and went to get the first aid kit. He returned to the living room, sat next to her, opened the kit and gave her an anti-inflammatory cream.

‘This is for you to rub on your fingers to stop the swelling so you don’t have an excuse to do housework,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan put her hands behind her back. She thought Gu Jiao Wu was being considerate, but he gave her the cream to force her to do housework.

‘Aren’t you scared I’ll break all the dishes?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Not scared,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I have plenty of dishes. If in seven days you break them then you have extremely good hands.’

‘Go to hell!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu looked out the window.

‘It’s too hot to go outside,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Do you want to take a nap?’

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know what tricks Gu Jiao Wu would use on her if she napped.

‘I’ll go read in the office,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Um, let’s go,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand, and they walked to the office. There

were books in different languages like German and Italian books.

‘What book do you want to read?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Lady Chatterley’s Lover,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu passed Qiao Tan Yuan the book, and he sat next to her on the sofa.

‘What are you doing?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

The sofa was spacious. Qiao Tan Yuan was suspicious why Gu Jiao Wu sat close to her.

‘I like sitting here,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan stood to sit somewhere else, and Gu Jiao Wu pulled her onto his lap.

‘Sit here,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I don’t want to,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Are you saying you want me to sit and hold the book for you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu wrapped an arm around Qiao Tan Yuan’s waist, and held the book for her in his other hand. She laid on his chest, and read. She didn’t get enough sleep last night, and began drifting off after reading for a while.

In Qiao Tan Yuan’s dream she raised a big dog. The dog was affectionate toward her, licking her and nibbling her. She wanted to push the dog off her, but the dog was too big and strong. She opened her eyes. She didn’t see a dog. There was only Gu Jiao Wu’s heavy body lying on top of her naked body.

‘You promised you wouldn’t touch me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Before I asked you if you wanted me to touch you and you said yes,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu spread Qiao Tan Yuan’s legs, joined their bodies and moved in and out of her body.

Later Qiao Tan Yuan was too tired to move so Gu Jiao Wu helped her dress.

‘You pinky swear with me!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

A satisfied Gu Jiao Wu hugged Qiao Tan Yuan on the sofa.

‘What do you want to eat for dinner?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Up to you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said since she was in no mood to eat.

‘I’m going fishing,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Do you want to go fishing with me?’

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said even though she wanted to go fishing.

‘Alright,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Stay here and nap. I’ll go fishing.’

‘I’ll wait for you to catch a fish,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t believe it would be easy to fish.

‘You don’t think I can catch a fish for us?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I wouldn’t dare,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu nodded, walked naked to the bedroom and changed clothes to go fishing.

Qiao Tan Yuan napped while Gu Jiao Wu went fishing. The sun was setting when she woke up. She walked outside, and was amazed to see he actually caught more than two fishes. He smiled at her, put the fishes in the kitchen and showered. She was curious to see if he knew how to scale and fillet a fish so she followed him to the kitchen after he came out of the bathroom.

End of Chapter Ninety-Four

Related

Ninety-Five



Chapter Ninety-Five

Firefly.

Qiao Tan Yuan was amazed at how Gu Jiao Wu effortlessly scaled and fillet the fishes.

‘Do you want to eat braised fish or steamed fish?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Braised fish,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought it would be harder to braise a fish than steaming a fish. Gu Jiao Wu amazed her again, his braised fish was delicious. After dinner, she washed dishes and she was happy she only broke two dishes.

‘Not bad,’ Gu Jiao Wu praised. ‘You managed to wash the dishes, and only broke two dishes.’

‘Washing dishes is easy,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu wisely kept his mouth closed. He held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand, and pulled her to the sofa to help rub cream on her swollen fingers.

‘As a reward I want to take you somewhere,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Where do you want to take me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand and took her to the forest behind the house. She was scared of the dark, and pulled his hand to return to the house.

‘Don’t worry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘There’s no ghost.’

‘You can say what you want to me inside the house,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If you want to gaze at the stars, we can sit at the front of the house. Why do you want to take me to a dark place?’

‘I want you to see different stars,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu dragged Qiao Tan Yuan further into the dense forest. If she wasn’t wearing hiking boots, her feet would have been cut by the sticks and twigs on the ground. A while later, they reached a big field of grass. The fireflies lit up the skyline, and the bright stars harmonised with the fireflies’ glowing bodies.

‘How did you know about this place?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Is it beautiful?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu caught a firefly, and showed the firefly to Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Beautiful,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was used to living in the city. It was the first time she saw fireflies.

‘Do you like it here?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Um, I like this place,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘It’s good you like it here,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu sat on the grass.

‘Sit here,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I don’t want to,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to sit on the dirty grass. Gu Jiao Wu pulled her down onto his lap.

‘Look up,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was dazzled by the sight of fireflies dancing around the

twinkling stars.

‘What do you think?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Beautiful,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You have good eyes for beautiful sceneries.’

‘We’ll sleep here tonight,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I don’t want to,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘There are mosquitoes, and we could catch a cold. Let’s go back to the house.’

‘You can go back,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’m sleeping here tonight.’

‘Are you joking?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Without Gu Jiao Wu guiding Qiao Tan Yuan back through the dense forest, she would be lost.

‘Are you scared of going back on your own?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘What is there to be scared of?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Good, because before I saw something floating behind you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘What... did you see?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘What else?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. He looked behind them, and acted like he saw something. ‘Ghosts. The forest ghosts people talk about.’

‘Ah!’ Qiao Tan Yuan cried out. She turned her head around and glared at Gu Jiao Wu. ‘You... don’t scare me.’

‘I’m not scaring you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Turn around, and you’ll see...’

‘Don’t say anything else,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and hugged Gu Jiao Wu’s neck.

Qiao Tan Yuan wished she never watched horror movies before.

‘It’s true,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Look behind you.’

‘I don’t want to look,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Can we go back to the house?’

‘Don’t you want to wait for them to leave before going back?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan buried her head into Gu Jiao Wu’s chest.

‘Stop,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m begging you not to say anything else.’

‘OK,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Are you scared of ghosts?’

‘Can you not mention that word?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘What word?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Ghosts?’

‘If you say that word again, I’ll ignore you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She gripped Gu Jiao Wu’s shoulders. ‘My legs are numb.’

Qiao Tan Yuan knew Gu Jiao Wu wanted to scare her in the middle of the night. She was so scared she didn’t dare move her legs.

‘For a gutsy woman, I didn’t think you’ll be scared of...’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Don’t say it!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I mean it. If you say that word again, I’ll ignore you.’

‘OK,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll piggy back you to the house.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was scared and tired. She wrapped her arms around Gu Jiao Wu’s neck, her legs around his waist and didn’t dare to look behind them.

Gu Jiao Wu felt Qiao Tan Yuan’s trembling body on his back.

‘You’re a college graduate,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You know scientifically there are no such thing as...’

‘You’re not allowed to say it!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu stopped teasing Qiao Tan Yuan, and walked slowly back to the house. She thought his broad shoulders were strong, reliable and warm. For a moment she wished the path they were walking on wouldn’t end.

When Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan returned to the bedroom, she heard the sounds of leaves rustling outside the window and couldn’t sleep.

‘I’ll help you sleep,’ Gu Jiao Wu whispered in Qiao Tan Yuan’s ear.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know if she was more scared of ghosts or Gu Jiao Wu’s idea of comfort.

In the morning, Gu Jiao Wu woke up first.

‘Wake up,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Let me sleep,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't get to sleep all night, because Gu Jiao Wu used his way to comfort her all night.

'If you don't wake up, I'll help you change clothes,' Gu Jiao Wu threatened.

Qiao Tan Yuan opened her eyes.

'Change into what?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

End of Chapter Ninety-Five

Related

Ninety-Six



Chapter Ninety-Six

Prank.

Gu Jiao Wu pointed at the red snorkelling suit on the bed.

‘Where did you get it?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘You’re not going to wear it?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I don’t mind helping you put it on,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Go outside,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Nothing I haven’t seen before,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan quickly changed, and ignored Gu Jiao Wu’s lusty stare.

Gu Jiao Wu praised himself for choosing the right snorkelling suit for Qiao Tan Yuan. Red made her milky skin shine, and the tight fabric outlined her breasts and legs.

Qiao Tan Yuan saw Gu Jiao Wu taking off her clothes, and she took a step back.

‘What do you want?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t believe Gu Jiao Wu didn’t eat his full before sunrise.

‘Changing clothes,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Let’s go.’

‘Go where?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu thought it was obvious where he wanted to take Qiao Tan Yuan since they were both wearing snorkelling gear.

Qiao Tan Yuan acted like she wasn’t interested in snorkelling in the deep rock pool. But when she and Gu Jiao Wu dived underneath the water, she was amazed by the underwater world. The sunlight shimmered like a halo under the water surface. The tropical fishes were colorful and beautiful. They snorkelled for more than half an hour. Then she thought of a way to take revenge on him for scaring her last night.

Gu Jiao Wu panicked when he saw Qiao Tan Yuan stopped kicking her flippers and closing her eyes. He swam to her, wrapped an arm around under her chest and pulled them toward the water surface. Usually she was light to carry, but the water pressure made him struggle to pull them above the water surface.

After Gu Jiao Wu dragged Qiao Tan Yuan’s body onto the white sandy beach, she wasn’t breathing and she didn’t move her body.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan,’ Gu Jiao Wu called and took off her goggles. ‘Qiao Tan Yuan, Tan Yuan...’

Gu Jiao Wu pressed his hands on her chest, but she still didn’t breathe or move. When his lips touched her lips, she opened her eyes and laughed.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan!’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘What?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Were you scared?’

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s arms tightly.

‘You pranked me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Serves you right,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Last night you scared me first.’

Gu Jiao Wu hugged Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Promise me you won’t scare me in this way again,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t expect Gu Jiao Wu to be worried about her to that extent.

‘Promise me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was scared he had lost Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan listened to Gu Jiao Wu’s racing heart. He was actually scared about her drowning. A little warmth and happiness crept into her heart.

‘Let go of me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I can’t breathe.’

Gu Jiao Wu loosened his hold on Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, promise me you wouldn’t prank me like this again,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Alright,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was worried she would change her mind after seven days being alone with Gu Jiao Wu. How could she protect her heart against the man she loved the most in the world?

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, you’re not allowed to risk your life again,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I heard you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She pushed Gu Jiao Wu’s arms off her. ‘I’m tired, I want to sleep.’

‘Don’t think about escaping,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You can’t escape.’

‘I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She was frustrated Gu Jiao Wu wrongly accused her of thinking about escaping. ‘Where can I escape to? Would you let me escape?’

‘No,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘We have another five days together on this island.’

‘I know,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You don’t need to remind me.’

Gu Jiao Wu lost his thought after Qiao Tan Yuan stood, and walked back to the house because he wanted to touch what was underneath the tight red snorkelling suit. He followed her to the bathroom, they bathed and walked to the living room. She napped on the sofa while he cooked in the kitchen.

‘Let’s eat,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I’m too tired to eat,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I want to sleep.’

Qiao Tan Yuan opened her eyes, because she thought she could smell noodles.

‘Noodles?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan wondered if Gu Jiao Wu made noodles from scratch.

‘I thought you would be hungry so making noodles was the fastest option,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He sat on the sofa and put the bowl of noodles on the coffee table. ‘Are you waiting for me to feed you?’

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan picked up the bowl of noodles before Gu Jiao Wu fed her like he did at the cafe and restaurant. She ate the noodles, and another wave of warm happiness crept into her heart. She admitted Gu Jiao Wu had put in a lot of effort to show her how much he cared about her. Away from the city, they were like newlyweds on an island honeymoon. He cooked, she washed dishes and he was attentive to her needs.

‘If you stare at me in that way, I can’t promise you’ll finish the bowl of noodles today,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan blushed. She didn’t know how long she stared at Gu Jiao Wu. She lowered her head, and quickly ate the whole bowl of noodles. Afterward she put the empty bowl on the coffee table, and slept in the bedroom while he worked in the office.

In the evening Gu Jiao Wu woke Qiao Tan Yuan up for dinner. At the dining table, she felt like she was turning into a pig. She ate, slept, ate and slept again. She washed the dishes after dinner, and was happy she didn’t break any dishes. He praised her, and took her to the sofa. He put cream on her swollen fingers,

and turned on the Discovery Channel. There were many international channels, she didn't understand why he wanted to watch a snake swallow a frog. She grabbed the TV remote, and switched to a variety comedy channel.

'What are you doing?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'It's not suitable for us to watch violent shows after dinner,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Violent? A snake eating a frog was violent? Gu Jiao Wu took back the TV remote.

'You're not acting like yourself,' Gu Jiao Wu teased.

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan did have common feminine traits like most other women. She was scared of ghosts, and didn't like watching nature documentaries.

'I was watching the comedy show,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'What's good about watching a bunch of MCs acting like fools?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'What's good about watching animals eat?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan switched the TV back to the comedy show.

Gu Jiao Wu watched Qiao Tan Yuan laugh at the MCs' slapstick comedy acts. He pulled her onto his lap, and stared at her tantalizing neck. She was distracted by the MCs so she didn't immediately notice his hands were slowly taking off her clothes, and his lips kissing her neck.

'Gu Jiao Wu...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

A moment ago Qiao Tan Yuan was laughing hysterically, and a moment later her body melted under Gu Jiao Wu's body. She lost count of how many times he made her body come on the sofa. She couldn't hear the laughter in the background either, because she focused on the sounds of her heart softening faster than her expectations.

The next couple of days past quickly like the tropical winds on the island. During the day Gu Jiao Wu cooked, he showed Qiao Tan Yuan how to prep vegetables, she washed dishes after meals then they read books and watched TV

together. In the evening they gazed at stars, and slept together in bed.

Qiao Tan Yuan was getting used to showing her hands to Gu Jiao Wu after she washed dishes, he would rub cream on her swollen fingers and let her choose the TV channel. If they watched a singing competition show, they would disagree about which singers sang better. She didn't want to lose to him, and provoked him by saying at least all the male singers sang better than him. But he would win in the end by making her sing sounds under him on the sofa.

If Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan swam in the evenings, he would carry her back to shore and frolic with her under the stars. What promise? He tricked her, he always had a way to get her to let him touch her. If they bickered, they would laugh together afterward. She thought he looked the most handsome when he was laughing. But she warned herself that their honeymoon bubble would burst after they returned to the city.

On the sixth night, Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan laid on the beach chairs, they held hands and gazed at the stars. She saw a shooting star, let go of his hand and sat up.

‘What are you doing?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

End of Chapter Ninety-Six

Related

Ninety-Seven



Chapter Ninety-Seven

Wish.

‘I’m making a wish,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Haven’t you heard about making a wish if you see a shooting star?’

‘What wish did you make?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I can’t tell you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If I tell you then my wish won’t come true.’

‘If you tell me, I can make your wish come true,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You promised,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I wish to leave this island right now, and go back home.’

‘You still haven’t changed your mind,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I won’t change my mind,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I want to go home.’

‘Tomorrow is the seventh day,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘It doesn’t matter what day it is,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I won’t change my mind.’

Gu Jiao Wu grabbed Qiao Tan Yuan’s waist, she lost her balance and fell on his chest.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, are you saying for the last six days you’ve only thought about giving me the same answer?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘What other answer do you want me to give you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘My answer is I want to leave, go home and distance myself from you...’

Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to hear the wrong answer from Qiao Tan Yuan's lips. He kissed her lips, and rolled them onto the sand. Then he took off their clothes, and drove her wild until the tide was high.

Qiao Tan Yuan was vaguely aware when Gu Jiao Wu carried her to the house. She didn't care about the sand on her body, she needed sleep more than a bath. But he made a detour to the bathroom. He held her under the shower head, and rinsed sand off their bodies. Although he was standing behind her, she didn't need to see desire on his face to know he wanted her because her back felt the moment he hardened.

After midnight, Gu Jiao Wu carried Qiao Tan Yuan to the bed. The moment her head touched a pillow, she fell asleep and dreamt of escaping.

On the seventh morning, Qiao Tan Yuan opened her eyes. Gu Jiao Wu was dressed in a white shirt, and black pants. It was the way he looked at her like he was the plaintiff, and she was the defendant that made her want to kick him if she had energy.

'Today's the seventh day,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Will you let me go home now?'

Gu Jiao Wu silently looked intensely at Qiao Tan Yuan.

'You promised,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I haven't changed my mind. I want you to give Xiao Bao back to me, and you can't interfere in my life anymore.'

Gu Jiao Wu pulled Qiao Tan Yuan to sit upright on the bed, and he hugged her.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, why is it so hard for you to believe me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt Gu Jiao Wu's hot hands on her back. She put her hands on his chest, and looked directly at his hopeful eyes.

'Yes,' Qiao Tan Yuan. 'It's hard for me to believe you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan was scared Gu Jiao Wu wouldn't release her from the island. She loved him, but she couldn't overlook there were too many obstacles between them. In the last seven days, he took care of her and protected her though it didn't mean he loved her. On the island he would rub cream on her swollen fingers after she washed dishes, but she didn't believe he would treat her the same way after they returned to the city. He said he brought her to the

island as a way of making up to her for not taking her on a honeymoon during their marriage. But no one could go on a honeymoon for the rest of their life. Their honeymoon ended, and it was time for them to return to their own separate lives.

Qiao Tan Yuan accepted Gu Jiao Wu didn't love her. He liked her, like a man who was curious about a woman he was attracted to. He would be curious about her for a short period, but she couldn't hold his interest for the rest of their lives. She was arrogant, selfish and stubborn. Their failed marriage showed he couldn't stand living with her.

Gu Jiao Wu wanted to hear Qiao Tan Yuan tell him the truth, he knew she loved him. For seven days and nights, it was just the two of them and he got to see many different sides to her. Most of the time she was like a loveable child, and he would wonder if she was a glimpse of what their daughter would be like when their daughter grew up. It was like his past was fading, and he could only see Qiao Tan Yuan. He loved Qiao Tan Yuan. He wanted to spend the rest of his life with Qiao Tan Yuan, and raise their daughter together as a family.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, I love you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was moved by Gu Jiao Wu's words and actions. She almost hugged him, and almost told him that she never stopped loving him. But her hands on his chest pushed him away.

'A pity, I don't love you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'You're lying,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He held Qiao Tan Yuan's hands. 'You love me.'

'I don't love you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Last night under me, how many times did you say you love me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Gu Jiao Wu!' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

It wasn't only last night, for seven days Gu Jiao Wu wouldn't let go of her until she told him she loved him.

'You forced me to say I love you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Gu Jiao Wu, I admit physically you satisfy me. But physical desire isn't love. I don't love you

anymore.'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't believe Qiao Tan Yuan's firm voice. He stroked her cheeks, and felt her cheeks tensed. He retrieved his hands and stood.

'Get ready to leave,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'We're leaving in one hour.'

What? Qiao Tan Yuan watched Gu Jiao Wu leave the bedroom. He didn't turn around to look at her. For a second, she thought his stiff back looked lonely. Was he serious about letting her leave in one hour?

End of Chapter Ninety-Seven

Related

Ninety-Eight



Chapter Ninety-Eight

Helicopter.

Qiao Tan Yuan brushed her teeth, and washed her face. When she entered the dining room, there were two hot bowls of congee on the dining table.

‘Eat,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat opposite Gu Jiao Wu, and silently ate her bowl of congee since she said everything she wanted to say to him before. After breakfast, she washed the dishes as usual. Except in her rush, she put too much dishwashing detergent and a plate slipped out of her hand.

‘I thought you improved,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Go outside,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu cleared the mess on the floor, and looked at Qiao Tan Yuan’s soapy hands. He held her hands, and rinsed her hands under the running tap.

Qiao Tan Yuan was embarrassed she broke another plate in front of Gu Jiao Wu.

‘I can clean my own hands,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu turned off the tap, and saw Qiao Tan Yuan’s embarrassed face. He held her waist, and hoisted her on the kitchen bench.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you promised...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips, and trailed kisses down her neck. By the time she could open her mouth again, he was already inside her. He continuously thrust in and out of her while leaving more kiss marks on her body.

If the kitchen bench wasn't sturdy, she would have landed on her bare bottom.

An hour later, Gu Jiao Wu carried Qiao Tan Yuan to the living room where their packed suitcases were on the floor next to the sofa. After she checked her clothes for any visible stains, one of his assistants knocked on the door.

'Mr Gu,' the assistant said. 'The helicopter's ready for take-off.'

Helicopter? What happened to the boat? Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know who the man she was intimate a moment ago was.

'Why are you here?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Where's Xiao Zhong?'

'Xiao Zhong has food poison,' the assistant said and picked up the suitcases.

Qiao Tan Yuan's legs were still numb. She did her best to walk normally so Gu Jiao Wu's assistant wouldn't suspect what she and Gu Jiao Wu were doing while waiting for Gu Jiao Wu's assistant to arrive. She followed them to the same big patch of grass Gu Jiao Wu took her to see fireflies. Because she was scared of seeing ghosts that night, she didn't suspect it was a helicopter landing site. She was going to miss the island, but she didn't look back at the island because she didn't want Gu Jiao Wu to know.

On the helicopter, Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't hold in her curiosity.

'Gu Jiao Wu, who are you?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't believe Gu Jiao Wu borrowed the island, and the helicopter. Gu Jiao Wu's assistant sounded close to Gu Jiao Wu more than a boss and subordinate relationship, almost like they were in the same brotherhood. It was her first time sitting in a helicopter, but she suspected Gu Jiao Wu often sat in a helicopter.

Gu Jiao Wu saw eye bags under Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes, and he frowned.

'If you're tired, you can sleep,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'I... I don't want to sleep,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Gu Jiao Wu, where did this helicopter come from? Don't tell me you rented it. How did you take us to the island without going through customs? Who owns this island...'

'What does it have to with you?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu leaned his face close to Qiao Tan Yuan's face, and he could see hurt in her eyes.

'If you change your mind and believe me, I'll answer all your questions,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Gu Jiao Wu... you're despicable,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't believe Gu Jiao Wu used her curiosity against her to persuade her to change her mind.

'Have you changed your mind?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'No, I'm not going to change my mind,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Then it's over,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu leaned on his seat, closed his eyes and slept.

Qiao Tan Yuan was tired from last night. She closed her eyes and slept. When she opened her eyes, she discovered she wasn't sitting in a helicopter. She was sitting on a plane next to Gu Jiao Wu. He was reading reports on his laptop. When he turned to look at her, he closed the screens on his laptop.

'You're awake,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Where are you taking me?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She could only see clouds outside the window. 'I want to go home, I...'

'We're on a plane back to the city,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He held Qiao Tan Yuan's hand. 'Calm down, we'll be landing in another two hours.'

'Really?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu nodded his head. 'If you want I can ask a flight attendant this plane's destination.'

'No need,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'As long as it's landing in the city.'

'If you're tired, go back to sleep,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu turned around to look at his laptop, but Qiao Tan Yuan wouldn't let go of his hand.

'You promised you'll give Xiao Bao back to me and you won't interfere in my

life anymore,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan’s trembling hand. Was she scared he wouldn’t let her see Xiao Bao or was she scared he wouldn’t leave her alone?

‘Don’t worry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and pushed Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand away. ‘I’ll give Xiao Bao back to you.’

‘I... I didn’t mean...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You know I value Xiao Bao more than my life. I can’t let her stay with the Gu Household.’

Qiao Tan Yuan stopped hiding the truth from Gu Jiao Wu, there was never a day or night she thought about abandoning Xiao Bao. She watched him read manual reports written in German. The secretive way he closed the screens on his laptop before made her suspect what was his real identity.

Qiao Tan Yuan had doubts whether she loved Gu Jiao Wu or the image he projected. She loved him since she fell on the ground as a girl, he helped her stand and told her not to cry. She was too tired to think about the answer. She closed her eyes, and dreamt about gazing at the stars next to Gu Jiao Wu. They were kissing, and their bodies were connected.

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan called.

Qiao Tan Yuan opened her eyes, and saw Gu Jiao Wu was staring at her. She looked out the window to avoid his eyes.

‘Are we there yet?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

End of Chapter Ninety-Eight

Related

Ninety-Nine



Chapter Ninety-Nine

Bathroom.

‘Soon,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand. ‘Did you see me in your dream?’

‘What?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘No. Who dreamt of you?’

‘You called my name,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu smiled, Qiao Tan Yuan had dreamt of him.

‘I... I called your name?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘I dreamt we returned to the city. You wouldn’t give Xiao Bao back to me. We argued, and I called your name.’

‘Really?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘You don’t need to worry about it even in your dream. I promised I’ll give Xiao Bao back to you.’

‘Good,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You know how important Xiao Bao is to me. I won’t let anyone steal Xiao Bao.’

The pilot prepared the plane for landing. Qiao Tan Yuan secretly glanced at Gu Jiao Wu. He said he would tell her everything if she promised to be with him. She did want to be with him. It was not knowing what day he would leave her again that stopped her from saying yes to him.

Gu Jiao Wu passed Qiao Tan Yuan a coat.

‘It’s cold in the city,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Wear this to stay warm.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was used to the tropical climate on the island, and forgot it was

cold in the city. She accepted the coat.

‘Thank you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘The plane’s about to land,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Put on your seat belt.’

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded her head, and Gu Jiao Wu held her hand tighter.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, are you sure you won’t change your mind?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t answer, and Gu Jiao Wu didn’t let go of her hand.

The plane landed. Gu Jiao Wu put on a black trench coat, held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand and they walked to the international airport arrival gate.

Outside the airport, Qiao Tan Yuan felt cold wind instead of tropical humid wind. She glanced at Gu Jiao Wu, and thought he looked taller in a trench coat.

‘I’ll take you home,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘No need,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’ll take a taxi home.’

‘Xiao Bao is staying at the Gu Mansion,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Don’t you want to take Xiao Bao home?’

‘I haven’t contacted my family for seven days,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘My parents must be worried.’

‘What’s one more night?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu led Qiao Tan Yuan to his car in the parking lot.

‘What about my suitcase?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Don’t worry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Someone is delivering your suitcase to the Qiao Mansion.’

Gu Jiao Wu turned on the car, and drove home.

‘How did you arrange everything?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘You can buy anything with money,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Money? Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t believe Gu Jiao Wu spent money. He had connections she didn’t know about. Money paid for things, but it couldn’t buy respect. The way his assistant on the island respected him indicated he had more privileges than an ordinary citizen.

‘If you don’t want to tell me then don’t say anything,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu heard Qiao Tan Yuan sulked like a girl, and he smiled.

An hour later, Gu Jiao Wu parked at the Gu Mansion and Qiao Tan Yuan remembered about the time zone difference.

‘It’s late,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Xiao Bao would be asleep.’

‘Um,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Do you want me to wake Xiao Bao up so you can take her home?’

‘I... it’s your fault,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I told you I wanted to go home on my own.’

‘It’s late,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Stay here tonight. I’ll drive you and Xiao Bao home tomorrow morning.’

Gu Jiao Wu got out of the car, and opened Qiao Tan Yuan’s door.

‘Or do you want me to take you home?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to go home and disturb her parents. She’d been away on an island for seven days so she didn’t want to stay in a hotel. Although she was happy to be with Gu Jiao Wu on the island, there wasn’t a day she didn’t miss Xiao Bao and wished she could see Xiao Bao.

‘Come inside,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Get a good night sleep. Tomorrow, you and Xiao Bao will get to go home.’

Qiao Tan Yuan followed Gu Jiao Wu to his bedroom, the bedroom she stayed alone in during their marriage. It brought back painful memories. Nothing changed. He didn’t change the curtains, sofa and vase she bought. But she didn’t delude herself. He didn’t pay attention to anything insignificant to him like how she being his wife was insignificant to him. So he wouldn’t waste his time changing furnishings he didn’t notice she bought. She looked at the empty vase, and remembered how she used to buy roses to decorate the bedroom and cheer herself up.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked away from the vase, and noticed Gu Jiao Wu was staring at her.

‘I... I’ll sleep on the sofa,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu pointed at the wardrobe.

‘Your clothes are still in the wardrobe,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Go take a bath, and sleep.’

Gu Jiao Wu walked to the study room. Qiao Tan Yuan was used to him following her to the bathroom on the island. She shook her head, picked out night clothes from a wardrobe drawer and walked to the bathroom. In the bathroom she took off her clothes, and discovered her bra was wet.

Qiao Tan Yuan remembered Gu Jiao Wu didn’t sleep with her on the flight home so he didn’t help express her breast milk. She couldn’t wake up Xiao Bao, and she didn’t want to ask him to help her so she decided to squeeze out breast milk herself to ease the discomfort.

Qiao Tan Yuan squeezed her breasts, and heard someone opened the bathroom door, she turned around and saw Gu Jiao Wu.

‘I forgot something in here,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu saw milk leaking out of Qiao Tan Yuan’s nipples, and immediately walked to her.

‘I can help you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Go outside,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu got to sleep with Qiao Tan Yuan at night for seven nights. It became a habit, he couldn’t sleep if she wasn’t in bed with him.

‘You promised me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘What did I promise you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘I promised you can leave the island. I didn’t promise I wouldn’t touch you. Besides, today is the seventh day.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t wait for Qiao Tan Yuan’s reply. He suckled her nipples, and she gripped his shoulders. She fell into his trap again, and he thoroughly ate her in the bathroom.

In the middle of the night, Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan laid on the bed together. Her last thought before she slept was he must have a bathroom fetish.

End of Chapter Ninety-Nine

Related

One Hundred



Chapter One Hundred

Accident.

Qiao Tan Yuan woke up at ten in the morning. She was relieved Gu Jiao Wu went to work. He left a new black blouse, white pants, white boots and a white coat for her on the sofa. She quickly changed clothes to go see Xiao Bao.

‘Miss Qiao,’ Mrs Chu said.

Mrs Chu carried Xiao Bao into the bedroom. Qiao Tan Yuan was grateful for Mrs Chu. Without Mrs Chu, she would be worried Xiao Bao would cry in an unfamiliar place.

Mrs Chu put Xiao Bao in Qiao Tan Yuan’s arms.

‘Xiao Bao’s healthy,’ Mrs Chu. ‘She’s been good, ate and slept well. She ate two and a half bowls of baby food puree each day, and drank the youngest Mrs Gu’s breast milk too. She really likes the youngest Mrs Gu, she’ll smile if the youngest Mrs Gu carries her.’

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded her head, and looked at Xiao Bao’s small pink face. Xiao Bao had grown since seven days ago. She knew Xiao Bao was well looked after at the Gu Mansion. Xiao Bao recognised her body scent, and Xiao Bao’s head rubbed against her breasts.

Qiao Tan Yuan smiled at Xiao Bao, patted Xiao Bao’s back and breast fed Xiao Bao on the sofa.

Mrs Chu returned to the bedroom after packing Xiao Bao’s belongings.

‘Miss Qiao, I know it’s not my place to say,’ Mrs Chu said. ‘But during the last seven days, everyone in the Gu Household loves Xiao Bao, and they treated Xiao Bao well. Xiao Bao likes having the elders of the Gu Household hold her too. Miss Qiao since you and Mr Gu went on a honeymoon, does that mean...’

‘Aunty, don’t you have anything else to say?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Nothing,’ Mrs Chu said. She was unhappy Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to consider staying at the Gu Mansion with Gu Jiao Wu and Xiao Bao. ‘Are we taking Xiao Bao to the Qiao Mansion?’

‘Um,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to stay in a bedroom that reminded her how much Gu Jiao Wu hated her.

Qiao Tan Yuan let Mrs Chu carry Xiao Bao so she could call Qiao Jie to pick them up from the Qiao Mansion. But Tan Pan Ting knocked on the door, and walked into the bedroom.

‘Tan Yuan,’ Tan Pan Ting greeted happily.

‘Pan Ting, why are you home?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘I’m on maternity leave,’ Tan Pan Ting said.

‘I see,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Pan Ting, thank you for taking care of Xiao Bao.’

‘I didn’t do much,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Xiao Bao’s grandma, and Mrs Chu deserve all the credit for taking good care of Xiao Bao. I’ve only breast fed Xiao Bao a little.’

‘I still want to thank you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I need to take Xiao Bao home. When I’m free I’ll bring Xiao Bao here to visit you.’

‘Tan Yuan... I heard big brother took you on a honeymoon,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Aren’t you two back together?’

‘What honeymoon?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Who told you nonsense?’

‘What?’ Tan Pan Ting asked. ‘I thought we could live together as sisters.’

‘We’re not fated to live together but we can still be friends,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘My family would be anxious to see Xiao Bao. I should take Xiao Bao home

before my family sends out a search squad.'

'I'm going to miss Xiao Bao,' Tan Pan Ting said. 'Xiao Bao is loveable unlike my two little demons.'

'Where are your boys?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'They're sleeping,' Tan Pan Ting said. 'My older boy cried all night, and my younger boy was restless all night. Why did I have to give birth to boys?'

'Mrs Gu, it's normal for babies to cry,' Mrs Chu said. 'You can't return them after you've given birth to them.'

'True,' Tan Pan Ting said. 'Tan Yuan, I won't force you to stay. But promise me you'll visit me often. I want us to share our baby experiences together.'

'OK,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I should go.'

'Tan Yuan, don't you want to say goodbye to Xiao Bao's grandma before you leave?' Tan Pan Ting asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan smiled and shook her head. She wasn't Wang Tu Ya's daughter-in-law, there was no reason for her to see Wang Tu Ya.

Tan Pan Ting waved bye to Qiao Tan Yuan, and Qiao Tan Yuan followed Mrs Chu and Xiao Bao to the front door. One of the Gu Household's driver was waiting for them at the front door.

'Miss Qiao, first young master asked me to drive you and the youngest mistress back to the Qiao Mansion,' the driver said.

Mrs Chu was carrying Xiao Bao to the car so Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't decline. Qiao Tan Yuan walked to the car, and looked around. Gu Jiao Wu didn't appear, and she didn't know why she was sad when he kept his promise to let her go.

In the car, Qiao Tan Yuan thought about how intimate she and Gu Jiao Wu were last night but became strangers the next day.

'Miss Qiao?' Mrs Chu called.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked out the window, and realised she was home. She picked up Xiao Bao, and kissed Xiao Bao's cheek. She was blessed to have Xiao Bao. She wouldn't be lonely as long as Xiao Bao was with her.

Mrs Qiao was waiting at the door when she saw Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao come out of the car. She carried Xiao Bao in her arms the moment Xiao Bao reached the door. She kissed Xiao Bao's cheek, and checked if Xiao Bao lost weight or was injured anywhere.

'It's good Xiao Bao is healthy,' Mrs Qiao said. 'They took good care of Xiao Bao.'

'What?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Mum, did you know Xiao Bao was at the Gu Mansion?'

Mrs Qiao gave Xiao Bao to Mrs Chu, and signalled for Mrs Chu to take Xiao Bao to the nursery.

'I only found out five days ago,' Mrs Chu said. 'We were waiting for your call to hear news you arrived in Denmark safely. But after the second day you and Xiao Bao left, we still didn't get a call from you. Your dad wanted to call the police. It's a good thing Wang Tu Ya called to say Gu Jiao Wu took you on a honeymoon, and Xiao Bao was at the Gu Mansion. Although Xiao Bao had Wang Tu Ya, Mrs Chu and Tan Pan Ting at the Gu Mansion, I wanted to take Xiao Bao home. Then I considered the good relations between our families, and agreed to let Xiao Bao stay at the Gu Mansion while you and Gu Jiao Wu were on a honeymoon.'

Mrs Qiao noticed Qiao Tan Yuan looked tired.

'Tan Yuan, are you tired?' Mrs Qiao asked. 'Didn't you have a relaxing honeymoon?'

A relaxing honeymoon? Qiao Tan Yuan thought going on a honeymoon with Gu Jiao Wu made her body more tired than going to work.

'Mum, I'm OK,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Tan Yuan, are you and Gu Jiao Wu back together?' Mrs Qiao asked.

'No,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Mum, he and I aren't fated to be together.'

'But...' Mrs Qiao said.

Mrs Qiao didn't understand why Qiao Tan Yuan agreed to go on a honeymoon with Gu Jiao Wu if Qiao Tan Yuan wasn't back together with Gu Jiao Wu.

'Mum, we didn't go on a honeymoon,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'He used Xiao Bao

to blackmail me to spend seven days with him. He promised after seven days if I didn't change my mind, he'll give Xiao Bao back to me and he won't interfere in my life anymore.'

'What did you...' Mrs Qiao said.

'I've made up my mind,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I don't want to live with him. I only want to live a peaceful life with Xiao Bao.'

Mrs Qiao was unsure if Qiao Tan Yuan made the right decision for Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao. But she supported Qiao Tan Yuan's decision.

'Tan Yuan, Shen Cheng's back,' Mrs Qiao said.

'Really?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Last night Shen Cheng was admitted to the hospital,' Mrs Qiao said.

'What?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Why is Shen Cheng in the hospital?'

'Last night Shen Cheng came to visit you and Xiao Bao,' Mrs Qiao said. 'I told Shen Cheng, you and Gu Jiao Wu were on a honeymoon. Then I received a call, Shen Cheng was in a car accident on the way home.'

Mrs Qiao didn't need to say why Shen Cheng drove inattentively, because Qiao Tan Yuan understood Shen Cheng would have been affected after receiving the honeymoon news.

'Is Shen Cheng seriously injured?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'What hospital is he staying in? I'll go visit him.'

No matter what happened, Shen Cheng was a friend in Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes.

'Tan Yuan... think about what you want carefully,' Mrs Qiao said. 'Gu Jiao Wu...'

'Mum!' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Don't mention him anymore.'

End of Chapter One Hundred

Related



Chapter 101

Basket.

‘I lost sleep worrying about you,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘The truth is I want you and Xiao to stay here. But if going to Denmark makes you happy then I won’t stop you.’

‘Mum, you don’t have to worry about me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m not going to Denmark anymore. I’m staying here with Xiao Bao.’

‘Tan Yuan... are you and Gu Jiao Wu...’ Mrs Qiao said.

‘Mum, there is nothing between him and me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m going upstairs to rest.’

Qiao Tan Yuan walked to her bedroom. She laid in bed feeling guilty for causing Shen Cheng’s car accident, and decided to visit Shen Cheng in the morning. She closed her eyes, Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t lying next to her. She wanted to forget Gu

Jiao Wu, but her head wouldn't listen. She thought about how Gu Jiao Wu held her tightly when he thought she drowned, and he said he loved her. It was a lie, Gu Jiao Wu loved Chu Da. She didn't believe Li Lam wasn't Chu Da, because no two people had the same face unless they were twins. Even if Li Lam wasn't Chu Da, her intuition told her Li Lam was infatuated with Gu Jiao Wu. Since Gu Jiao Wu loved Chu Da, it wouldn't take him long to move on with Li Lam. She made the right decision for herself, and she didn't regret ending things with Gu Jiao Wu.

In the morning, Qiao Tan Yuan felt refreshed. She chose a cream turtleneck blouse, and white pants. She left the white coat Gu Jiao Wu bought for her on the sofa last night. The designer of the white coat was her favorite designer. Since it matched her outfit, she wore the white coat too.

After Qiao Tan Yuan breast fed Xiao Bao, she asked Mrs Chu to play with Xiao Bao while she visited Shen Cheng at the hospital. She bought a fruit basket for Shen Cheng on the way to hospital. By the time she arrived at the hospital, she realised she forgot to ask Mrs Qiao for Shen Cheng's room number. She asked reception for Shen Cheng's room number, and took the elevator to his room. Outside his room, she overheard his doctor say he hit his head, arm and leg. After the doctor left the room, she felt guiltier seeing his head bandaged, one arm and one leg in a cast.

Shen Cheng saw Qiao Tan Yuan enter his hospital room, and he tried to sit up on his own. She walked to the bed, and helped him sit up.

'How are you?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Why are you here?' Shen Cheng asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan put the fruit basket on a table, and felt awkward seeing Shen Cheng again.

'I heard you were in a car accident and I came to visit you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Thank you,' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng didn't expect the day he returned home from overseas, Qiao Tan Yuan had gone overseas on a honeymoon with Gu Jiao Wu.

Qiao Tan Yuan put a pillow behind Shen Cheng's back. He looked like a

mummy, and it made her worry he was seriously injured.

‘Why did you drive carelessly?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Do I look scary to you?’ Shen Cheng asked. ‘Don’t worry, the doctor wrapped me up as a precaution. My injuries are not as bad as they look.’

Qiao Tan Yuan sat on a chair next to the bed.

‘Who’s scary?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Have you eaten yet?’

‘Yes,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘Mum brought food for me before. She’ll come back later.’

‘Oh,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Do you want to eat fruits? I can peel fruits for you.’

‘No,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘I’m full.’

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded her head, and didn’t know what to say.

‘I should congratulate you,’ Shen Cheng said.

‘Congratulate me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘You and big brother are back together,’ Shen Cheng said and forced himself to smile. ‘It’s a miracle big brother took you on a honeymoon.’

‘Not true,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Don’t believe my mum’s nonsense.’

‘Don’t you want to get back together with big brother?’ Shen Cheng asked.

‘I’m not back together with him,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Really?’ Shen Cheng asked.

Shen Cheng had spent months travelling around North America and Europe, but he couldn’t forget Qiao Tan Yuan. If he couldn’t forget her then he wanted to follow his heart even if she broke his heart again. He was devastated when Mrs Qiao told him that Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu went on a honeymoon. He shouldn’t have driven home in a shocked state from the Qiao Mansion. He swerved to avoid hitting a car, but ended up hitting a light pole.

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘He and I are not fated to be together.’

‘But don’t you love big brother?’ Shen Cheng asked.

‘I don’t love him anymore,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

The door opened, Qiao Tan Yuan and Shen Cheng were surprised to see Gu Jiao Wu. They didn't know how long Gu Jiao Wu was standing outside the door.

Gu Jiao Wu saw the fruit basket on the table and frowned. He put the fruit basket he was holding next to Qiao Tan Yuan's fruit basket.

'Today I heard you were in a car accident,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Are you OK?'

'I'm OK,' Shen Cheng said. 'Big brother why are you here, and not at work?'

'Today's Saturday,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Shen Cheng knocked his bandaged head.

'Big brother, I hit my head lightly and it made me forget what day it is,' Shen Cheng said.

'Don't hit your head,' Qiao Tan Yuan chided. She pulled Shen Cheng's hand away from his head. 'Or you'll turn yourself into a dummy.'

'I'm OK,' Shen Cheng said. He saw Qiao Tan Yuan's worried face, smiled and held her hand. 'My injuries are half healed since you came to visit me.'

'Nonsense,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. Sometimes she felt Shen Cheng was a kid. 'If you want to recover, you need to listen to your doctor.'

'I only need you to visit me every day and I'll recover faster,' Shen Cheng said.

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded her head. She owed Shen Cheng a lot. The least she could do was visit him until he recovered.

Gu Jiao Wu fisted his hands. He couldn't stand seeing Shen Cheng being close to Qiao Tan Yuan. He was about to open his mouth to interrupt them when Gu Jiao Wen walked into the room.

'Big brother, you're too much,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'You made me find a parking on my own, and visited Shen Cheng before me.'

'Big brother Jiao Wen,' Shen Cheng greeted.

Gu Jiao Wen pointed at one of the fruit baskets.

'I bought that fruit basket for you but big brother took the credit,' Gu Jiao Wen said.

Gu Jiao Wu saw Gu Jiao Wen leave early in the morning, and he asked Gu Jiao Wen where Gu Jiao Wen was going. Gu Jiao Wen told him about Shen Cheng's car accident. Then he went with Gu Jiao Wen to visit Shen Cheng at the hospital, and didn't have time to buy a get well gift for Shen Cheng.

'Big brother Jiao Wen, it's enough for me to have you and big brother visit me,' Shen Cheng said.

'Why were you so careless?' Gu Jiao Wen asked.

'I was inattentive,' Shen Cheng said and looked at Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan was right. It was her fault Shen Cheng got into a car accident. She looked at him guiltily.

Everyone else, especially Gu Jiao Wu misunderstood Qiao Tan Yuan was looking lovingly at Shen Cheng.

End of Chapter 101

Related



Chapter 102

Mummy.

Gu Jiao Wu stretched his arm to hold Qiao Tan Yuan's hand, but Tong Shang Wen, Hu Zui Ren and Du Lei Xin carried gifts into Shen Cheng's hospital room.

Tong Shang Wen brought flowers, Hu Zui Ren brought a laptop and Du Lei Xin brought books. They were surprised to see the two Gu brothers visited Shen Cheng too.

'Shen Cheng, you should thank me for saving you from dying of boredom,' Hu Zui Ren said. 'I brought a laptop for you to entertain yourself. Unlike these two fools who brought you flowers and feminine books.'

'You don't need to brag,' Tong Shang Wen said. 'Shen Cheng hit his head. It's not good for him to use the laptop while he's recovering.'

'Which is why I brought books,' Du Lei Xin said. 'You can keep your mind busy reading books.'

'Big brother Lei Xin, what books did you bring for me?' Shen Cheng asked.

'I chose books suitable for you to read,' Du Lei Xin said and smiled.

Shen Cheng looked at the meditation books and frowned. Did he look like a monk?

Hu Zui Ren patted Shen Cheng's good shoulder.

'If you don't want to read,' Hu Zui Ren said. 'Turn on the laptop. I asked a programmer to install the latest games, music and movies for you.'

'Zui Ren, look at Shen Cheng's arms,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'Do you expect him to play games with one hand?'

'So what if Shen Cheng injured his arm?' Hu Zui Ren asked and looked at Qiao Tan Yuan. 'He has someone to take care of him.'

Hu Zui Ren was busy with work, and hadn't seen everyone since Xiao Bao's one month milestone celebration. He thought since Gu Jiao Wu didn't attend Xiao Bao's celebration, it meant Shen Cheng and Qiao Tan Yuan had a chance to be together.

'Big brother Zui Ren, what nonsense are you saying?' Shen Cheng asked.

Shen Cheng didn't want Hu Zui Ren to embarrass Qiao Tan Yuan in front of everyone.

'Shen Cheng, you shouldn't play games or read too much,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You need to rest to recover.'

'I know,' Shen Cheng said.

'That's right,' Tong Shang Wen said. 'You need to rest. Since you didn't attend my birthday party, you need to recover to attend Zui Ren's birthday party.'

'Big brother Shang Wen, give me a break,' Shen Cheng said. 'Do you want me to show up at big brother's Zui Ren's birthday party looking like a mummy?'

'So what?' Tong Shang Wen asked. 'I'll organise a costume birthday party for Zui Ren. You'll look like the perfect mummy.'

'Good idea,' Du Lei Xin said. 'Shen Cheng, now you have no excuse not to go to Zui Ren's birthday party.'

'Zui Ren, is your birthday coming up?' Gu Jiao Wen asked.

'Big brother Jiao Wen, you forgot all our birthdays after you got married,' Tong Shang Wen teased. 'You can only see your wife and sons. Even Tan Yuan who has a daughter came to my birthday party. Big brother Jiao Wen, you neglected your friends too much.'

Gu Jiao Wen did want to go to Tong Shang Wen's birthday party, but his boys were sick that day and he couldn't have fun while worrying about his boys.

'But I know big brother Jiao Wen is a dedicated family man so I'll forgive you,' Tong Shang Wen said. 'Shen Cheng, make sure you get plenty of rest and recover to attend Zui Ren's birthday party.'

'OK,' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng looked at Gu Jiao Wu who was glaring at Qiao Tan Yuan's hand on his good shoulder. He sensed Gu Jiao Wu's feelings for Qian Tan Yuan had changed a lot since Xiao Bao was born. But he didn't know if he was happy or sad about the change in Gu Jiao Wu.

'Tan Yuan, I'm thirsty,' Shen Cheng said. 'Can you pour me a glass of water?'

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded her head, and poured a glass of water for Shen Cheng. She wanted to do what she could do to help Shen Cheng recover.

'Thank you,' Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng drank a sip of water, and felt a sharp pain in his injured arm. He would have dropped the glass if Qiao Tan Yuan didn't brace his arms.

'What's wrong?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Are you in pain? Do you want me to call your doctor?'

'I'm OK,' Shen Cheng said. 'You don't have to worry.'

'Looks like we're the third wheels,' Hu Zui Ren teased. 'Shen Cheng has a beauty on his arm, and can't see his friends. It's our cue to leave.'

'I need to go home and help Pan Ting take care of our boys,' Gu Jiao Wen said. He looked at Gu Jiao Wu. 'Big brother, are coming with me?'

'I'm coming,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He patted Shen Cheng's good shoulder. 'Shen Cheng, stay here and rest. I'll visit you another day.'

'I'm leaving too,' Du Lei Xin said. 'If you're up to it, read the books I brought you.'

'Um,' Shen Cheng said.

'Bye Shen Cheng,' Tong Shang Wen said.

'Bye,' Shen Cheng said and waved to everyone with his good hand.

Qiao Tan Yuan stayed behind to apologize.

'Shen Cheng, I'm sorry,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'It's my...'

'You don't have anything to be sorry about,' Shen Cheng said. 'It's my fault for driving carelessly. Don't blame yourself.'

‘Shen Cheng, honestly I’m...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘You don’t need to say anything,’ Shen Cheng said and held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand. ‘I understand. You don’t need to feel guilty. You don’t owe me anything.’

Qiao Tan Yuan thought it was her fault for giving Shen Cheng hope then dashing his hope.

‘Alright,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘If you think you owe me then tomorrow come here, and spend time with me.’

‘OK, I’ll come visit you tomorrow,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘There’s nothing to do here,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘I’ll be happy if I have you to keep me company.’

‘Starting from tomorrow, I’ll come visit you at the hospital until you recover,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Tan Yuan, thank you,’ Shen Cheng said and smiled.

Outside the hospital, Gu Jiao Wen was reversing out of the parking lot when Gu Jiao Wu asked him to stop the car.

‘What’s wrong?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked.

‘I remembered I need to go somewhere,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and got out of the car. ‘You can go home first.’

‘Big brother, do you want me to ask a driver to come pick you up?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked.

‘No need,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll take a taxi home.’

Gu Jiao Wen drove off, and Gu Jiao Wu walked to Qiao Tan Yuan’s car.

Qiao Tan Yuan stayed inside Shen Cheng’s hospital room until Mrs Shen came back. When she walked to her car, she was surprised to see Gu Jiao Wu.

‘What are you doing here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu lifted Qiao Tan Yuan’s arm, he looked at her watch and frowned. She was in Shen Cheng’s hospital room for more than an hour.

Qiao Tan Yuan ignored Gu Jiao Wu. She wanted to open her car door, but he

was blocking her way.

‘Can you move aside?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

End of Chapter 102

Related



Chapter 103

Promise.

‘You moved on fast,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘What nonsense are you saying?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Did you reject me to be with Shen Cheng?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘What?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Who wants to be with Shen Cheng?’

‘Am I wrong?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Do you think I’ll let Xiao Bao call another man father?’

‘You promised to let me go and let me take Xiao Bao back to the Qiao Household,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Yes, but I only agreed for you to take Xiao Bao back to the Qiao Household,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You promised!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Do you think you can stand here if I didn’t keep my promise?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew Gu Jiao Wu spoke the truth, he would have kept her on the island if he didn’t agree to let her return home.

‘You broke your promise,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘You can say what you like,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu grabbed Qiao Tan Yuan’s car key, and sat in the driver’s seat.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, this is my car,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Get in,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You get out,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I need to go home to be with Xiao Bao.’

‘I’ll drive you home,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I don’t need you to drive me home,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I can drive myself home.’

‘Either I drive you home or you can stay here all day,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan surrendered as Gu Jiao Wu expected, she sat in the car.

‘Home?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu glanced at Qiao Tan Yuan’s pursed lips and he smiled. He turned on the car, and drove to the Qiao Mansion.

‘Your car needs a tune up,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘When was the last time you had it checked?’

Mr and Mrs Qiao bought the red car for Qiao Tan Yuan’s birthday. Qiao Tan Yuan like most women, drove cars and didn’t pay attention to the condition of a car’s engine. She knew Gu Jiao Wu was worried about her safety, but she wasn’t grateful.

‘I don’t need you to worry about my car,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to fight with Qiao Tan Yuan, he focused on arriving at the Qiao Mansion safely.

After Gu Jiao Wu parked the car, Qiao Tan Yuan put out her hand.

‘Give me back my car key,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t give back the key. He followed Qiao Tan Yuan into the Qiao Mansion.

Mrs Qiao was surprised to see Gu Jiao Wu. Didn’t Qiao Tan Yuan say there was nothing between Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu?

Gu Jiao Wu greeted Mrs Qiao, and he chased after Qiao Tan Yuan.

Mrs Qiao watched Gu Jiao Wu entered the nursery, and she understood, Qiao

Tan Yuan's way of thinking was too simple. Gu Jiao Wu wouldn't be Gu Jiao Wu if he let go of Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao that easily. She was going to let them decide their own fate.

In the nursery, Qiao Tan Yuan ignored Gu Jiao Wu. She fed Xiao Bao a bowl of baby food puree, played with Xiao Bao until Xiao Bao fell asleep. Then she asked Mrs Chu to watch over Xiao Bao, and she walked to her bedroom. She was about to lock her bedroom door, but Gu Jiao Wu was quicker. He entered her bedroom, and he closed the door.

'Gu Jiao Wu, I want you to leave,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu saw the look of weariness in Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes.

'Are you scared of me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Who's scared of you?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'I just don't want to see you.'

'Who do want to see?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Shen Cheng?'

Gu Jiao Wu was jealous Qiao Tan Yuan spent half the day with Shen Cheng, but she didn't want to see him.

'So what if I want to see Shen Cheng?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'I don't need your permission, and I don't need to report to you about my life.'

Gu Jiao Wu looked closely at Qiao Tan Yuan's face, and her outfit. When they were on the island Qiao Tan Yuan didn't wear makeup or dressed up for him. But she wore makeup, and dressed up to see Shen Cheng.

'How do you think Shen Cheng will feel if he knew you wore clothes I bought you to go see him?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at the white coat Gu Jiao Wu bought her, and felt embarrassed. She took off the white coat, and threw it at him.

'Take it,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Who needs to wear your clothes?'

Qiao Tan Yuan wouldn't have accepted clothes from Gu Jiao Wu if he didn't send her suitcase to her home, and she had nothing to wear at the Gu Mansion except night clothes.

Gu Jiao Wu caught the white coat, and stood in front of Qiao Tan Yuan who

was glaring at him.

‘Are you looking at me because you’re waiting for me to take off the rest of your clothes?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Who’s waiting for you to take off my clothes?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘It’s not what you’re thinking. I only returned your coat.’

‘What am I thinking?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘What else can you be thinking except wanting to make a commotion in my bedroom?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Commotion?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu tossed the coat on the floor. Then he held Qiao Tan Yuan’s waist, and kissed her lips like he wanted to the moment he saw her at the hospital. When his hand slid into her pants, she bit his tongue hard and he let go of her lips.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, you can’t be with Chen Sheng,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you promised to let me go,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I only promised to let you go home,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I didn’t promise to let you go.’

‘You promised you wouldn’t interfere in my life anymore,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Do you think I would ever let you go so you can be with another man?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

End of Chapter 103

Related



Chapter 104

Empty.

‘You know Shen Cheng well,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If I’m with Shen Cheng, he’ll treat me and Xiao Bao well.’

‘Do you actually want to be with Shen Cheng?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. He held Qiao Tan Yuan’s chin. ‘Unless I die, you can’t be with Shen Cheng.’

‘Then you can die,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You have no right to stop me.’

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yuan’s chin, pulled her body closer to his body and he kissed her lips. He wanted to glue her to him, and not let another man near her.

When Gu Jiao Wu was pulling Qiao Tan Yuan’s pants down, she kicked his leg with her heel. He let go of her, and she retreated several steps.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you’re despicable!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, do you want to kill me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked and rubbed his sore leg.

‘Yes, I want to kill you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She didn’t want to fight with Gu Jiao Wu, and she didn’t want him to die. ‘Stop treating me like a toy. You can’t change my mind through flesh. Satisfying a physical need is meaningless.’

‘Are you saying no matter what, you won’t believe me or give me a chance?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan had Xiao Bao. Xiao Bao was enough. She didn’t want to feel love or hate anymore.

‘Do you hate me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘No, I don’t hate you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘They why don’t you want to be with me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Because I don’t have the strength to love you anymore,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘In the past I loved you, you were my world. I schemed to get you to marry me, to give me a chance.’ She dug her fingernails into her palms to stop herself from crying, and she took a deep breath. ‘Do you need me to recount how I lived being married to you for three years? You didn’t look at me once, you didn’t care about me. Do you remember our first wedding anniversary? It took me a lot of courage to wear lingerie in front of you. But you acted like you couldn’t see me.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t know what to say to comfort Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘On your birthday I did my best to cook a meal for you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I called you to come home. But you said you were busy, and told me not to bother you then you hung up on me. If it was my birthday, I only wanted to eat a meal with you. But you didn’t bother to find out my birthday. It wasn’t important that you didn’t give me flowers or even a small gift. But if I wanted to eat a meal with you, I had to ask your family or your friends to ask you to eat a meal with us. You didn’t smile at me. I waited for you to look my way. But in your eyes I didn’t exist. In your dreams the woman’s name you called was Chu Da.’

Qiao Tan Yuan blinked back tears, and composed herself.

‘You didn’t pay attention to me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I didn’t receive even a bit of your love. Now you’re saying you love me, and you want to be with me. Do

you expect me to jump if you say jump?’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to see the sadness, and skeptical look in Qiao Tan Yuan’s eyes.

‘Why won’t you believe I love you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I don’t need your love anymore,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t need you. I don’t want anything to do with you. It’s too late. You’ve hurt me too deeply. Now my only wish is to live a peaceful life with Xiao Bao. If you love me then you’ll grant my wish.’

Gu Jiao Wu felt his heart break.

‘I didn’t fulfil my duties as a husband to you during those three years,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘But it’s in the past. Now I can give you and Xiao Bao a happy family life.’

‘There are many children who have single parents,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’ll do everything to give Xiao Bao a happy life. Gu Jiao Wu, let go.’

Let go? Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan, if he could let go then he would have let go long ago.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I wasn’t the only one at fault for our failed first marriage,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I can’t erase what I did in the past. But now I don’t want to let go.’

‘Why are you cornering me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Do you want to see what dirty tactics I’ll use against you?’

‘I know you won’t,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘If that’s what you believe then I can say you don’t know me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘How ever low you’re willing to go, I can match you.’

‘If this is your wish then I’ll grant your wish,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu left without saying another word or looking back.

Qiao Tan Yuan collapsed on the bed. She didn’t care if Gu Jiao Wu actually let go of her, and she didn’t regret her decision.

Old memories resurfaced in Qiao Tan Yuan’s head. She remembered on her birthday, she reserved a table at Gu Jiao Wu’s favorite restaurant. She called him

to ask him to eat dinner with her. He picked up after she called the fifth time, and he promised he would come. She sat at the restaurant until eleven at night. That night she waited five hours, he didn't show up. She called his phone again, his phone was switched off and she worried that he was in an accident. She looked for him, he was drinking with Du Lei Xin. In Gu Jiao Wu's heart, there was his family, friends and career but she didn't exist in his heart.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought if Gu Jiao Wu was momentarily curious about her, and wanted to give Xiao Bao a family then she would rather he didn't pay attention to her. She let herself cry, but told herself to keep standing tall and not fall just because Gu Jiao Wu wouldn't be in her life anymore.

After seven days past, Gu Jiao Wu actually kept his promise. Qiao Tan Yuan visited Shen Cheng at the hospital in the mornings, she went to work in the afternoons and spent time with Xiao Bao in the evenings to keep herself busy. Shen Cheng told her Gu Jiao Wu brought Shen Cheng gifts, and visited Shen Cheng after she left the hospital.

Mrs Shen treated Qiao Tan Yuan well like Mrs Shen used to when Qiao Tan Yuan was younger, because after Shen Cheng's car accident Mrs Shen only wanted Shen Cheng to be happy.

Shen Cheng's doctor discharged Shen Cheng from the hospital after Shen Cheng's injuries healed.

Hu Zui Ren was happy to hear Shen Cheng could attend the birthday party. Qiao Tan Yuan was worried Shen Cheng was pushing himself too soon so she agreed to escort Shen Cheng to the birthday party.

End of Chapter 104

Related



Chapter 105

Green.

‘Tan Yuan, do you think it’ll scare everyone to see a vampire and a witch side by side?’ Shen Cheng asked.

‘Do you really think everyone will be scared seeing a vampire and a witch?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘I don’t know,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘But everyone will ask why such a beautiful witch exists?’

Qiao Tan Yuan blushed. She didn't want Shen Cheng to misunderstand she wanted to be more than friends with him.

Shen Cheng understood Qiao Tan Yuan's intentions.

'Let's go inside,' Shen Cheng said. 'I've been waiting to show off my vampire cape for a long time.'

'Um,' Qiao Tan Yuan said and followed Shen Cheng into the function room.

Everyone at the party was in costume.

'Vampire?' Tong Shang Wen asked Shen Cheng. 'Doesn't suit you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Tong Shang Wen's costume, and didn't know who he was disguised as.

'Who are you meant to be?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Can't you tell who I am?' Tong Shang Wen asked. He puffed his chest. 'I'm Guo Xu from the Bodyguards.'

'I don't think you look like Guo Xu,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Then who do I look like?' Tong Shang Wen asked.

'Xinmen Qing from the Golden Lotus,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Shen Cheng laughed, and Tong Shang Wen glared at Shen Cheng.

'Don't you have eyes?' Tong Shang Wen asked Qiao Tan Yuan. 'I clearly look like Guo Xu.'

'Yes, yes, you're Guo Xu,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'What's the birthday man dressed as today?'

'Zui Ren said he wants to be fashionably late to his own party,' Tong Shang Wen said. 'You'll get to see his costume later when he makes a dramatic entrance.'

Du Lei Xin joined the group.

'Lei Xin, who are you dressed as?' Shen Cheng asked.

'Kaito Kid from the Magic Kaito,' Du Lei Xin said.

'If you jump off from the stage, you'll look more like Kaito Kid,' Qiao Tan Yuan

said.

‘Kaito Kid, what are you going to steal?’ Tong Shang Wen asked.

‘It depends what’s worth stealing here,’ Du Lei Xin said.

‘Here comes the power ranger couple,’ Tong Shang Wen said.

‘Aren’t I allowed to be a power ranger?’ Tan Pan Ting asked.

‘Of course you can,’ Tong Shang Wen said. He looked at the taller power ranger next to Tan Pan Ting. ‘Did big brother come with you two?’

‘I don’t know,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. ‘I called big brother’s phone, but it was switched off.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was relieved Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t at the party.

‘Let’s get something to drink before the main attraction,’ Tong Shang Wen said.

Suddenly the lights were switched off. Everyone froze until the lights were switched on again. A screen was projected on the stage wall, Shrek leapt off the stage and most of the female guests squealed.

Shrek landed in front of Tong Shang Wen.

‘What do you think of my costume?’ Hu Zui Ren asked.

‘Hu Zui Ren, I wouldn’t have guessed you secretly liked Shrek,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I like the movie,’ Hu Zui Ren said.

‘I thought you’re dressed as Sadako from the Ring,’ Tong Shang Wen joked. ‘Speaking of Sadako, why aren’t there many guests dressed from horror movies?’

Shen Cheng looked around the function room.

‘True,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘Most of the guests are dressed as heroes and heroines.’

‘If we dress someone as Sadako, we can film Shrek and Sadako crawling off the stage together,’ Tong Shang Wen said.

‘You two, is this a party or a horror amusement park to scare guests?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘What’s the difference?’ Hu Zui Ren asked. ‘Alright, everyone go eat first while waiting for the main event.’

‘What’s the main event?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Let’s go and eat,’ Hu Zui Ren said mysteriously.

‘Tan Yuan, I’m hungry,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Can you come with me to find food?’

‘Don’t you need your husband?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked.

‘I want to talk about women’s business with Tan Yuan,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Men are not invited.’

Tan Pan Ting linked arms with Qiao Tan Yuan, and they walked to a buffet table.

‘Tan Yuan, Xiao Bao is more than six months old now,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Have you weaned Xiao Bao off breast milk?’

‘Xiao Bao wants to eat more than drink breast milk,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘You’re so lucky to be free,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘I need to endure a couple more months.’

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Xiao Bao was growing up too fast.

‘Time flies,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Babies grow bigger every day.’

Tan Pan Ting checked that no one could hear her except Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Tan Yuan, it’s hard to raise Xiao Bao on your own,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Have you thought about...’

‘Pan Ting, I’m in a good place,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Right now, I don’t have any plans to change my single status.’

‘But...’ Tan Pan Ting said.

Tan Pan Ting used to hate the cold face Gu Jiao Wu. Lately, she found Gu Jiao Wu tolerable and she even pitied him by the way he moped around the house

looking lonely.

‘Every day after work, big brother goes into the twins’ nursery and looks at them like he was looking at...’ Tan Pan Ting said.

‘Pan Ting, did he ask you to put in a good word for him?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘No,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Do you think Gu Jiao Wu is someone who’ll ask another person to put in a good word for him?’

Qiao Tan Yuan agreed, it wasn’t Gu Jiao Wu’s style.

‘After giving birth, I realised children need both their parents to be involved in their lives,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘I love Xiao Bao. I hope Xiao Bao gets to receive love from both her parents. If you don’t want me to say anything else, I’ll stop.’

Tan Pan Ting had a soft heart. She recognised the way Gu Jiao Wu looked at the twins was as if Gu Jiao Wu was looking at Xiao Bao. She hated Gu Jiao Wu when he mistreated Qiao Tan Yuan. But she thought Gu Jiao Wu had changed, and she hoped Qiao Tan Yuan would give him a second chance.

‘I’m going to wash my hands,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and walked to the bathroom.

In the bathroom Qiao Tan Yuan washed her hands. She looked in the mirror, and thought she looked like a convincing witch with her dark eyeliner and cape. She patted her cheeks to stop herself from being swayed by Tan Pan Ting’s words. She should be happy Gu Jiao Wu kept his promise.

After Qiao Tan Yuan touched up her witch makeup, she walked outside the bathroom and accidentally bumped into someone. Lucky the person she bumped into held her waist before she fell. The person who saved her from falling was dressed like a wizard.

‘Thank you... Gu Jiao Wu?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t want to come to a party dressed in a costume.

‘You look surprised to see me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan looked like a beautiful witch. He pulled her closer to him until their noses touched, she was wearing perfume.

‘Let go,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘You’re wearing perfume,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I can wear perfume if I want to,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu sniffed Qiao Tan Yuan’s neck, and kissed her lips that he missed.

End of Chapter 105

Related



Chapter 106

Witch Hunt.

Qiao Tan Yuan for a moment succumbed to Gu Jiao Wu's intoxicating kiss. She wrapped her arms around his neck, and their tongues soaked in the taste they craved. A moment later her head won the battle over her heart, her hands moved to his chest and pushed him away.

'Are you done?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Let go.'

Gu Jiao Wu heard his and Qiao Tan Yuan's uneven breaths. He remembered she was still upset with him, and let her go. She took a step back, and composed herself. He took a step forward, and held her hand.

'It's been this long and you still don't want to understand,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Understand what?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'About us,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'I have no intention of ever getting back together with you now or in the future,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'If you don't let go, I don't mind calling other guests to come and make you let go.'

Most of the party guests were Gu Jiao Wu's and Qiao Tan Yuan's acquaintances. But it was the adamant look in her eyes that made him let go and leave.

The way Gu Jiao Wu's cape straightened after he turned around made Qiao Tan Yuan sensed loneliness from him. She wondered if he dressed like a wizard because he knew about her witch costume. She shook her head to clear thoughts about him, and she walked back to the function room.

On the dance floor, the power ranger couple swayed together to match the song's rhythm. But Hu Zui Ren the Shrek was the star on the dance floor. Qiao Tan Yuan wasn't lost in the lively atmosphere, she felt someone staring at her. She looked around the room, and spotted Gu Jiao Wu in the distance holding a wine glass while his eyes were zoomed in on where she was standing. His stare made her face turn red, and she looked away so he couldn't see how much his presence affected her.

Shen Cheng the vampire walked to Qiao Tan Yuan, and put his hand out in front of her.

'I looked for you outside the bathroom but I didn't see you,' Shen Cheng said. 'Now that I found you, will you dance one song with me?'

Qiao Tan Yuan was worried Shen Cheng saw Gu Jiao Wu kissing her outside the bathroom.

'Have you forgotten you're my dance partner tonight?' Shen Cheng asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan accepted Shen Cheng's offered hand, and followed him to the dance floor.

Gu Jiao Wu gripped his wine glass. He wanted to take Qiao Tan Yuan away from Shen Cheng's arms.

'I didn't think you'll come,' Du Lei Xin said. 'Not only did you come, but you're in costume too.'

'I had some free time so I came,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Really?' Du Lei Xin asked. 'Upstairs, I keep some vintage wine bottles. Big brother, do you want to open a bottle, and drink with me upstairs?'

Du Lei Xin followed Gu Jiao Wu's murderous gaze on Shen Cheng dancing happily with Qiao Tan Yuan, and he understood Gu Jiao Wu's reluctance to go upstairs.

‘Big brother, it’s Zui Ren’s birthday,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘Don’t be a party pooper.’

Gu Jiao Wu nodded, and walked upstairs with Du Lei Xin.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t feel Gu Jiao Wu’s staring at her back anymore. She turned her head around, Gu Jiao Wu had disappeared. When she looked back at Shen Cheng, she accidentally stepped on his foot.

‘If you care about him, why don’t you want to get back together with him?’ Shen Cheng asked.

‘I don’t understand what you’re saying,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘You don’t have to act like you can’t see the truth,’ Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng stopped forcing Qiao Tan Yuan to admit the truth, and they danced the rest of the song. After the song ended, she left the dance floor and sat on a chair. He picked up two glasses of juice from a waiter’s tray, passed her a glass and sat next to her.

‘If you’re tired, take a long rest,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I’m not a weakling,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘You on the other hand are turning into a nagging mum by the day.’

‘Are you making fun of me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘If you’re not injured, I wouldn’t pay attention to you.’

A simple jest made Shen Cheng accept Qiao Tan Yuan spent time with him because he was injured. He thought it was meaningless to keep her by his side because of his injuries.

‘I’m surprised Qiao Jie didn’t attend the party,’ Shen Cheng. ‘This kind of celebration is right up his alley way. You and your little brother are complete opposites.’

‘Qiao Jie and I have always been different from each other,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Shen Cheng’s attentions made Qiao Tan Yuan feel awkward, she looked away and drank the glass of juice.

Shen Cheng grabbed Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand to force her to look at him.

‘Shen Cheng, don’t be like this,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

When Shen Cheng was travelling, he wished Qiao Tan Yuan was with him to see the beautiful landscapes. He knew she saw him as a friend, but he still hoped one day she would see him as more than a friend.

‘If you’re with big brother, I would have given up,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘But you’re not with big brother so I still have a chance. I can say the man who loves you the most in the world is me.’

Qiao Tan Yuan believed Shen Cheng was the man who loved her the most in the world. But believing in someone’s love, and accepting their love were two different things.

‘Shen Cheng, I’m sorry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. If she didn’t want to be with Gu Jiao Wu then she wanted to stay single. ‘Even if I’m not with Gu Jiao Wu, I won’t be with you either because it’s not fair for you.’

‘What if I don’t need fairness?’ Shen Cheng asked.

‘Shen Cheng, I’m serious,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Don’t be like this.’

Shen Cheng let go of Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand.

‘OK,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘I won’t pressure you anymore. But don’t run away every time you see me, because we’re still friends.’

‘Friends,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m happy to be your friend.’

‘Thank you,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘How about another dance with me?’

‘I need to go to the bathroom,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan put the empty glass of juice on a waiter’s tray, and walked to the bathroom. She was grateful toward Shen Cheng, but she didn’t want to give him hope again.

Qiao Tan Yuan washed her hands, and checked her witch makeup in the bathroom. When she walked outside the bathroom, someone struck the back of her neck and she fell unconscious.

Upstairs, Du Lei Xin looked closely at Gu Jiao Wu’s wizard costume, and he smiled.

'I didn't know you liked wizards,' Du Lei Xin said.

'Why did you ask me to come upstairs?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'I was scared if you stayed downstairs, you would give Shen Cheng a beating,' Du Lei Xin said.

'Nonsense,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He was embarrassed Du Lei Xin saw the truth. 'I don't want to give Shen Cheng a beating.'

'Really?' Du Lei Xin asked.

'If you're this free, why don't you go look for Jiao Mai?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Lately she's been cooped up in the lab.'

'It's impossible for her and me to be together,' Du Lei Xin said.

'Why not?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Won't you two good not long ago?'

'Things were good until one of the female employees at work was sick,' Du Lei Xin said. 'I took the employee to the hospital for a check-up, Jiao Mai saw us together and misunderstood. After all this time, why won't Jiao Mai believe me?'

Gu Jiao Wu finally understood why lately Gu Jiao Mai became a workaholic.

'What's wrong with you?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'If Jiao Mai didn't care about you then she wouldn't be jealous.'

'Really?' Du Lei Xin asked.

'Yes,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Jiao Mai has always been indifferent toward outsiders. If she's upset with you, because she saw you take another woman to the hospital in the middle of night, it means she cares about you. It'll be strange if she doesn't misunderstand.'

'True,' Du Lei Xin said. 'No wonder you look like you want to kill Shen Cheng when he's dancing with Tan Yuan.'

'Nonsense,' Gu Jiao Wu denied.

'Can you say you're not jealous?' Du Lei Xin asked. 'If you want to preach to me then you need to convince Tan Yuan to believe you're sincere first.'

Gu Jiao Wu wasn't going to give up on Qiao Tan Yuan. Unless he died, he wouldn't let her be with another man.

‘We should return to the party otherwise we’ll upset the birthday man,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu and Du Lei Xin walked downstairs. Hu Zui Ren was cutting the Shrek birthday cake on stage.

Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t interested in desserts. He looked over at Shen Cheng, but he didn’t see Qiao Tan Yuan next to Shen Cheng.

‘Big brother, are you looking for Tan Yuan?’ Tan Pan Ting asked Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Um,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I haven’t seen Tan Yuan since she stopped dancing,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘Go ask Shen Cheng where she is.’

‘No need,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu believed Qiao Tan Yuan would show up soon to eat cake. He noticed her tastebuds changed after Xiao Bao was born, she liked to eat sweets.

After all the cake pieces were given out, Gu Jiao Wu was worried why he didn’t see Qiao Tan Yuan and he walked to Shen Cheng.

‘Where’s Qiao Tan Yuan?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked Shen Cheng.

Shen Cheng didn’t see Qiao Tan Yuan since she went to the bathroom, he assumed she went home.

‘She went home to be with Xiao Bao,’ Shen Cheng said. He resented Gu Jiao Wu for mistreating Qiao Tan Yuan. Yet Gu Jiao Wu suddenly decided to be with her, and wouldn’t let her go. So he wanted to taunt Gu Jiao Wu. ‘Because she didn’t want to see you.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t care if Qiao Tan Yuan went home to be with their daughter, and avoid him. If she believed she could escape him then she was too naive.

Hu Zui Ren invited everyone to the after party at Du Lei Xin’s place, but Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t interested and went home to sleep.

In the morning, Gu Jiao Wu drove to the Qiao Mansion to see Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao.

‘Aunty, what did you say?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Tan Yuan didn’t come home last

night?’

‘Yes,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘I thought Tan Yuan was with you.’

‘No,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If Tan Yuan’s with me, I would have taken her home this morning. What about her phone? Did aunty ring her phone?’

‘I called but she didn’t pick up,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘Do you think something happened to her...’

‘What about Shen Cheng?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Why didn’t Shen Cheng take Tan Yuan home?’

‘I asked Shen Cheng if he saw Tan Yuan,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘He said after she went to the bathroom, he didn’t see her again. Jiao Wu, tell me nothing happened to Tan Yuan.’

‘Nothing will happen to Tan Yuan,’ Gu Jiao Wu promised. ‘Aunty, don’t worry. I’ll ask some people to look for Tan Yuan, and I’ll bring Tan Yuan home.’

Mrs Qiao nodded her head.

‘Aunty, I’ll have someone come here to trace your phone calls,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If anyone calls, stall them on the phone for as long as you can.’

Gu Jiao Wu strode to his car, and he called an assistant.

‘You have one hour to find Qiao Tan Yuan,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and hung up.

Gu Jiao Wu called the Gu Household’s security, and instructed them to go to the Qiao Mansion and monitor all incoming phone calls.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, where are you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked himself.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t know why someone kidnapped Qiao Tan Yuan. Was the kidnapper motivated by money or to take revenge on him?

Far away from the Qiao Mansion, Qiao Tan Yuan opened her eyes. She didn’t recognise her surroundings. She couldn’t move, her hands and legs were tied up by a rope and tape covered her mouth. The room she was held captive in looked like a male’s bedroom. There was a bed, a cupboard, two sofas and a coffee table. The bed was occupied by her. Who kidnapped her? She looked outside the window, it was morning and she calmed herself to remember what happened

last night. She remembered she left Shen Cheng to go to the bathroom then she blacked out.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked carefully at her surroundings. The sofas were made from Italian leather. So she deduced her kidnapper didn't kidnap her for money. She immediately thought of Gu Jiao Wu. Did he kidnap her to force her to marry him again? She wanted to kill him! How dare he tie her up?

Someone opened the door, and walked to the bed.

'You...' Qiao Tan Yuan mumbled through her taped mouth.

End of Chapter 106

Related

107 – 108 – 109 – 110



Chapters 107-110

Side Story

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju's Side Story:

A flashback scene to the day Cheng Yi shot Zheng Jia Ju's arm.

'Why didn't you shoot my head?' Zheng Jia Ju's asked.

Cheng Yi didn't know why he didn't want to kill Zheng Jia Ju. He regretted shooting her arm, and wanted to take her to the hospital. She refused, because she didn't want him to be arrested. He offered to take her home, but she didn't want her parents to know he shot her.

Cheng Yi took out the bullet from Zheng Jia Ju's arm, and he bandaged her arm. She couldn't use her arms for days. He bonded with their son, changing nappies, hold their son during breast feeding times and bought food for her.

After Zheng Jia Ju recovered, she left Cheng Yi and took their son home.

Fei Yan Niao found out Cheng Yi didn't kill Zheng Jia Ju, and schemed to kill two birds with one stone. Fei Yan Niao wanted to take revenge on Gu Jiao Wu for forcing him to shoot Cheng Yi, and also trigger Cheng Yi's memories.

Fei Yan Niao ordered an assassin to kidnap Zheng Jia Ju. Fei Yuan Niao told Cheng Yi, because Cheng Yi didn't fulfil the contract killing, he kidnapped Zheng Jia Ju. Fei Yuan Niao agreed to give Cheng Yi a second chance, he'd spare Zheng Jia Ju's life in exchange for Qiao Tan Yuan's life.

Cheng Yi misunderstood Zheng Jia Ju was Gu Jiao Wu's mistress, and Qiao Tan Yuan was Gu Jiao Wu's wife. He didn't hesitate to kidnap Qiao Tan Yuan, because he hated Gu Jiao Wu for abandoning Zheng Jia Ju's son.

End of Chapters 107 to 109.

Chapter 110

Mistaken Identity.

Cheng Yi hated women putting the blame on their husbands' mistresses for their husband's betrayal. He believed an unfaithful husband would always be an unfaithful husband. It didn't matter how many mistresses were eliminated, unfaithful husbands would find another mistress.

Qiao Tan Yuan was usually a fierce woman. But in the face of death, her heart turned numb and her body sweated. The man in front of the bed looked like he was preparing to kill her. She wiggled pointlessly on the bed, because the rope around her hands and ankles were bound tight.

Cheng Yi pointed a gun at Qiao Tan Yuan's head. She couldn't talk or escape. Her only hope was rolling off the bed to postpone her death. She used all her strength to roll over twice, she fell onto the floor and hit her head. She didn't register her head pain, and wiggled toward the door.

Cheng Yi didn't know why when he looked into Zheng Jia Ju's eyes, he couldn't kill her. But when he looked into Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes, he had no hesitation to pull the trigger.

Suddenly a gun shot was heard. Cheng Yi used Qiao Tan Yuan's body to shield his body, and he pointed the gun at the door. The door opened, and Gu Jiao Wu stepped into the bedroom.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew she wasn't hallucinating. It was Gu Jiao Wu who came to save her. She recognised the coat on him. She bought it for him as a birthday gift many years ago. It was the first time she saw him wear the coat she gave him. She cried happy tears to see Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan cried because she was scared. He fisted his hands, and stepped toward Qiao Tan Yuan.

Cheng Yi pulled Qiao Tan Yuan up to stand in front of him. He saw Gu Jiao Wu

stepped toward them, and he moved himself and Qiao Tan Yuan back away from Gu Jiao Wu.

Qiao Tan Yuan recognised the two men behind Gu Jiao Wu, they were his assistants who carried their suitcases and pilot the helicopter on the island. She suspected his assistants weren't cops because they weren't wearing police protective gear. They pointed their guns at Cheng Yi, and Cheng Yi pointed a gun at her head.

Gu Jiao Wu saw the fear in Qiao Tan Yuan eyes, and he took more steps toward her.

'Cheng Yi, you'll regret it if you don't put your gun down,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know why Gu Jiao Wu knew her kidnapper's name.

Cheng Yi pressed the gun into Qiao Tan Yuan's head.

'Cheng Yi, you hate killing people,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Don't do something you'll regret.'

Cheng Yi scoffed coldly. He hated opportunistic men like Gu Jiao Wu. He remembered Gu Jiao Wu tried to pass off Zheng Jia Ju's son as his son, because Gu Jiao Wu didn't want his wife to find out. He lost his memories, not his eyesight.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't know why Cheng Yi looked at him with contempt. Why Cheng Yi wasn't in the U.S., and why Cheng Yi kidnapped Qiao Tan Yuan. But what mattered most to him was Qiao Tan Yuan's life.

'Cheng Yi, let her go,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu owed Cheng Yi many things, and he didn't want to hurt Cheng Yi.

Cheng Yi remembered Fei Yan Niao's threat, if he didn't kill Qiao Tan Yuan then Fei Yan Niao would kill Zheng Jia Ju.

'Cheng Yi, we've known each other since you were seventeen,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'The Cheng Yi I know hates killing people. Put your gun down. I promise nothing will happen to you if you let her go.'

Cheng Yi and Qiao Tan Yuan were shocked Gu Jiao Wu was close friends with Cheng Yi.

‘Cheng Yi, when you were seventeen we met in Washington in the U.S.,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You were chased by gangsters, and I saved you. Do you remember?’

Gu Jiao Wu noticed Cheng Yi was distracted trying to remember their first meeting, and he took a step closer to Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘You didn’t thank me for saving you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘That year, your parents died, and you didn’t have any relatives in the U.S. I asked if you wanted to come back here with me, but you wanted to stay in the U.S. Do you remember?’

Cheng Yi couldn’t remember anything.

‘I don’t know what you’re talking about,’ Cheng Yi said. ‘I only know I want this woman to die.’

‘Cheng Yi, don’t kill her,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘She’s my woman. If she dies, I’ll grieve for the rest of my life. Do you remember, you promised you wouldn’t do anything to hurt me?’

‘Enough!’ Cheng Yi said. ‘Whether you’re hurting or not, has nothing to do with me.’

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t scared of Cheng Yi’s gun pointed at her head anymore. She only cared about Gu Jiao Wu’s words, he would grieve for her if she died. The love she suppressed in her heart ignited, and she cried.

Gu Jiao Wu’s heart broke to see Qiao Tan Yuan cry. He looked at her, and his eyes asked her to believe him. He took another step forward.

‘Cheng Yi, if you let her go, I’ll give you anything you want,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu suspected Fei Yan Niao gave Cheng Yi a mission to kill Qiao Tan Yuan to take revenge on him.

‘Cheng Yi, Fei Yan Niao is messing with you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘His purpose isn’t for you to kill her.’

Cheng Yi let go of the trigger after he heard Gu Jiao Wu mentioned Fei Yan Niao.

‘If you don’t believe me, I can call him,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He took out his phone. ‘Believe me, his purpose isn’t for you to kill her.’

Cheng Yi pressed his back against a wall, and didn't let Qiao Tan Yuan go.

Qiao Tan Yuan wondered why Gu Jiao Wu didn't tell her about Fei Yan Niao and Cheng Yi when they were married.

'Mr Gu, why are you free to call me?' Fei Yan Niao asked sarcastically. 'I'm scared to have the privilege to talk to you.'

'Fei Yan Niao, have you played enough?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Playing what?' Fei Yan Niao asked and laughed. 'I only wanted to give you a taste of your own medicine.'

'What do you mean?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'You forced me to shoot my friends,' Fei Yan Niao said. 'Now I'm letting you have the same experience. The last several months, were you and your wife happy? If you don't want your wife to die then you need to make Cheng Yi regain his memories. If you can't make him remember, I look forward to seeing you regret it for the rest of your life.'

'Fei Yan Niao!' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Take back your order!'

'Are you giving me an order?' Fei Yan Niao asked and laughed. 'Gu Jiao Wu, if you beg me, I'll order Cheng Yi to release your wife.'

'Fei Yan Niao!' Gu Jiao Wu said.

It was the first time Gu Jiao Wu felt powerless when confronting Fei Yan Niao. Last time he lost financially to get Fei Yan Niao to release Tan Pan Ting. But it was different when Qiao Tan Yuan's life was at risk.

'Open your mouth and beg me if you want Cheng Yi to release your wife,' Fei Yan Niao said.

Fei Yan Niao thought hearing Gu Jiao Wu lose his pride was more valuable than monetary gains.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Cheng Yi, but Cheng Yi didn't recognise him.

'Beg me,' Fei Yan Niao said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't understand what Gu Jiao Wu and Fei Yan Niao were discussing. But she could see how conflicted Gu Jiao Wu looked. If she wasn't

going to die, she didn't want Gu Jiao Wu to suffer. She was wrong. Gu Jiao Wu didn't only care about her because of Xiao Bao, he cared about her because there was a place in his heart for her. It was enough, she didn't need to cry anymore. She didn't waste years loving Gu Jiao Wu, because he finally reciprocated a bit of her love. When Gu Jiao Wu was about to open his mouth, she slammed her back against Cheng Yi's chest and hit her head on Cheng Yi's chin.

Cheng Yi was focused on Gu Jiao Wu and Fei Yan Niao's conversation. He didn't expect Qiao Tan Yuan to attack him, and escape him. The moment Qiao Tan Yuan fell onto the ground, he aimed his gun at her head.

'No...' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu leapt onto Qiao Tan Yuan's body, the bullet released from Cheng Yi's gun lodged into Gu Jiao Wu's back and blood oozed out of Gu Jiao Wu's back.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't expect Gu Jiao Wu would protect her, and take a bullet for her. She looked at the blood on Gu Jiao Wu's back, and she sobbed uncontrollably.

Gu Jiao Wu's assistants shot bullets, and a bullet hit Cheng Yi's arm.

Cheng Yi didn't give up, he needed to kill Qiao Tan Yuan. Suddenly his head ached, and he remembered Gu Jiao Wu.

'Big brother Jiao Wu...' Cheng Yi called.

Gu Jiao Wu's assistants turned Gu Jiao Wu's body over.

'Don't kill him,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'We understand,' an assistant said.

'Untie her,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Big brother Jiao Wu...' Cheng Yi called.

After Qiao Tan Yuan was untied, and the tape was removed from her mouth, her arms and legs were numb but she only cared about Gu Jiao Wu.

'Gu Jiao Wu, are you OK?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Jiao Wu, are you OK?'

End of Chapter 110

Related



Chapter 111

Regret.

‘I’m sorry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He regretted he didn’t take Qiao Tan Yuan home last night. ‘I made you scared’

‘I’m not scared,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and held Gu Jiao Wu’s hand. ‘Don’t speak. You’ll be at the hospital soon.’

The paramedics carried Cheng Yi and Gu Jiao Wu into the ambulance.

In the ambulance, Gu Jiao Wu didn’t let go of Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand.

‘Tan... Tan Yuan, believe me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and fell unconscious.

‘Big brother Jiao Wu...’ Gu Jiao Wu’s assistants called.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you can’t die!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Can you hear me? You can’t die!’

Qiao Tan Yuan cried on Gu Jiao Wu’s hand.

At the hospital, the paramedics wheeled Gu Jiao Wu into the emergency operating room.

‘Miss, you can’t come in with the patient,’ the nurse said.

‘I’m begging you, let me stay by his side,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘You can’t come in,’ the nurse said. ‘Later will let you know the patient’s condition.’

Gu Jiao Wu's assistants braced Qiao Tan Yuan's shoulders before she collapsed. They helped her sit on a chair outside the operating room.

'Big sister, big brother will be OK,' the assistants said at the same time.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't feel the cold or physical pain. She didn't think there would be a day Gu Jiao Wu would protect her, take a bullet for her, hold her hand and asked her to believe him. What did he want her to believe? Did he want her to believe he loved her?

Qiao Tan Yuan silently cried. She hated herself for not admitting to Gu Jiao Wu that she never stopped loving him. The truth was the first time he asked her to come back to him, her heart softened and she wanted to be with him. But her pride stopped her. She didn't want to be rejected by the same man again. She was scared he was only curious about her for a moment, and his curiosity would fade.

Qiao Tan Yuan convinced herself that he was treating her better because of Xiao Bao. The seven days on the island with him were the happiest days of her life. It was just the two of them, they laughed, ate, bickered and spent time together. If back then she knew he would take a bullet for her, she would have believed him. Life was cruel, she couldn't undo her regret.

Gu Jiao Wu's assistants passed tissues to Qiao Tan Yuan, and offered comforting words.

'Big sister, don't cry,' the first assistant said. 'Big brother will be sad if he knows you're crying.'

'Big sister, big brother cares about you the most,' the second assistant said.

Qiao Tan Yuan blew her nose, and dried her eyes.

'Really?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Yes,' the first assistant said. 'We've followed big brother for many years. We've never seen big brother panicked before. You're the first woman to make him panic.'

'When you were sleeping at the airport, big brother was tired but he held you in his arms and wouldn't let anyone disturb you,' the second assistant said.

‘Everything on the island from food to clothes, big brother instructed us to prepare them for you,’ the first assistant said.

‘Today big brother gave us one hour to find big sister,’ the second assistant said. ‘Lucky your phone was on otherwise we would be dead.’

‘Big sister, we’re telling you all this because we want you to know big brother wouldn’t want you to cry,’ the first assistant said.

‘Um, I won’t cry anymore,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan remembered crying wasn’t going to solve anything. She was going to wait for Gu Jiao Wu to come out. She should believe nothing was going to happen to Gu Jiao Wu.

A long time later, a doctor came out of the operating room.

‘Who is the patient’s family member?’ the doctor asked.

‘I’m his wife,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘We’ve removed the bullet from the patient’s lung,’ the doctor said. ‘But he lost a lot of blood. We’ll send him into the ICU to be monitored. If in twenty-four hours he doesn’t wake up...’

‘What will happen?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Then we’ve done all we can for him,’ the doctor said.

Nurses wheeled Gu Jiao Wu to the ICU. A ventilator was connected to Gu Jiao Wu to help him breathe. Qiao Tan Yuan followed Gu Jiao Wu to the ICU, and forced herself not to cry.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat beside Gu Jiao Wu’s bed in the ICU, and held his pale hand.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you have to wake up,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Can you hear me? You have to wake up.’ She kissed his hand. ‘If you want me to believe you then wake up, and I’ll believe everything you say.’

A while later Gu Jiao Wu’s assistants brought dinner for Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Big sister, you need to eat something,’ the first assistant said.

‘I’m not hungry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't eat while Gu Jiao Wu was unconscious.

'Big sister, you need to stay healthy,' the second assistant said. 'How can you take care of big brother if you can't take care of yourself?'

Qiao Tan Yuan let go of Gu Jiao Wu's hand. She went through the motions of eating.

'Have you two eaten?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'You two can go eat and rest. I'll stay here with him.'

'Big sister, we'll call someone to escort you home to rest,' the first assistant said. 'We'll stay here with big brother.'

'No,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I need to stay here to take care of him.'

'What about big brother's daughter?' the second assistant said. 'You've been missing for a night and day. Your family would be worried about you, and big brother's daughter must be looking for you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan thought about Xiao Bao, she couldn't neglect Xiao Bao but she didn't want to leave Gu Jiao Wu.

'Big sister, we promise we won't leave big brother's side until you come back tomorrow morning,' the first assistant said.

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded her head. After she ate her dinner, Xiao Lam drove her home.

'Xiao Lam, how did you know Gu Jiao Wu and how long have you followed him?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Xiao Lam kept his eyes on the road.

'Big sister, you should wait for big brother to wake up and ask him to tell you himself,' Xiao Lam said.

'You're right,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan needed to believe Gu Jiao Wu was going to wake up.

When Qiao Tan Yuan arrived home, everyone was awake because they were worried about Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Tan Yuan, are you hurt anymore?' Mrs Qiao asked.

‘Mum, I’m OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m going to shower and sleep. I need to wake up early tomorrow.’

‘What happened?’ Mrs Qiao asked.

‘Mum, it’s hard to explain everything now,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Gu Jiao Wu saved me. He’s injured, and staying at the hospital. I’ll check on Xiao Bao first. Tomorrow I’m going to stay with Gu Jiao Wu at the hospital.’

Mr and Mrs Qiao looked at each other confusedly. They didn’t know why Gu Jiao Wu was injured, and what hospital Gu Jiao Wu was staying at.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked into the nursery, Xiao Bao was asleep and Mrs Chu was watching over Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked to the bathroom, she looked at herself in the mirror. Her cape was stained with blood. She understood why Xiao Lam, and everyone else wanted her to go home. The sight of Gu Jiao Wu’s blood made her nose and eyes sting. She forced herself to stay strong. She showered, dried her hair and slept.

That night Qiao Tan Yuan dreamt about the days she spent on the island with Gu Jiao Wu. They swam, gazed at stars, cooked and cleaned together.

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan murmured.

Qiao Tan Yuan woke up from her dream. She looked at the clock, it was nine in the morning. She ran into the bathroom, brushed and dressed in the clothes Gu Jiao Wu bought her.

Mr and Mrs Qiao wanted to visit Gu Jiao Wu at the hospital with Qiao Tan Yuan. But Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want them to know Gu Jiao Wu was shot. It was enough they looked after Xiao Bao for her.

End of Chapter 111

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Chapter 112

Chance.

Qiao Tan Yuan held Gu Jiao Wu's hand at the hospital. Overnight there was stubble on his chin.

'You guys should go take a rest,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Don't let him worry about you guys.'

Xiao Lam and the others reluctantly left the hospital room to go eat and rest.

Later that morning, the doctor examined Gu Jiao Wu, and told Qiao Tan Yuan that Gu Jiao Wu's condition was stable and all they could do was wait for him to

wake up.

‘Jiao Wu, Xiao Bao is healthy,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’ve weaned her off breast milk. Don’t misunderstand I’m doing it because I want to stay here with you. She’s older than six months, and likes to eat more than drink breast milk now.’

Qiao Tan Yuan could see the Gu Jiao Wu’s chest scar under his gown. She chanted to herself not to cry.

‘If you want me to forgive you and believe you, you have to wake up,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan gave Gu Jiao Wu a sponge bath, dried his body and sat on the chair next to his bed.

‘Our daughter needs a name,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘We can’t call her by her nickname forever. I’ve picked out some girl names for her. If you don’t like them then you need to find a name you like for her.’

Qiao Tan Yuan listened to Gu Jiao Wu’s weak breathing. She didn’t have a lung injury before, but she knew it must be painful.

‘Hey, don’t use this hateful way to make me believe you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Aren’t you scared...’

Qiao Tan Yuan felt Gu Jiao Wu’s pulse was weaker.

‘If we get married again, you have to listen to me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I want to go to Paris, and choose a designer wedding gown. I want to go to the Aegean Sea to take wedding photos, and I want to go to the same island for our honeymoon. This time you can’t mention divorce. If you do, you’ll be dead meat. Also, giving birth is painful. I don’t want another child. If you hate our daughter then I’ll take her to Denmark, and you can go find another woman to give you a child. You’ve bullied me in the past, in the future I get to bully you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan felt like there was someone behind her. She turned around, Shen Cheng and Du Lei Xin were standing behind her. Their complexions, especially Shen Cheng’s complexion was pale.

‘Shen Cheng, are you OK?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Shen Cheng shook his head.

‘I’m sorry I didn’t take you home from the party,’ Shen Cheng said.

‘I’m Ok,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘This isn’t your fault.’

‘I’m sorry,’ Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng was shocked when he heard Gu Jiao Wu saved Qiao Tan Yuan’s life.

‘If Du Lei Xin didn’t tell me what happened, I wouldn’t have known,’ Shen Cheng. ‘I’m sorry I found out too late.’

‘It’s not your fault,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She looked at Du Lei Xin. ‘Lei Xin, how did you know Gu Jiao Wu’s injured?’

‘Yesterday morning when big brother found out you were kidnapped he called many people to look for you,’ Du Lei Xin said while looking at Gu Jiao Wu. ‘He’s lying in a hospital bed because of you. Your heart should know how he feels about you now.’

‘I understand,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said to Du Lei Xin. ‘You don’t need to say anything else.’

‘It’s good you understand,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘You didn’t understand big brother deeply in the past, and you still don’t understand him completely yet.’

‘I was wrong,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I used to think I understood him the most in the world.’

‘You should know big brother can separate you and Xiao Bao if he wanted to,’ Du Lei Xin. ‘But he wouldn’t do that to you.’

‘You don’t need to say anything else,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘In the future I won’t leave him again.’

‘Good,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘You need to remember your promise. Shen Cheng, we should go.’

Du Lei Xin dragged Shen Cheng out of the hospital.

Later Gu Jiao Wen visited Gu Jiao Wu.

‘How is big brother?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked.

‘The doctors don’t know if he’ll wake up,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘You better pray big brother wakes up,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. ‘I won’t forgive you if he doesn’t...’

‘If he dies, I’ll die with him,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wen scoffed coldly.

‘You chicken shit,’ Gu Jiao Wen cursed. ‘If you two die then what will happen to Xiao Bao?’

Qiao Tan Yuan closed her mouth.

‘You should take good care of big brother,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. ‘I won’t say anything to the elders yet. But you should explain the situation to your parents.’

‘I know,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I’ll let the past go,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. ‘In the future you need to treat big brother well so you don’t have regrets.’

Gu Jiao Wen didn’t want to give Qiao Tan Yuan another chance to hurt Gu Jiao Wu.

Regrets? Qiao Tan Yuan had regrets long ago. If she could predict the future, she wouldn’t let Gu Jiao Wu be injured.

Gu Jiao Wen left the hospital and went home.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, can you wake up?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘I miss you. How can you say you love me? Your brothers and friends came to threaten me. They warned me not to hurt you again. What a joke, who really is the one who’s hurt... I’ll be the bigger person and forgive you if you wake up.’

In the afternoon Xiao Lam and the others returned to the hospital. They brought Qiao Tan Yuan lunch, and forced her to eat.

After lunch, Gu Jiao Wu was still unconscious.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, wake up,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Stop scaring me. Do you remember many years ago, I fell on the ground and cried? You helped me stand and told me to stop crying, because girls who cry are ugly and girls who smile are beautiful. I was too young to know I fell in love with you that day. I only thought you were gentle and handsome. You said you don’t like women who aren’t

scholars. I did my best to study. I did many things because I wanted you to notice me. Jiao Wu, I love you. In the past my small wish was for you to look my way once. If you smiled at me, and loved me a bit then I would have felt like I received the world.'

Qiao Tan Yuan waited for Gu Jiao Wu to open his eyes for a while.

'Jiao Wu, if you wake up I'll believe you love me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'If you love me, don't make me worry. Even if you're not thinking of me then you need to think about Xiao Bao. Do you want Xiao Bao to grow up without a father?'

Qiao Tan Yuan cried next to Gu Jiao Wu's shoulder so she didn't see Gu Jiao Wu's face twitched.

Gu Jiao Wu squeezed Qiao Tan Yuan's hand weakly.

'Jiao Wu, are you awake?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu opened his eyes, and saw Qiao Tan Yuan crying.

'Jiao Wu, you're awake,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Heavens, you're awake.'

Gu Jiao Wu smiled weakly. He was too weak to open his mouth.

Qiao Tan Yuan went outside to ask a nurse to call the doctor.

A while later, the doctor examined Gu Jiao Wu.

'It's good he's awake and stable,' the doctor said. 'Now he needs rest to recover.'

'Thank you doctor,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

The doctor nodded and left the room.

Qiao Tan Yuan leaned her ear next to Gu Jiao Wu's mouth because he looked like he wanted to say something.

'Tan Yuan, do you believe me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked softly.

'I believe you and I won't doubt you again,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu smiled, and pointed at his lips. Qiao Tan Yuan got him a glass of water and a straw. But he pointed at her lips.

Qiao Tan Yuan blushed. She looked outside the room, it was night time and she

didn't see anyone. She sipped water, and fed Gu Jiao Wu water like how he fed her milk at the cafe.

'Thank you,' Gu Jiao Wu said softly.

'I should be the one thanking you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Who asked you to take a bullet for me? The doctor said the bullet injured your lung... Jiao Wu, thank you.'

'I can't let anything happen to you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Gu Jiao Wu, I love you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'I love you too,' Gu Jiao Wu said and smiled.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't care about the pain he felt when Cheng Yi shot him. He was happy the bullet shot him and not Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Next time you can't risk your life,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'There won't be a next time,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Xiao Lam and the others will come back later,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You can ask me to get anything you want.'

'Are you tired?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'If you are, go home and rest.'

'I want to stay here with you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'What about Xiao Bao?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. He stared at Qiao Tan Yuan's chest. 'On the other hand I benefit more if you stay.'

'You... what are you thinking?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

End of Chapter 112

Related



Chapter 113

To answer or not to answer.

‘I miss you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You’ve neglected me for a long time.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu... you’re like this and you want to...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘In the future will you say yes?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked and smiled.

Gu Jiao Wu wanted to take advantage of his injury. He didn’t want Qiao Tan Yuan to slap him, kick him and knee him every time he touched her.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, are you saying if I say no, you don’t want to do it with me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘On the island you won’t this good.’

Gu Jiao Wu laughed too much, and made his chest hurt.

‘You need to rest,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Do you know how worried I was about you?’

‘I’m OK,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If I rest then you should rest too.’

‘Alright,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan took out a bedsheet from the cupboard to sleep on the sofa.

Gu Jiao Wu patted the bed.

‘Tan Yuan, sleep on the bed with me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I don’t want to,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Don’t worry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’m like this, I can’t do anything to you.’

‘I’m scared I’ll accidentally hit you in my sleep,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘This injury is nothing,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Come sleep on the bed.’

A bullet into the lung was nothing? Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to argue with

Gu Jiao Wu in his condition. She carefully laid on the bed next to him, and avoided his chest.

‘Are you hungry?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘I’m not hungry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘It’s late. Let’s sleep.’

‘OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan closed her eyes, and fell asleep.

Gu Jiao Wu hugged Qiao Tan Yuan. The thought of how worried Qiao Tan Yuan must have been in the last two days made his heart ached. Then he thought about Cheng Yi, if Cheng Yi still had amnesia, he was worried Cheng Yi would come after Qiao Tan Yuan again. He shook his head, he needed to sleep to recover faster and protect Qiao Tan Yuan.

Gu Jiao Wu listened to Qiao Tan Yuan’s heartbeat, he breathed in her scent and his heart felt at peace. His last thought before he slept was his injury was worth the reward.

In the morning, Qiao Tan Yuan woke up before Gu Jiao Wu. She got out of bed, because she was embarrassed to let the doctors and nurses see her in bed with Gu Jiao Wu.

When Qiao Tan Yuan came out of the bathroom, Xiao Lam and the others entered Gu Jiao Wu’s hospital room.

‘Big sister,’ Xiao Lam greeted. ‘Is big brother awake yet?’

‘Late last night he woke up,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and smiled.

‘That’s good news,’ Xiao Lam said. ‘Big sister, you can go home today. We’ll stay here to take care of big brother.’

‘I’ll stay here with him,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’ll only worry if I go home.’

‘OK,’ Xiao Lam said. ‘Big sister, are you hungry? I’ll go buy breakfast for you.’

Gu Jiao Wu woke up, he looked at his assistants then he looked at Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Big brother,’ Xiao Lam and the others greeted together.

‘Jiao Wu, how do you feel?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Are you in pain?’

‘I’m OK,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘My chest doesn’t hurt as much as last night. Tan Yuan, can you go buy congee for me? I’m hungry.’

‘OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’ll get you fish congee. What else do you want to eat?’

‘Fish congee is enough,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Make sure you eat before you come back. I don’t want you to starve.’

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded, picked up her bag and went to buy congee.

‘Big brother, Cheng Yi is awake and wants to leave,’ Xiao Lam reported.

‘Tomorrow bring him here to see me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Don’t let Tan Yuan see him.’

‘Big brother, big sister doesn’t want to leave your bedside,’ Xiao Lam said.

‘I’ll ask Tan Yuan to go home and check-up on Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. But he knew Qiao Tan Yuan wouldn’t want to leave him for too long. ‘I’m worried Cheng Yi doesn’t want to see me.’

‘OK, we’ll bring Cheng Yi here tomorrow to see big brother,’ Xiao Lam said.

‘Did Tan Yuan ask any of you about your identities?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Big sister did ask me,’ Xiao Lam said. ‘But I told her to wait until big brother woke up, and for her to ask you to explain.’

‘Um, I understand,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘When Tan Yuan’s back, you can all go home. Next time don’t come together to visit me to avoid unwanted attention.’

‘Yes big brother,’ Xiao Lam and the others said.

Xiao Lam’s group said goodbye to Qiao Tan Yuan when she returned with congee, and they left the hospital.

‘Jiao Wu, I’ll help you sit up and I’ll feed you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Um,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan fed Gu Jiao Wu a bowl of congee then she tidied the room.

‘Jiao Wu, you said you would answer all my questions after I agree to believe you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘What do you want to know?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Why do your assistants call you big brother Jiao Wu?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.
‘Who are they? They were carrying guns when they came with you to save me.
Who’s Cheng Yi? Why does he want to kill me?’

‘Which question do you want me to answer first?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘It doesn’t matter what order,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I want to hear you answer all my questions.’

‘What if I don’t want to answer?’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You promised me you would answer all my questions,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

End of Chapter 113

Related

114 -115



Chapters 114 & 115

Side Story

Summary of Cheng Yi's Side Story:

A flashback scene. Gu Jiao Wu remembered his first meeting with Cheng Yi.

Cheng Yi chose to join Fei Yan Niao's gang, and he promised to follow Gu Jiao Wu if Gu Jiao Wu establish an underworld business as powerful as Fei Yan Niao's gang.

Cheng Yi saved Fei Yan Niao's life, his face was scarred from a knife wound and he gained Fei Yan Niao's trust.

End of Chapter 114

Chapter 115

Trust.

'Tan Yuan, do you trust me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked and held Qiao Tan Yuan's hand.

'I trust you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'At least let me know who Cheng Yi is.'

'Cheng Yi's my friend,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'He lost his memory, and a bad person used him to kidnap you.'

'Do you have connections with a bad person?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Yes,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Why didn’t the person look for you but kidnapped me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘He wants me to suffer,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘He knows if something happens to you, I’ll suffer.’

Qiao Tan Yuan blushed. No matter what a fierce woman she was, hearing sincere words from the man she loved affected her deeply.

Gu Jiao Wu wished he wasn’t reckless. He kidnapped his daughter, and took Qiao Tan Yuan to the island had made it easy for Fei Yan Niao to find out from spies, Qiao Tan Yuan was the most important woman to him.

‘Jiao Wu, if something happened to you, I’ll be sad for the rest of my life,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Am I that important to you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked and smiled. ‘Then I’ll need to take better care of myself, and not get injured.’

‘Jiao Wu, you’re the most important man to me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I hope I’ll always be with you.’

‘Um, we’ll always be together,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

The doctor came into the room, Qiao Tan Yuan let go of Gu Jiao Wu’s hand and let the doctor examine Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Your wound is recovering,’ the doctor said. ‘If you keep your chest wound dry, and don’t overexert yourself then you can go home soon.’

The doctor let Gu Jiao Wu be transferred into a VIP hospital room. The VIP room had a bedroom, bathroom, living room and a kitchen.

At midday, Qiao Tan Yuan fed lunch to Gu Jiao Wu, and he took his medication that made him drowsy. After Gu Jiao Wu napped, she asked Xiao Lam to watch over Gu Jiao Wu while she went home to be with Xiao Bao and to ask Mrs Chu to cook soup for Gu Jiao Wu.

After Qiao Tan Yuan left, Xiao Lam brought Cheng Yi to Gu Jiao Wu’s room.

Cheng Yi looked at Gu Jiao Wu, and he remembered how he regretted shooting Gu Jiao Wu. He vaguely remembered Gu Jiao Wu that day, but he didn’t know why calling him big brother Jiao Wu was so familiar to him.

Gu Jiao Wu asked Xiao Lam to untie Cheng Yi's wrists, and for Xiao Lam to give him and Cheng Yi privacy.

Xiao Lam untied Cheng Yi's wrists, and a bit of blood dripped onto the bedsheet. Xiao Lam left to guard outside the hospital.

'Cheng Yi, I promise you we're friends and I don't want to hurt you,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'After you leave the hospital I won't interfere in your life. But I want you to know Fei Yan Niao is a bad person, and you shouldn't let him use you.'

Cheng Yi hated not remembering. He didn't know who to believe.

'Cheng Yi, Qiao Tan Yuan is important to me,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If you hurt her, I won't forgive you and you won't forgive yourself after you regain your memories.'

'Qiao Tan Yuan needs to die,' Cheng Yi said coldly.

'Why?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Qiao Tan Yuan is my woman. If you kill her, it's like you killing me. The Cheng Yi I know hates killing people.'

'She deserves to die,' Cheng Yi said.

'Why?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'What lies did Fei Yan Niao feed you?'

'Do you need me to say what sort of a man you are?' Cheng Yi asked.

'Cheng Yi, don't believe Fei Yan Niao's lies,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'We're friends. It's alright if you don't remember me or your wife and son. But don't forget who you are. You're not someone who likes killing people.'

'My wife and son?' Cheng Yi asked.

'Yes,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Cheng Yi, do you remember the emails you sent me? You wrote you were living a happy life with your wife, Zheng Jia Ju and she was pregnant. You love Zheng Jia Ju. Go back to Zheng Jia Ju and your son.'

'You're lying,' Cheng Yi said. 'You're the father of Zheng Jia Ju's son.'

'What nonsense are you saying?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Qiao Tan Yuan is the mother of my daughter. Zheng Jia Ju is your wife, and you're the father of Zheng Jia Ju's son.'

At that moment Qiao Tan Yuan returned with a Dewar flask of soup. She was

shocked to see Cheng Yi, and blood stain on the bedsheet. She ran to Gu Jiao Wu, and protected Gu Jiao Wu from Cheng Yi.

‘Jiao Wu are you OK?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Where are you hurt?’

Qiao Tan Yuan turned around, and glared at Cheng Yi.

‘Isn’t it enough you’ve injured Jiao Wu?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked Cheng Yi. ‘What more do you want? If you want to kill me, you can kill me but you can’t kill Jiao Wu.’

Gu Jiao Wu saw the intent to kill in Cheng Yi’s eyes. He didn’t care about his injury, and pulled Qiao Tan Yuan behind him on the bed.

End of Chapter 115

Related



Chapter 116

DNA.

The stitches on Gu Jiao Wu’s chest were teared. Qiao Tan Yuan was more worried about the blood on his chest than her own life.

‘Cheng Yi, you’re the father of Zheng Jia Ju’s son,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If you don’t believe me, get a DNA test and you’ll know the truth.’

Cheng Yi was surprised Gu Jiao Wu would suggest he take a DNA test.

‘Ask your heart, why you want to avenge Zheng Jia Ju,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Why you feel a connection to Zheng Jia Ju. You don’t remember Zheng Jia Ju, but your heart remembers Zheng Jia Ju.’

Cheng Yi took a step back, and collapsed.

Gu Jiao Wu got out of bed to help Cheng Yi, but he lost too much blood and collapsed on the bed.

Qiao Tan Yuan ran outside and called for help.

The doctors examined Gu Jiao Wu and Cheng Yi then they bandaged Gu Jiao Wu and Cheng Yi’s wounds.

In the evening, Gu Jiao Wu woke up and saw Qiao Tan Yuan sitting on the chair next to his bed.

‘Don’t say anything,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You reopened your wound, and need to rest.’

‘I’m OK,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand to reassure her.

‘Next time if you do something reckless again, I’ll forget about you,’ Qiao Tan

Yuan threatened.

‘Where’s Cheng Yi?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘You should worry about yourself first,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘He’s my friend,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I called the police to arrest him,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘What?’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Why did you call the police? Nothing happened to me. He’s a good person.’

‘You should rest,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I didn’t call the police. Are you satisfied now?’

Qiao Tan Yuan picked up the flask on the table.

‘Are you hungry?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘I can warm up the soup I asked Mrs Chu to make for you or I can go buy you dinner.’

‘The soup is enough,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan reheated the soup, and fed Gu Jiao Wu. Afterward she went home to be with Xiao Bao.

Xiao Lam saw Qiao Tan Yuan leave in her car, and he walked to Gu Jiao Wu’s room.

‘Big brother, Cheng Yi left the hospital,’ Xiao Lam reported.

‘Let him go,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I believe he knows Fei Yan Niao’s lying to him.’

‘Yes big brother,’ Xiao Lam said and left to let Gu Jiao Wu sleep.

The following morning, Qiao Tan Yuan brought breakfast for Gu Jiao Wu and Xiao Lam. She didn’t expect Gu Jiao Wen, Du Lei Xin, Hu Zui Ren and Tong Shang Wen would arrive before her.

‘Big brother, I told the elders you’re on a business trip overseas,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. ‘If you don’t rest and recover soon, I can’t stop your mum running around hospitals looking for you.’

Gu Jiao Wen hated hiding secrets from his family, he didn’t even tell Tan Pan Ting that Gu Jiao Wu was shot.

‘Um, my injury is nothing,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll recover in another couple of days.’

The men looked at Gu Jiao Wu like he had a head injury, because a bullet to the lung wasn’t nothing.

After the men left, Qiao Tan Yuan thought about Shen Cheng. She didn’t want to cause a rift between Gu Jiao Wu and Shen Cheng’s friendship.

Gu Jiao Wu fiddled with Qiao Tan Yuan’s fingers.

‘What are you thinking about?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I’m thinking about Shen Cheng,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Today he didn’t come with the others to visit you. I’m worried he’s upset with me.’

‘You’re thinking about Shen Cheng?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked and frowned.

‘I... are you jealous?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu scoffed.

‘Why would I be jealous?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Shen Cheng isn’t compatible with you.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, what do you mean?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu meant a good man like Shen Cheng wasn’t compatible with a bad woman like her.

‘I meant the only man who is compatible with you is me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand tightly, and forgot about his chest pain. ‘You belong with me.’

‘I don’t know,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If you mistreat me, I’ll go find another man. I’m certain there are many men who are compatible with me.’

‘If any other man dares to touch you, I’ll turn him into an invalid,’ Gu Jiao Wu threatened.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, why are you such a Neanderthal?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Neanderthal?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu pulled Qiao Tan Yuan onto the bed and kissed her lips. She didn’t

pressure on his chest, and held his shoulders. She never kissed a Neanderthal before, and she wondered if their tongue would be as sweet as Gu Jiao Wu's tongue.

End of Chapter 116

Related



Chapter 117

Mum.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan's neck, her sweet taste made him forget about his pain.

Qiao Tan Yuan pulled back before Gu Jiao Wu did something more reckless.

'Gu Jiao Wu, don't be reckless,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Reckless?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Wait until my wound heals, and I'll show you reckless.'

'Gu Jiao Wu, you're injured and you want to...' Qiao Tan Yuan said and blushed.

Gu Jiao Wu wrinkled Qiao Tan Yuan's clothes when they were kissing, and her chest was still heaving after their kiss. If he wasn't injured, her chest would be heaving under him.

'You don't have to look at me like I'm a starved wolf,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I can't do anything to you in my condition.'

Gu Jiao Wu felt chest pain, took a prescribed painkiller and napped.

Qiao Tan Yuan prepared a sponge bath for Gu Jiao Wu. When he was unconscious she wasn't self-conscious giving him a sponge bath. But knowing he could wake up any time, made her shy.

When Gu Jiao Wu woke up, Qiao Tan Yuan was holding a wet towel. He

watched water drops drip onto her clothes, and felt aroused.

‘You... have you looked enough?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘What is there to look at?’

‘If you’re not looking at me then how do you know I’m looking at you?’ Gu Jiao Wu teased.

‘I can feel you looking at me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. Gu Jiao Wu was looking at her like he could see through her clothes. ‘Stop looking at me otherwise I’ll won’t help you have a sponge bath.’

‘OK, I won’t look at you anymore,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He yawned and closed his eyes. ‘I’ll sleep. Satisfied?’

Qiao Tan Yuan was suspicious Gu Jiao Wu was pretending to sleep.

Qiao Tan Yuan put the wet towel in the warm tub of water on the table. Then she took off Gu Jiao Wu’s hospital gown. She washed his thighs, turned around to wring the towel into the tub and when she turned back, she gasped. Why was Gu Jiao Wu aroused in his sleep?

‘Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan called.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t react, but Qiao Tan Yuan was suspicious why he was becoming more erect.

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan called. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, sit up for me.’

Gu Jiao Wu kept his eyes closed. Qiao Tan Yuan tossed the towel into the tub.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, if you keep pretending to sleep then I won’t care about you anymore.’

Gu Jiao Wu opened his eyes.

‘Why are you so noisy?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘I was sleeping, but you woke me up.’

Qiao Tan Yuan pointed at Gu Jiao Wu’s erection.

‘How can you say you were sleeping?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Why are you wrongly accusing me?’ Gu Jiao Wu said innocently. ‘How can I control something that has a mind of its own?’

‘You... you... turn it back to normal,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t finish washing Gu Jiao Wu’s body if he was in an erect state.

‘It doesn’t listen to me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t know how Qiao Tan Yuan expected he wouldn’t be react to her caresses.

‘You... aren’t you injured?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know how Gu Jiao Wu could become erect so quickly.

‘My lung is injured,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘But below my chest, everything is healthy.’

Gu Jiao Wu was happy to see Qiao Tan Yuan’s embarrassed state. Memories of the old Qiao Tan Yuan were blurry. The Qiao Tan Yuan in front of him was loveable, and he could tolerate all her childish antics.

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wondered if Gu Jiao Wu thought she could control his erect state.

‘Don’t call me anymore,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu hadn’t touched Qiao Tan Yuan for a long time. If he heard her call him one more time, he would explode.

‘If you keep calling me then it will grow bigger,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to throw the tub of water onto Gu Jiao Wu’s body to cool him down. But she didn’t want to hurt him. She stood, picked up the tub of water and strode to the bathroom.

Gu Jiao Wu watched Qiao Tan Yuan walk to the bathroom then he looked down at erection and sighed pitifully. It was painful when there was a beautiful meal in front of him, but he could only look and not eat. He wanted to ask Qiao Tan Yuan to use her sweet mouth to help him find release. But he knew she would be embarrassed and angry if someone suddenly walked into the room then she would starve him for a longer period.

Gu Jiao Wu pulled the bedsheet over his body, closed his eyes and endured. A long time later, he fell asleep.

Qiao Tan Yuan purposely stayed in the bathroom for a long time. When she returned to the bed, Gu Jiao Wu was sleeping. Before she didn't want him to pounce on her, and injure himself more. A part of her was disappointed he was sleeping. Images of them in bed together on the island made her crave for his touch. It was a good thing he didn't see the look of desire in her eyes otherwise he would tease her mercilessly.

A couple of days later, Gu Jiao Wu recovered. Xiao Lam reported to him that Cheng Yi travelled to Zheng Jiu Ju's home to look for her. Gu Jiao Wu was happy to hear the good news. He wanted Cheng Yi to live a happy life even if Cheng Yi had amnesia.

The moment Gu Jiao Wu got out of bed, Qiao Tan Yuan returned to the room.

'Jiao Wu, what are you doing out of bed?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'I've stayed in bed for six days,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If I stay in bed any longer, my body will stop functioning.'

Qiao Tan Yuan remembered the doctor advised Gu Jiao Wu needed to stay in bed for seven days so he wouldn't need more stitches.

'If you don't go back to bed, I'll ask aunty Wang to come here and take care of you,' Qiao Tan Yuan threatened.

'Aunty?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. He sat on the bed, and frowned. 'Why are you calling my mum aunty?'

'If I don't call your mum aunty then am I supposed to call her uncle?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'You're supposed to call her mum,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He pulled Qiao Tan Yuan onto the bed next to him. 'Am I wrong?'

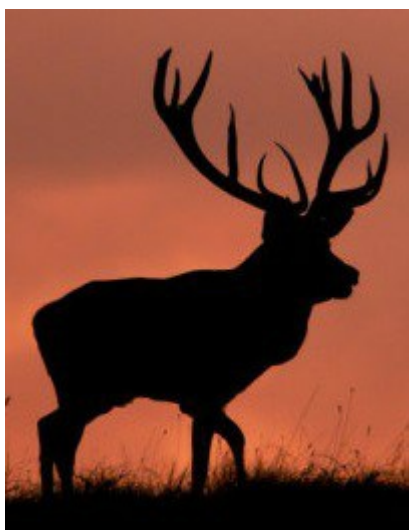
'Right now I'm Miss Qiao,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Of course I'm supposed to call her aunty.'

'Miss Qiao!' Gu Jiao Wu called and hugged Qiao Tan Yuan tightly.

'Gu Jiao Wu, are you crazy?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Your chest wound.'

End of Chapter 117

Related



Chapter 118

Next step.

‘You don’t need to worry about my wound,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. Under Qiao Tan Yuan’s care, his wound healed quickly. ‘Don’t you want to marry me?’

‘It’s not that,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Then we’ll get married soon,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

In that moment Gu Jiao Wu wished he could immediately take Qiao Tan Yuan and their daughter home with him.

‘Jiao Wu, the truth is I’m not prepared yet,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘What else is there to prepare?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Jiao Wu, I don’t know,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t want us to rush into anything.’

‘Rush?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Do you want to wait until Xiao Bao can speak and run?’

‘No...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan agreed to marry Gu Jiao Wu when he woke up after being shot. She didn’t know why she felt it wasn’t the right time to marry Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Then it’s settled,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll speak to our parents, and let them

know we'll get married soon.'

'Jiao Wu, I feel too happy,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'm scared my happiness is a dream.'

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't believe the day Gu Jiao Wu only looked at her arrived. During the last few days she felt like she was floating on clouds. She was scared someone would wake her up, and tell her Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to be with her.

'Isn't it good to be happy?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Are you saying being with me doesn't make you happy or are you saying I don't give you a sense of security?'

Qiao Tan Yuan believed Gu Jiao Wu loved her. But she wasn't used to having the man she loved the most in the world reciprocate her love. It made her scared that if she was too happy, something bad would happen and she couldn't be with Gu Jiao Wu anymore.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, do I give you a sense of security?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'It's not that,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I trust you. I'm just scared of being too happy, and my happiness will be taken away from me.'

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan's lips roughly. He wanted to reassure her, he wouldn't let her escape. She wrapped her arms around his neck, and he deepened the kiss. His hands on her waist slid under her shirt.

The moment Gu Jiao Wu began kneading Qiao Tan Yuan's breasts, she remembered they were in the hospital. She held his arms, turned her head around and checked if anyone was outside the door.

'We're in the hospital,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'I want you,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He wasn't satisfied to only kiss Qiao Tan Yuan in bed. 'We can lock the door.'

'What about your wound?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yuan, and went to lock the door.

'Gu Jiao Wu, are you crazy?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'You haven't healed completely.'

'I told you I have a chest wound and below my chest everything is healthy,' Gu

Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu sat back on the bed, and kissed Qiao Tan Yuan's lips. The door was locked, there was nothing left to stop them being intimate with each other.

'Gu Jiao Wu, let go,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to risk Gu Jiao Wu's health.

'Let me hold you a little longer,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Jiao Wu, your wound,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Don't worry about my wound,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If you take good care of me like this, my wound will heal faster.'

'You... I'm not going to care about you anymore,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'You can't stop caring about me,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Let's continue.'

Gu Jiao Wu fingered Qiao Tan Yuan until she wet his fingers.

'Gu Jiao Wu!' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I hate you.'

'I love you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu took off Qiao Tan Yuan's clothes, and took off his hospital gown. He laid on the bed, she straddled his thighs and he fondled her body while she rode him.

'Gu Jiao Wu... I hate you...' Qiao Tan Yuan said in between her moans.

At night Qiao Tan Yuan got out of bed, and showered to wash off the sweat on her body.

When Gu Jiao Wu saw Qiao Tan Yuan come out of the bathroom, he patted the bed.

'You should sleep,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'I'll sleep better if you're lying next to me,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Tonight, I'm sleeping on the sofa,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Since Gu Jiao Wu recovered, Qiao Tan Yuan knew he wouldn't sleep if she was in bed with him.

‘I promise I won’t touch you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Do you think I’m a wild buck? Tonight I’ll spare you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to change out of the towel.

‘Come here and sleep,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan carefully laid next to Gu Jiao Wu on the bed.

‘Be good and sleep,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Tonight I’ll listen to you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘In the future you need to listen to me too,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘It depends on the situation,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. Qiao Tan Yuan ruled his heart, but common sense ruled his head. ‘I can’t listen to everything you tell me to do.’

Gu Jiao Wu wisely didn’t say he wanted more bed time with Qiao Tan Yuan in the future.

‘You... what are you thinking about?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘I’m thinking about my interests,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Is it wrong of me to want to protect some of my interests?’

Gu Jiao Wu took off Qiao Tan Yuan’s towel, and held her waist.

‘Let’s continue,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and nibbled Qiao Tan Yuan’s ear.

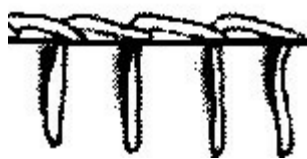
In the middle of the night, the hospital staff on night shift heard a couple cry out each other’s names coming from a VIP hospital room.

‘Jiao Wu...’

‘Tan Yuan...’

End of Chapter 118

Related



Chapter 119

Side Story.

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju's Side Story: Flashback scene to what happened after Cheng Yi left the hospital.

Cheng Yi received the DNA results, he was the father of Zheng Jia Ju's son. He went to Zheng Jia Ju's home, he asked her if she was his wife and if she needed money to support their son.

'I'm taking good care of my son on my own,' Zheng Jia Ju said.

'Do you hate me for forgetting you?' Cheng Yi asked. 'Forgetting our son, and shooting you?'

'I don't hate you,' Zheng Jia Ju said. 'You're free to live your new life.'

'Why don't you hate me?' Cheng Yi asked. 'Why didn't you tell me that you're my wife and Xiao Nian is my son?'

'It doesn't matter anymore,' Zheng Jia Ju said. 'You didn't bother to find out about me and my son before you shot me and wanted to kill my son.'

Chapter 119

'Gu Jiao Wu, I'm tired,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Let's sleep.'

'If you don't promise me... I can...' Gu Jiao Wu whispered in Qiao Tan Yuan's ear.

'Gu Jiao Wu, are you crazy?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan wondered if Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to live anymore.

'What is your one track mind thinking about?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'I want you to

promise me that we'll get married soon.'

'You... before you said you want me to promise every day would be like today,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Yes, I did say that,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If we're married, wouldn't we be sleeping together like this every day?'

'You... you're shameless,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Am I wrong?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Where else would I be sleeping except next to you after we're married?'

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan's pink cheeks were enticing.

'Gu Jiao Wu...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew Gu Jiao Wu wouldn't sleep if she was next to him in bed. She rolled over, her back faced him and she yawned.

'I want to sleep,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'm going to ignore you.'

'You're going to ignore me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Yes, I'm going to ignore you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'm tired. I want to sleep.'

Gu Jiao Wu put a hand on Qiao Tan Yuan's shoulder.

'Don't touch me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She pushed Gu Jiao Wu's hand off her shoulder. 'I want to sleep.'

'Ah... it hurts,' Gu Jiao Wu feigned.

Qiao Tan Yuan rolled over, and looked at Gu Jiao Wu's chest.

'Are you OK?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'You hit me,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'It hurts.'

'I...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan only remembered she pushed Gu Jiao Wu's hand away, she didn't remember hitting him.

'Do you want me to call a doctor?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan jumped off the bed to put clothes on, but Gu Jiao Wu pulled her

back on the bed.

‘You... you pranked me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I’m not that weak,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I only wanted to give you a little scare.’

‘You... you’re horrible,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was scared she had hit Gu Jiao Wu by accident.

‘This is payback,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Do you remember on the island, how much you scared me when I thought you were drowning?’

‘You... you didn’t have to scare me like this,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I wanted to remind you that I have a good memory,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You promised to marry me so you can’t run away.’

‘I won’t run away,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She rubbed her face on Gu Jiao Wu’s neck. ‘If I run then how can I be with you?’

‘Um,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He patted Qiao Tan Yuan’s back. He was happy he received her promise. ‘Let’s sleep.’

Qiao Tan Yuan closed her eyes.

‘Tan Yuan, you need to work on your stamina,’ Gu Jiao Wu whispered in Qiao Tan Yuan’s ear.

Qiao Tan Yuan opened her eyes, and closed her eyes again because she didn’t want to see Gu Jiao Wu’s smug grin. She didn’t think she had poor stamina, it was Gu Jiao Wu’s fault for having such a strong stamina.

In the morning, Gu Jiao Wu woke up refreshed, because he was fed last night after Qiao Tan Yuan starved him for a long time. She was curled up against his arm like an adorable kitten, it awoken his morning glory. He rolled on his side, and kissed her lips. She opened her eyes, blinked and smiled at him.

‘Morning,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Morning,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu caressed Qiao Tan Yuan’s shoulder, and kissed her lips. She looked over his shoulder, and noticed sunlight was shining through the window.

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan got out of bed and dressed.

‘It’s no time to play,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘The stitches are coming off today.’

‘It’s too early in the morning,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You don’t have to worry since the doctor won’t come here until much later.’

Qiao Tan Yuan ignored Gu Jiao Wu, and she walked into the bathroom. She brushed and washed her face at the sink. Then she turned around, Gu Jiao Wu appeared out of nowhere and he closed the bathroom door.

End of Chapter 119

Related



Chapter 120

Cohabit.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, what do you want to do in here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘You didn’t lock the door,’ Gu Jiao Wu said innocently.

‘You...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu hugged Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘After my stitches are cut I can go home,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Tan Yuan, you promised you’ll come home with me.’

‘Jiao Wu, I am coming home with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘There’s my good girl,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He patted Qiao Tan Yuan’s cheek, and held her hand. ‘Let’s go.’

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded. The last six days she helped Gu Jiao Wu brush, wash, dress and go to the toilet. She wasn’t used to nursing someone back to health, but by the time she got used to it, Gu Jiao Wu had recovered.

When Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan walked out of the bathroom, the doctor and nurse knocked on the door. She opened the door for them, the doctor cut

Gu Jiao Wu's stitches and advised Gu Jiao Wu to take it easy for a period to ensure the wound didn't reopen.

Gu Jiao Wen, Du Lei Xin and Xiao Lam walked into the room after the doctor discharged Gu Jiao Wu and left. Gu Jiao Wen wanted to drive Gu Jiao Wu back to the Gu Mansion, but Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to drive Gu Jiao Wu back to the Qiao Mansion.

'Tan Yuan, you promised to come home with me,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'I know,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'The doctor advised you to get rest, and not to do anything strenuous. At the Gu Mansion, Jiao Wen's boys are noisy and aunty Wang doesn't know about your injury. I want you to come home with me so I can take care of you, and it's more peaceful at the Qiao Mansion.'

'Big sister, do you know how to take care of big brother?' Gu Jiao Wen asked. 'You don't even know how to cook.'

'In the last seven days who else took care of Jiao Wu but me?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu saw the way Qiao Tan Yuan gave Gu Jiao Wen a dagger, and he smiled. He sided with her, she didn't need to know how to cook to take care of him. Besides, as long as they were together it didn't matter what roof they were under.

'Everyone can go home,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Thank you for your good intentions. But Tan Yuan's right, it's better if I stay at the Qiao Mansion with her to recover.'

Gu Jiao Wu missed Xiao Bao. He wanted to bond with Xiao Bao, and to inform Qiao Tan Yuan's parents about their wedding plans. So he didn't mind staying at the Qiao Mansion.

'Big brother, what am I going to tell your mum?' Gu Jiao Wen asked.

Gu Jiao Wen didn't want to lie to Wang Tu Ya anymore.

'Tell my mum, I miss my wife and daughter,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If she doesn't want to see her granddaughter again then I'll come home.'

Gu Jiao Wu understood Wang Tu Ya was itching to have Xiao Bao return to the Gu Household.

Gu Jiao Wen and Du Lei Xin glanced at each other, they thought using Xiao Bao to blackmail Wang Tu Ya was the best way to let Gu Jiao Wu recover in peace at the Qiao Mansion.

Later at the Qiao Mansion, Mrs Qiao was happy to see Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Tan Yuan, you and Jiao Wu are back,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘I asked aunty to make pig trotters and vegetable soup for Jiao Wu. Jiao Wu, in the future I hope everything will go smoothly for you.’

Gu Jiao Wu nodded. He followed Mrs Qiao to the dining room, and Qiao Tan Yuan walked to the nursery to see Xiao Bao first.

In the dining room, Gu Jiao Wu ate a bowl of soup quickly because he wanted to go see Xiao Bao.

‘Jiao Wu, eat another bowl of soup,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘I want to discuss some things with you.’

Gu Jiao Wu reluctantly picked up the second bowl of soup.

‘Jiao Wu, I heard you were injured and stayed at the hospital,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘If Tan Yuan didn’t ask me to stay home and take care of Xiao Bao, I would have visited you at the hospital.’

‘Mum, I’m OK,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Mrs Qiao was startled Gu Jiao Wu called her mum again.

‘I see you and Tan Yuan have patched things up,’ Mrs Qiao said.

‘Yes mum,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Tan Yuan and I have decided to get married soon. I wanted to finish our apartment renovations, and prepare a wedding straight away. But Tan Yuan wanted me to rest a little longer.’

‘It’s good news,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘You can go see Xiao Bao. She’s grown a lot since the last time you saw her.’

‘Mum, I promise this time I’ll take good care of Tan Yuan and make her happy,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I believe you,’ Mrs Qiao said.

Gu Jiao Wu walked upstairs. He hadn't seen Xiao Bao for more than half a month. When he walked into the nursery, Qiao Tan Yuan was holding Xiao Bao upright and Xiao Bao's small head was rubbing against Qiao Tan Yuan's shoulder.

'Xiao Bao, mummy missed you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She lifted Xiao Bao up a little, and she smiled. 'Wow, Xiao Bao's grown a little bigger. Come here, and let mummy give you a kiss.'

Qiao Tan Yuan kissed Xiao Bao's cheeks. Xiao Bao laughed, and spoke baby talk.

'Miss Qiao, Xiao Bao is saying mummy,' Mrs Chu said. 'When you won't not home, I showed Xiao Bao a photo of you, and Xiao Bao would say mummy.'

Qiao Tan Yuan smiled. Xiao Bao was only a little older than seven months. She didn't know any babies who knew how to talk that young.

'Xiao Bao, my little treasure,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan kissed Xiao Bao's stomach. Xiao Bao laughed, and Xiao Bao's small hands played with her shirt.

Qiao Tan Yuan turned around, and saw Gu Jiao Wu standing at the door smiling at her and Xiao Bao. She carried Xiao Bao to Gu Jiao Wu and she smiled at Xiao Bao.

'Xiao Bao, this is your daddy,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Since Qiao Tan Yuan reconciled with Gu Jiao Wu, she wanted Xiao Bao and Gu Jiao Wu's father and daughter relationship to improve.

Gu Jiao Wu stared at Xiao Bao's small face. He couldn't believe how much Xiao Bao grew in the short period he didn't see Xiao Bao. Qiao Tan Yuan passed Xiao Bao to him, and Xiao Bao immediately cried in his arms.

'Xiao Bao, don't cry,' Gu Jiao Wu said and gently patted Xiao Bao's back.

Qiao Tan Yuan was worried Xiao Bao would accidentally hit Gu Jiao Wu's chest so she had no choice but to take Xiao Bao back in her arms. Xiao Bao stopped crying the moment she held Xiao Bao.

'Xiao Bao, why did you cry?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked and patted Xiao Bao's back.

Gu Jiao Wu stretched out his arms toward Xiao Bao.

‘Xiao Bao, let daddy hold you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Xiao Bao pouted her lips, and turned her head away from Gu Jiao Wu.

End of Chapter 120

Related



Chapter 121

Side Story.

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju's Side Story: 'I'm sorry,' Cheng Yi said.

'Sorry for what?' Zheng Jia Ju asked.

'I'm sorry for injuring your arm,' Cheng Yi said.

'My arm is healed,' Zheng Jia Ju said. 'It's my heart you've injured.'

'I'm sorry,' Cheng Yi. He couldn't remember Zheng Jia Ju, but he wanted to take responsibility for Zheng Jia Ju and Xiao Nian. 'Can you give me a chance to take care of you and Xiao Nian?'

Zheng Jia Ju didn't know what Fei Yan Niao's ulterior motive was to tell Cheng Yi the truth that she was Cheng Yi's wife. But if Cheng Yi trusted Fei Yan Niao over her, she didn't want Cheng Yi to be involved in Xiao Nian's life.

'I'm taking good care of Xiao Nian and myself,' Zheng Jia Ju said. 'You don't have to feel obligated to stay. I was married to the Cheng Yi who loves me, and remembers me. I'm not married to you. My husband wouldn't do anything to hurt me and Xiao Nian. In my eyes, my husband, and Xiao Nian's father is dead. Mr Cheng, you can go back to living your life.'

Zheng Jia Ju put Xiao Nian into a stroller, and wheeled Xiao Nian away from Cheng Yi.

Chapter 121

'Xiao Bao,' Qiao Tan Yuan called. She turned around to let Xiao Bao face Gu

Jiao Wu. 'Xiao Bao, look this is your daddy. Xiao Bao, let daddy hold you.'

Xiao Bao buried her small head into Qiao Tan Yuan's shoulder.

'Jiao Wu, let's give Xiao Bao some time to be closer to you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu was dejected Xiao Bao didn't recognise him. But he was willing to wait until Xiao Bao grew a little bigger, and get used to having him around.

Qiao Tan Yuan gave Xiao Bao to Mrs Chu, and held Gu Jiao Wu's hand.

'Jiao Wu, I'll take you to rest,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu was feeling fit and healthy. But he didn't want to worry Qiao Tan Yuan so he followed her to her bedroom.

When Qiao Tan Yuan was making the bed, Gu Jiao Wu walked downstairs to inform Mr Qiao about their wedding plans, and returned to the bedroom at the same time Qiao Tan Yuan came out of the bathroom.

'Jiao Wu, you can go shower,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was about to sit in front of the vanity table, but Gu Jiao Wu obstructed her way.

'Why didn't you wait for me to shower together?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Jiao Wu, can't you behave for a bit?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'I can't,' Gu Jiao Wu said and caressed Qiao Tan Yuan's bare shoulders. 'I want you to help me shower.'

'Gu Jiao Wu... I've showered,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'You can shower again,' Gu Jiao Wu.

'You... be sensible,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Let me dry my hair. You should go into the bathroom and shower.'

'I need you,' Gu Jiao Wu said and carried Qiao Tan Yuan to the bathroom.

'Gu Jiao Wu, your wound,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'I'm OK,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If you care about me then help me shower.'

'You... then you have to promise that I'm only helping you shower,' Qiao Tan

Yuan said.

‘What can’t I do?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked innocently.

‘Just shower,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

End of Chapter 121

Related



Chapter 122

What name?

‘I promise,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan turned on the tap, and checked the water temperature. She turned around, Gu Jiao Wu was naked and she coughed awkwardly.

‘You can shower,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Every time Qiao Tan Yuan saw Gu Jiao Wu’s naked body, she would blush. She didn’t think she would get used to seeing him naked.

Gu Jiao Wu stepped into the shower, Qiao Tan Yuan held the shower cord and carefully washed his body. Her heart ached every time she saw the scar on his chest, and she knew she would always love him.

Gu Jiao Wu savored the sensation of Qiao Tan Yuan softly scrubbing his back,

and massaging his soapy head.

Gu Jiao Wu behaved during the half an hour it took Qiao Tan Yuan to help him shower.

Qiao Tan Yuan was surprised Gu Jiao Wu listened to her. She turned off the tap, and reached for a towel. But he carried her into the bath tub.

‘Ah...’ Qiao Tan Yuan cried out softly.

Gu Jiao Wu turned on the bath tap, and warm water quickly filled the tub. Qiao Tan Yuan tried to boost herself out of the tub, but her hands were slippery and she fell onto his lap.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you promised,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I did keep my promise,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I let you help me shower. Now I want to help you relax.’

Gu Jiao Wu turned Qiao Tan Yuan around to face him. He kissed her lips, and spread her legs. He liked having her help him shower, but he liked helping her relax more.

After the water turned cold, Gu Jiao Wu carried Qiao Tan Yuan to the bed.

‘Tan Yuan, do you have any energy left?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked innocently.

Gu Jiao Wu dried Qiao Tan Yuan and himself on the bed.

‘Tan Yuan, your stamina is truly weak,’ Gu Jiao Wu teased.

Qiao Tan Yuan acted like she couldn’t hear Gu Jiao Wu. He went to get the hair dryer then he blow dried her hair.

Later Gu Jiao Wu laid next to Qiao Tan Yuan on the bed. It was a habit for him to wrap an arm around her waist, and hug her to sleep.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, aren’t you satisfied yet?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘What are you saying?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘I only want to hug you and sleep.’

‘You... before you didn’t keep your promise,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Are you saying you won’t relaxed before?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Can you say you didn’t bully me before?’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I didn’t,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips and throat. ‘If this is bullying you then I want to bully you more.’

Qiao Tan Yuan turned around, Gu Jiao Wu hugged her from behind and stroked her hair.

‘You should sleep,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and closed her eyes.

The following morning, Gu Jiao Wu woke up but he didn’t see Qiao Tan Yuan next to him in bed. He got out of bed, dressed and walked to the nursery. Xiao Bao was lying on a baby mat on the floor, and Qiao Tan Yuan put a plush rabbit in Xiao Bao’s small hands, and Xiao Bao threw the it on the floor.

‘Xiao Bao, look at the baby rabbit,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Xiao Bao spoke baby gibberish, and stretched her small arms toward the rabbit.

Qiao Tan Yuan held the rabbit above Xiao Bao’s hands.

‘Mummy’s going to throw the baby rabbit away since Xiao Bao didn’t want the baby rabbit,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

More gibberish came out of Xiao Bao’s mouth, and she held her small hands in the air.

Gu Jiao Wu saw Xiao Bao was about to cry so he grabbed the rabbit from Qiao Tan Yuan’s hands, and he put it in Xiao Bao’s hands.

‘Xiao Bao, daddy gave the baby rabbit to you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Xiao Bao threw the rabbit on the floor again and she cried.

Gu Jiao Wu picked up the rabbit, and he waved it above Xiao Bao’s hands.

‘Xiao Bao, look, daddy’s giving you the baby rabbit,’ Gu Jiao Wu coaxed.

Xiao Bao ignored Gu Jiao Wu and she cried louder.

Qiao Tan Yuan sighed helplessly. She grabbed the rabbit form Gu Jiao Wu’s hands, and she put it in Xiao Bao’s hands.

‘Xiao Bao, mummy gave you the baby rabbit,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Don’t cry anymore.’

Xiao Bao threw the rabbit on the floor again. She stretched her small hands toward Qiao Tan Yuan, and Qiao Tan Yuan carried Xiao Bao. Xiao Bao buried her head in Qiao Tan Yuan's chest.

'Xiao Bao, let daddy hold you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Xiao Bao clutched Qiao Tan Yuan's shirt, and she cried.

'Jiao Wu, I think Xiao Bao's hungry,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Aunty is making baby food for Xiao Bao downstairs. I'll take Xiao Bao downstairs to eat.'

Gu Jiao Wu nodded. He wanted to try holding Xiao Bao again after breakfast. When he followed Qiao Tan Yuan downstairs, he stroked Xiao Bao's cheek, and Xiao Bao turned her head away from his hand. He sighed, he didn't think he had a scary face. His nephews loved playing with him, but Xiao Bao didn't want to be close to him.

After breakfast, Qiao Tan Yuan put Xiao Bao in a stroller and wheeled Xiao Bao in the garden to see flower blossoms. Gu Jiao Wu walked beside the stroller, but Xiao Bao ignored him.

Qiao Tan Yuan crouched in front of the stroller, and stroked Xiao Bao's cheek.

'Xiao Bao, look, this is your daddy,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Xiao Bao continued to ignore Gu Jiao Wu.

'Jiao Wu, don't worry,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'If you spend more time with Xiao Bao, she'll understand you're her daddy.'

'Um,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'We haven't thought of a name for Xiao Bao. We can't call our daughter by her nickname forever.'

'I want to give Xiao Bao a Danish name,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu frowned. He didn't want to think about Qiao Tan Yuan almost leaving him to go to Denmark with Xiao Bao. He looked at Xiao Bao for a while. He thought Xiao Bao was a gift from heaven, and he wished Xiao Bao would listen to him.

'Tan Yuan, what do you think about Ting Ding?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Ting for a good listener, and Ding for heaven. Gu Ting Ding sounds like a good name for our daughter.'

‘Um, Ting Ding,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Gu Ting Ding,’ Gu Jiao Wu called and smiled at Gu Ting Ding. ‘Gu Ting Ding, do you like your name?’

‘Wait,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Jiao Wu, who said Ting Ding’s family name is Gu? Our daughter’s name is Qiao Ting Ding.’

End of Chapter 122

Related



Chapter 123

Side Story.

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju’s Side Story: Cheng Yi picked up Xiao Nian from the stroller.

‘Where are you taking my son?’ Zheng Jia Ju asked.

‘Home,’ Cheng Yi said. ‘Get in my car, and I’ll drive you and Xiao Nian home.’

‘Give back my son,’ Zheng Jia Ju said. She remembered when she needed Cheng Yi the most in the delivery room, no matter how much she begged him, he didn’t come to the hospital. ‘I don’t need you to drive me and my son home. I’m calling a taxi home.’

Cheng Yi put Xiao Nian into the baby seat in his car, and he opened the front passenger door for Zheng Jia Ju. She couldn’t let him drive off with Xiao Nian so she sat in his car.

Chapter 123

‘Tan Yuan, let’s plan our wedding,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Wedding?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Yes,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Do you think I would just take you back to the Gu Mansion and not marry you?’

‘You haven’t proposed to me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I want you to give me a proper proposal on one knee. I want to go to Paris to look for a designer wedding dress. I want to go to the island to take our wedding photos and have a honeymoon there.’

Proposal? Gu Jiao Wu didn't know why he needed to propose since Qiao Tan Yuan had promised to marry him, and she planned out their honeymoon.

'OK,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'We'll go to the island to take wedding photos and have our honeymoon.'

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Xiao Bao who was ignoring him, and he frowned.

'Tan Yuan, we'll pick out the best wedding photo of us then we'll hang it in our daughter's nursery,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Why?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu picked up the plush rabbit, and he waved it in front of Xiao Bao.

'So our daughter will know I'm her daddy and she won't cry if she sees me,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan laughed uncontrollably. Xiao Bao heard her laugh, Xiao Bao looked at her and Xiao Bao laughed too.

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu called.

Gu Jiao Wu thought it was harder for Xiao Bao to accept him than Cheng Yi's memory returning.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Xiao Bao's adorable rosy small face. Xiao Bao was too young for him to reason with. But Qiao Tan Yuan laughing at his expense was a different matter.

'If you keep laughing, be careful I'll give you something to laugh about,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Come here and make me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought the pain of giving birth to Xiao Bao was worthwhile, because Xiao Bao was loyal to her.

'Jiao Wu, think about it,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You didn't want to have Xiao Bao. It'll be strange if Xiao Bao didn't hate you.'

'Tan Yuan, didn't you say you'll forget the past?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Do you want to get even with me?'

'I wouldn't dare,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I meant Xiao Bao doesn't want to be

close to you, because she senses you didn't want her. You need to be patient, spend time with Xiao Bao, and she'll be comfortable around you.'

Gu Jiao Wu stroked Xiao Bao's rosy cheek, Xiao Bao pouted her lips and stretched out her arms toward Qiao Tan Yuan. Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to give up. He picked up Xiao Bao and walked to the rose bushes. Xiao Bao kicked her legs and she cried.

'Xiao Bao, look at the roses,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Look, roses.'

Xiao Bao cried louder, and Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan for help.

'Tan Yuan, help me,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Help you?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was torn between letting Gu Jiao Wu find a way to bond with Xiao Bao or comfort Xiao Bao.

'Help me to get Xiao Bao to stop crying,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan carried Xiao Bao into her arms.

'Xiao Bao, mummy's here,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Xiao Bao sniffed her small red nose, and looked pitifully at Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Xiao Bao, don't cry,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Daddy is a bad man. Xiao and mummy won't pay attention to daddy, OK?'

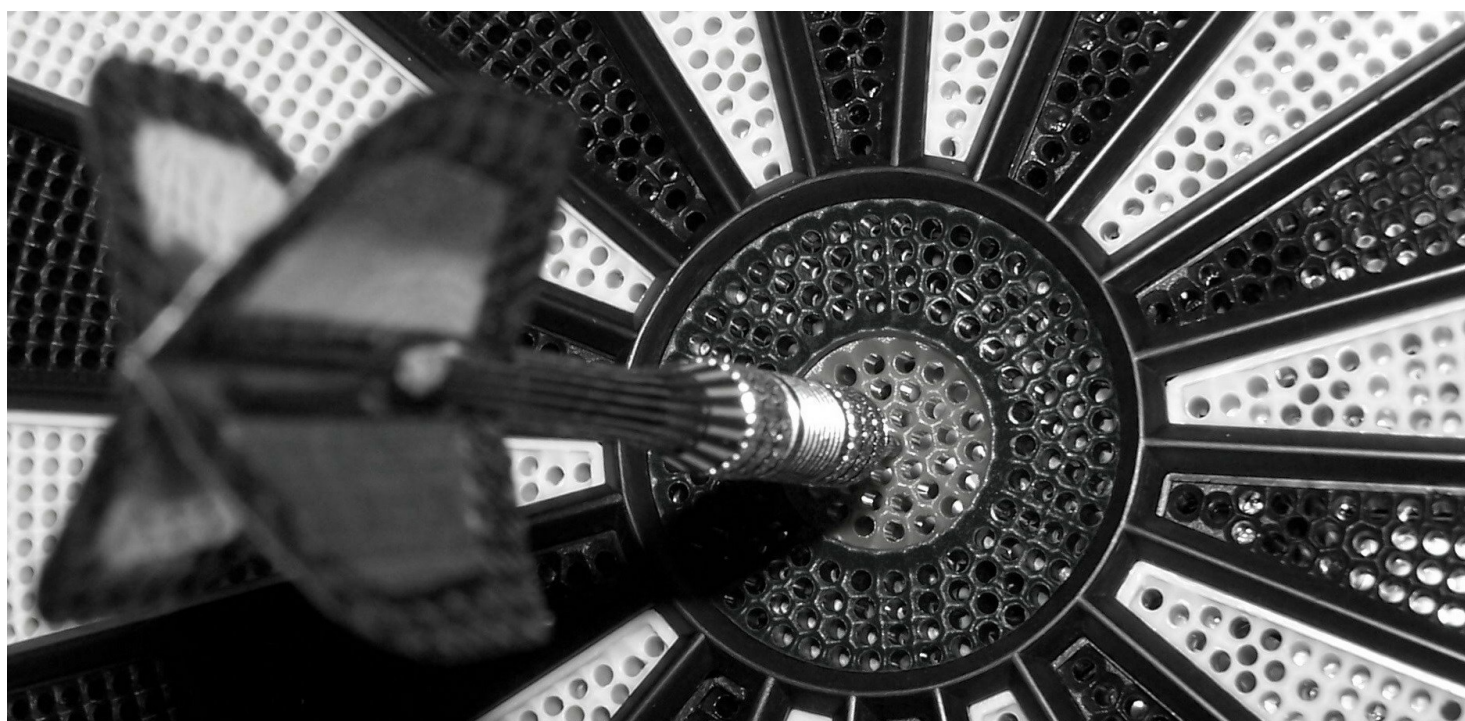
Bad man? Gu Jiao Wu scoffed. That night he showed Qiao Tan Yuan what a bad man he was.

A fortnight later, Gu Jiao Wu discussed with Qiao Tan Yuan about him going back to work. She made him promise to rest for another fortnight before going back to work to ensure his wound healed. He agreed, and used the time off work to strengthen his bond with Xiao Bao.

On a sunny afternoon, Gu Jiao Wu took Xiao Bao out to the backyard garden to see flowers and butterflies. Before Xiao Bao cried, a gardener informed him there was a visitor who asked to see him. He carried Xiao Bao to Mrs Chu, and he went to see the visitor, Wang Tu Ya.

End of Chapter 123

Related



Chapter 124

Darts.

‘Mum?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘What are you doing here?’

‘Can’t I come here?’ Wang Tu Ya asked. ‘How many days have you disappeared? It turns out you ran here. Don’t you care about your elders?’

Gu Jiao Wu wisely listened to Wang Tu Ya’s lecture.

‘You said you’ll bring Tan Yuan home,’ Wang Tu Ya. ‘But look at how big Xiao Bao is now. When do you plan on bringing Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao home? I don’t care anymore. I’m going to discuss the wedding plans with little brother and little sister Qiao.’

Wang Tu Ya couldn’t stand Chen Ting Yu flaunting the twins and Tan Pan Ting in front of their acquaintances. She wanted Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao to return to Gu Mansion immediately.

‘Mum...’ Gu Jiao Wu called.

Wang Tu Ya ignored Gu Jiao Wu, and she went to find Mrs Qiao.

A while later Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan were summoned to the living room. They sat on the sofa, and listened to Wang Tu Ya and Mrs Qiao discuss

wedding banquet locations, wedding catering companies, wedding cakes, who to invite and auspicious wedding dates.

‘Stop,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Although Qiao Tan Yuan agreed to marry Gu Jiao Wu. She didn’t want Gu Jiao Wu to be pressured into marrying her by their parents like their first marriage.

‘Tan Yuan?’ Wang Tu Ya and Mrs Qiao asked.

‘It’s Jiao Wu and I who are getting married,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You two should at least ask for our opinions.’

‘You don’t want to get married?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t want you to feel pressured into marrying me.’

‘Tan Yuan!’ Gu Jiao Wu called. He held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand. ‘What nonsense are you saying?’

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan in a way to let her know she promised to not run away. She smiled at him. She remembered how he risked his life to save her, and she believed he truly wanted to be with her and Xiao Bao.

Wang Tu Ya and Mrs Qiao continued discussing the wedding plans. Afterward Wang Tu Ya dragged Gu Jiao Wu to the Gu Mansion, and to inform the rest of the Gu elders about the wedding.

At the Gu Mansion, everyone sat in the living room and finalised the wedding date.

‘Big sister, what should we name Xiao Bao?’ Chen Ting Yu asked.

‘Tan Yuan and I decided to name our daughter Ting Ding,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Gu Ting Ding.’

Wang Tu Ya and Chen Ting Yu were disappointed they couldn’t help choose Xiao Bao’s name. But they thought Gu Ting Ding was a good name.

‘Jiao Wu, although I want Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao to come home,’ Gu Tian Chu said. ‘I want to hear from you that you’re certain you truly want to spend the rest of your life with Tan Yuan.’

‘Grandpa, I promise I truly want to marry Tan Yuan,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Good,’ Gu Tian Chu said. ‘The eighth of February is the earliest auspicious wedding date.’

‘Thank you grandpa,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was happy he could marry Qiao Tan Yuan in a month.

On the weekend Wang Tu Ya brought many wedding gifts for Qiao Tan Yuan to the Qiao Mansion. Mr and Mrs Qiao didn’t care about the expensive wedding gifts, they were happy to see Gu Jiao Wu truly wanted to be with Qiao Tan Yuan.

Later that evening, Gu Jiao Wu took Qiao Tan Yuan out to the joint surprise birthday party Du Lei Xin organised for Gu Jiao Mai and Gu Jiao Wen. He walked her to his car. She wore a tight black dress, a red jacket and black heels. If it wasn’t Gu Jiao Mai and Gu Jiao Wen’s birthday party then he would have taken Qiao Tan Yuan back to the bedroom.

‘Where are we going?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked out the car window, she was curious where Gu Jiao Wu was taking her.

‘To eat dinner,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Dinner?’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘We could have eaten dinner at home.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was disappointed. She thought Gu Jiao Wu planned a special date for the two of them. If she had known they were only eating dinner, she would have stayed home because Xiao Bao was crying when Xiao Bao saw her leave with Gu Jiao Wu.

‘I’ll take you home later,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Du Lei Xin gave me the secret dinner location. After we eat dinner there, we’ll go home together.’

‘Secret dinner?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t answer, and he drove straight to the surprise birthday party venue.

At the party venue, Qiao Tan Yuan was surprised to see everyone, including Gu Jiao Mai attend the dinner.

‘Why is everyone here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu pointed at the two birthday cakes on the stage.

‘Today is Jiao Wen and Jiao Mai’s birthday,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Du Lei Xin organised a surprise birthday party for them.’

The apartment complex had eighteen floors. The top eight floors were guest apartments. Above the lobby was the bar and the second floor to the fifth floor were karaoke rooms, gyms and massage parlors.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at the two birthday cakes. The first birthday cake was shaped in a heart, and decorated with roses. On top of the second birthday cake were figurines of a couple and twin boys.

Shen Cheng saw Gu Jiao Wu escort Qiao Tan Yuan to the reserved birthday table so he stood and walked to the stage to sing a karaoke song.

Tong Shang Wen waved to the birthday twins.

‘Jiao Wen and Jiao Mai today is your birthdays,’ Tong Shang Wen said. ‘You two can’t leave without eating with everyone, cutting your birthday cakes and singing songs on stage.’

‘Let me enjoy my birthday in peace,’ Gu Jiao Mai said. She wheeled her wheelchair to the table. ‘I won’t be singing.’

‘Jiao Mai, you have a voice of an angel,’ Tong Shang Wen said. ‘It would be a waste if your guests don’t get to hear you sing at least one song.’

Tong Shang Wen remembered how everyone were moved to see Gu Jiao Mai sing on TV long ago.

Gu Jiao Mai pointed at Gu Jiao Wen.

‘Jiao Wen will sing in my stead,’ Gu Jiao Mai said.

‘What’s so good about singing?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked. ‘We should play something fun tonight.’

‘Play what?’ Tan Pan Ting asked.

‘Play darts,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘The loser after shooting three darts has to drink a shot.’

‘Jiao Wen, don’t think we’ll give you the edge because it’s your birthday,’ Tong

Shang Wen. 'Everyone knows you're good at shooting. You just want to see all of us get wasted.'

'Alright,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'How about I get a handicap? I'll be blindfolded when it's my turn. Satisfied?'

'Yes!' Tan Pan Ting agreed.

'Blindfold?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know Gu Jiao Wen was that good at playing darts.

'OK,' Tong Shang Wen said. 'The darts contest will exclude the women. The man who loses after shooting three darts has to drink a whole wine bottle.'

'OK,' Gu Jiao Wen said.

'One wine bottle?' Tan Pan Ting asked. 'Isn't that too much?'

'Pan Ting, don't worry,' Tong Shang Wen said. 'If Jiao Wen loses, you don't have to drink for him.'

'Shang Wen, don't gloat too soon,' Tan Pan Ting said. 'Jiao Wu, I believe in you.'

'Thank you wife,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'Shang Wen, you can go first.'

Tong Shang Wen shot three darts, two darts hit nine and one dart hit eight.

Everyone applauded Tong Shang Wen's good aim.

Hu Zui Ren was the next person to shoot, two darts hit nine and one dart hit ten.

Tong Shang Wen was unhappy Hu Zui Ren beat his score.

Du Lei Xin smiled at Gu Jiao Mai and shot three darts, two darts hit ten and one dart hit nine.

Gu Jiao Mai applauded and praised Du Lei Xin.

Tan Pan Ting blindfolded Gu Jiao Wen, and he shot three darts, all three darts hit ten.

'Wow!' Tan Pan Ting praised and clapped loudly. 'My husband is amazing.'

'Jiao Wu, can you hit the target blindfolded too?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Will you be disappointed if I say I can’t?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘It’s only a party trick.’

‘If I hit the target blindfolded, will you listen to everything I say tonight?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu stood, smiled at Qiao Tan Yuan and blindfolded himself.

‘I’m taking your silence as a promise,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t get a chance to protest. Gu Jiao Wu shot three darts in one go, and all three darts hit ten. Her mouth and eyes widened. She didn’t know Gu Jiao Wu was secretly a good shooter, and she clapped enthusiastically.

‘Jiao Wu, you’re impressive!’ Qiao Tan Yuan praised.

‘Big brother, where did you learn to play darts?’ Tong Shang Wen asked.

‘Shang Wen, did you think you’re the only one who knows how to play darts?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t care about winning, he cared about receiving rewards from Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘I won,’ Gu Jiao Wu said to Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘Tonight you have to listen to me.’

Gu Jiao Wu missed Qiao Tan Yuan. He was busy at work, and planning their wedding so he didn’t have a lot of free time to spend with Qiao Tan Yuan.

Everyone smiled at the blushing Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘You... behave,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said to Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wu sat next to Qiao Tan Yuan, smiled and held her hand.

‘Shang Wen, you lost,’ Tan Pan Ting said. ‘You said it yourself, the loser has to drink one whole wine bottle.’

‘Who’s scared of a wine bottle?’ Tong Shang Wen said.

Tong Shang Wen grabbed a wine bottle, and gulped it down in one go.

Gu Jiao Wen and Tan Pan Ting sang a duet on stage. Followed by Du Lei Xin who wheeled Gu Jiao Mai on stage and forced Gu Jiao Mai to sing a love song with him.

It was the first time Qiao Tan Yuan and Tan Pan Ting heard Gu Jiao Mai sing. Gu Jiao Mai had a beautiful singing voice. But it was the way Du Lei Xin looked lovingly at Gu Jiao Mai that surprised Qiao Tan Yuan, and she wondered if they were secret lovers. Qiao Tan Yuan glanced at Gu Jiao Wu, he looked like he knew Du Lei Xin and Gu Jiao Mai were secret lovers for a long time.

Qiao Tan Yuan was envious of Du Lei Xin and Gu Jiao Mai.

‘Jiao Wu, do you want to...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and changed her mind.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to ruin the good atmosphere by looking sad if Gu Jiao Wu rejected singing a song with her.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand, and smiled at her.

‘What song do you want to sing?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Do you want to sing with me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was slowly getting used to seeing Gu Jiao Wu smiling at her.

‘What are you saying?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. He pulled Qiao Tan Yuan on stage. ‘Tan Yuan, you can choose a song for us.’

‘I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan chose an old love song, Understand My Heart (月亮代表我的心).

Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu sang the chorus together:

My heart yearns for one true love,

I loved you deeply,

Why did my sweet dream disappear too quickly?

Your gentle eyes pierced my soul,

If I let you come close to me,

Will you understand my heart?

After Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu’s duet ended, all the guests could see how much Gu Jiao Wu loved Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t think one day Gu Jiao Wu would see the gentle look in his

eyes looking into her eyes like how he used to look at Chu Da in the past. Qiao Tan Yuan believed hers and Gu Jiao Wu’s second marriage would work out, and they would be happy together because he loved her. Her trance was broken when she heard the sounds of glass breaking. She looked around, and saw Shen Cheng dropped a wine glass. She put down the microphone, and walked off stage. Gu Jiao Wu walked quicker, and held her hand off stage.

‘Tan Yuan, what do you want to do?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

End of Chapter 124

Related



Chapter 125

A friend.

‘I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan only wanted to comfort Shen Cheng a little.

‘You don’t have to worry about him,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu understood Shen Cheng was heartbroken. But he didn’t want Qiao Tan Yuan to comfort Shen Cheng.

‘Jiao Wu, I... feel sorry toward Shen Cheng,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘If you feel sorry toward him then don’t worry about him,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want Qiao Tan Yuan to give Shen Cheng hope if she comforted Shen Cheng.

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded. She forced herself not to look at Shen Cheng. Gu Jiao Wu was right, if she cared about Shen Cheng, she needed to give Shen Cheng space. Gu Jiao Wu held her hand, led her back on stage and he purposely chose another love song for them to sing.

After the love song, Gu Jiao Wu selected a plate of Qiao Tan Yuan’s favorite dishes from the buffet table, and a glass of juice. He brought the plate of food and juice to Qiao Tan Yuan. He held her hand, and fed her to let Shen Cheng see

that he loved her, and wouldn't let her go even for a friend.

Later Qiao Tan Yuan ate a piece of cake. She couldn't bear to see Shen Cheng hurting anymore, and she told Gu Jiao Wu she wanted to go home and sleep. Gu Jiao Wu nodded, and led her to the elevators. Instead of taking her home, he took her upstairs to one of the guest rooms he asked Du Lei Xin to reserve for him.

In the apartment, Gu Jiao Wu locked the door and he kissed Qiao Tan Yuan's lips with urgent need. She wrapped her arms around his neck, and kissed him back.

'In the future you have to stay away from Shen Cheng,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Are you scared I'll corrupt Shen Cheng?' Qiao Tan Yuan teased.

'Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'You'll be my wife soon. You need to stay away from all men.'

'Does that include you?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked innocently.

'Except me,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'I can't promise you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said and smiled.

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'What about my dad and Qiao Jie?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu was taunted enough. He sealed Qiao Tan Yuan's lips with a burning kiss.

Qiao Tan Yuan savored Gu Jiao Wu's kiss. She missed him since he returned to the Gu Mansion.

The night drew closer to dawn as two bodies drew closer together in the apartment.

The following days, Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan were busy planning their wedding.

On the day a wedding boutique called Qiao Tan Yuan to inform her that the designer wedding dresses she ordered were delivered, and they asked her to come to the wedding boutique for a fitting.

Gu Jiao Wu drove Qiao Tan Yuan to the wedding boutique. He changed into his tuxedo quickly, and he read a newspaper while she changed into a wedding dress. He put the newspaper down after she came out of a cubicle. The white wedding dress she wore hugged her body, and accentuated her slim waist and slender legs. The dress was a strapless long dress with beads and embroidered roses on the front of corset. He was amazed at how beautiful she looked in the dress.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't say anything for a while. It made Qiao Tan Yuan think about their first wedding. He wasn't involved in the wedding planning, she planned everything for them. He didn't even look at her on their wedding day. But she persevered for three years in the hope he would one day look at her, and accepted her for who she was. She was beginning to doubt if she should stay hopeful they would be happy together in their second marriage.

Gu Jiao Wu stood in front of Qiao Tan Yuan, and he held her hand.

'Not bad,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Not bad?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan suppressed her doubts. She believed Gu Jiao Wu and herself would be happy together.

'Then I'll go change into another dress,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'No,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'You look beautiful in this dress.'

'OK,' Qiao Tan Yuan said and smiled. 'Let's go to a park to take pre-wedding photos together.'

'Um,' Gu Jiao Wu said and smiled too.

A wedding photographer was waiting for Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan at the park before they arrived at the park. The photographer spent the afternoon taking photos of them.

Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan changed out of their wedding clothes after their pre-wedding shoot. Then he drove her to the Qiao Mansion.

Mr and Mrs Qiao pretended like they didn't know Gu Jiao Wu slept in Qiao Tan Yuan's bedroom before the wedding, because they believed Gu Jiao Wu was

sincere about marrying Qiao Tan Yuan again.

Less than a month before the wedding, Xiao Bao was used to seeing Gu Jiao Wu at the Qiao Mansion and Xiao Bao didn't cry if he held her for a little while.

Since the birthday party, Gu Jiao Wu always returned to the Qiao Mansion after work. Late one afternoon, he drove past a new toy shop and decided to buy some toys for Xiao Bao. Inside the toy shop, he chose toys Xiao Bao liked to play with. When he carried the bags of toys to his car, he remembered he hadn't bought Qiao Tan Yuan roses since she agreed to marry him.

End of Chapter 125

Related



Chapter 126

Cornflowers.

At the florist shop, Gu Jiao Wu looked for red roses.

‘Sir, what flowers are you looking for?’ the florist asked.

‘Red roses,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘How many red roses do you want?’ the florist asked.

‘Ninety-nine red roses,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I’ll wrap them into a bouquet for you,’ the florist said.

Gu Jiao Wu nodded. He anticipated how happy Qiao Tan Yuan would be to receive roses from him. Then he pictured scattering rose petals on the bed, and have Qiao Tan Yuan pose on the bed of rose petals. The thought made him aroused. He quickly turned away from the counter, and looked at the other flowers in the shop. He didn’t know why thinking about Qiao Tan Yuan would turn him on. He wondered was it because he abstained for years or was it because of Qiao Tan Yuan’s appeal?

‘Hello Miss, what flowers are you looking for?’ the florist asked.

‘I’m looking for cornflowers,’ Li Lam said.

Gu Jiao Wu turned around, he was surprised to see Li Lam. She stared at the bouquet of red roses the florist finished wrapping.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, who are you buying the roses for?’ Li Lam asked.

‘It has nothing to do with you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘But it matters to Chu Da,’ Li Lam said. ‘I want to know if it’s worth it for Chu Da to love you.’

‘You’re not Chu Da,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I’m not Chu Da,’ Li Lam said. ‘I asked who you bought the roses for because today is Chu Da’s birthday.’

Gu Jiao Wu almost dropped the bouquet of roses he bought. He had forgotten Chu Da’s birthday.

‘It’s true what they say,’ Li Lam said. ‘Out with the old, and in with the new. In your heart Chu Da must not mean anything to you anymore if you’ve forgotten Chu Da’s birthday.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t deny Qiao Tan Yuan occupied the biggest place in his heart. The image of the easy going and sweet Chu Da had faded in his heart.

‘Where is Chu Da?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Why should you care?’ Li Lam said. ‘You have a new woman. It shouldn’t matter if Chu Da is alive or dead.’

‘Li Lam, this is between me and Chu Da,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Tell me where is Chu Da.’

Gu Jiao Wu was a loyal man. He looked everywhere for Chu Da for more than three years. Then Qiao Tan Yuan gave birth to Xiao Bao, and everything changed.

‘Miss, your bouquet of cornflowers are ready,’ the florist said.

‘Thank you,’ Li Lam said.

The florist sensed tension between Li Lam and Gu Jiao Wu so she quickly gave Li Lam the cornflowers, and tended to other customers.

‘Gu Jiao Wu go and live a happy life with your new woman and leave Chu Da alone,’ Li Lam said.

Gu Jiao Wu chased after Li Lam, but she drove off.

Later that evening, at the Qiao Mansion, Qiao Tan Yuan walked to her bedroom after playing with Xiao Bao.

‘Jiao Wu, what’s wrong?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt Gu Jiao Wu was acting unusual since dinner.

‘Nothing is wrong,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to upset Qiao Tan Yuan by mentioning Chu Da.

‘Is Xiao Bao asleep?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Xiao Bao’s asleep,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Xiao Bao likes the toys you bought her. If you keep spending time with Xiao Bao soon she’ll like you more than her toys.’

‘I don’t know if that’s possible,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was jealous of Xiao Bao’s toys. His own daughter liked toys more than she liked him.

‘Jiao Wu, wait for Xiao Bao to grow a little bigger and she’ll understand your heart,’ Qiao Tan Yuan consoled.

‘I hope so,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Jiao Wu, confess,’ Qiao Tan Yuan joked. ‘Today you bought toys for Xiao Bao, and roses for me. Are you hiding a mistress?’

Qiao Tan Yuan trusted Gu Jiao Wu was faithful to her so she could joke about him having a non-existent mistress.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to see the bouquet of roses in Qiao Tan Yuan’s hands. He grabbed the roses, and put them on a table. Then he kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips and trailed kisses down to her collar bone.

‘Jiao Wu... slow down,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know why Gu Jiao Wu was holding her too tightly, and she felt like he was rougher with her than usual.

Gu Jiao Wu pushed Qiao Tan Yuan onto the bed. She was worried why he avoided looking at her face while he touched her body on the bed.

The following morning, Gu Jiao Wu woke up before Qiao Tan Yuan. He dreamt of Chu Da for the first time since he realised he loved Qiao Tan Yuan. In his dream, Chu Da told him she loved him and Chu Da asked him why he didn’t love her.

Gu Jiao Wu got out of bed, dressed and drove to Li Lam’s work building.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you’re here sooner than I expected,’ Li Lam said.

‘Where is Chu Da?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘If you want to know then follow my car,’ Li Lam said and pointed to her car.

Gu Jiao Wu followed Li Lam’s car outside of the city. He didn’t care if Li Lam was playing mind games, he was determined to find out where Chu Da was that day. When Li Lam parked her car, he sat frozen in his car and stared at the site in front of him for a long time.

End of Chapter 126

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Chapter 127

Cemetery.

Li Lam stepped out of her car she parked in front of the cemetery gate. She turned around, Gu Jiao Wu was still sitting in his car.

‘Why aren’t you following me?’ Li Lam asked. ‘Are you scared of facing the truth?’

‘Li Lam, if you’re playing mind games, I suggest you stop,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Playing mind games?’ Li Lam asked. ‘I wish the heavens are playing a joke on me.’

Gu Jiao Wu clenched his hands, and he followed Li Lam into the cemetery. His heart knew the truth, but he didn’t want to believe it. The cemetery was desolate, and surrounded by mountains. Li Lam stopped in front a tombstone he didn’t want to see.

‘Big sister, I’m here to see you,’ Li Lam said in a choked voice. ‘I’m sorry I brought him here. I don’t know if you want to see him.’

Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t believe who the photo of the smiling woman on the tombstone belonged to... Chu Da.

‘Impossible...’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu looked everywhere for Chu Da. He didn’t expect to see Chu Da again when she was six feet under. She died three years ago.

‘Impossible... tell me the truth,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘What happened?’

Li Lam sat in front of Chu Da’s tombstone. She cried onto the bouquet of cornflowers she brought last night.

‘Tell me, what happened to Chu Da...’ Gu Jiao Wu said in a shaky voice.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t believe a young healthy woman like Chu Da would suddenly die. It was too cruel, he couldn’t accept Chu Da died. His shaky hand stroked Chu Da’s photo.

‘What’s the point of knowing what happened to Chu Da now?’ Li Lam asked coldly. ‘Big sister, I brought the man you loved here to see you. I was wrong. I should have brought him here sooner to see you. The truth is I know you want to see him.’

Li Lam couldn’t control her tears.

‘Big sister, I’m sorry,’ Li Lam said. ‘I’m sorry for leaving you alone here by yourself for a long time. I’m sorry I didn’t bring him here sooner...’

Gu Jiao Wu pulled Li Lam’s arm.

‘Tell me, why she’s this young... why she’s taken away this soon...’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Li Lam pushed Gu Jiao Wu’s hand off her arm.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I’m not in a good mood to explain anything,’ Li Lam said. ‘Yesterday was big sister’s birthday, but you didn’t come here to see big sister. It’s better late than never. I’ll give you and big sister privacy to talk to each other. If you want to know what happened to big sister, come here next week, it’s her anniversary.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to believe Chu Da died.

‘Big sister is pitiful,’ Chu Da said. ‘She died one week after her birthday... big sister, I believe you want to talk to him alone. I’ll come back next week to see you.’

Li Lam left the cemetery, and Gu Jiao Wu sat in front of Chu Da’s tombstone.

‘Chu Da... why didn’t you believe in me enough to confide in me?’ Gu Jiao Wu

asked. 'Why did you choose to leave me? Why didn't you tell me the reason why you left me? I suffered for years looking for you, missing you. Why didn't you believe I loved you? Why didn't you let me take care of you?'

Gu Jiao Wu understood Li Lam wanted to prolong his pain by waiting until it was Chu Da's anniversary to tell him what happened to Chu Da.

Chu Da was a different woman to Qiao Tan Yuan. Chu Da was giving, homely, independent, hardworking and innocent. When Gu Jiao Wu lived with Chu Da, she was easy going and they lived a peaceful life together. Chu Da took care of him tirelessly. It didn't matter if he worked overtime, she always stayed up to wait for him to eat the dinner she cooked. He had wanted to marry Chu Da, and make Chu Da happy.

'Chu Da, why did you leave me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Why didn't you give me a chance to make you happy? Did you leave me because I didn't find you sooner? Are you punishing me because I didn't protect you?'

A cold wind swept past Chu Da's tombstone.

'Chu Da...' Gu Jiao Wu called.

Gu Jiao Wu's phone rang, it was Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Jiao Wu, where are you?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Everyone's waiting for you to eat dinner.'

End of Chapter 127

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Chapter 128

Side Story.

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju's Side Story:

Cheng Yi bond with Xiao Nian, and asked Zheng Jia Ju to come to the U.S. with him and Xiao Nian.

Zheng Jia Ju rejected Cheng Yi's offer, and she secretly planned to take Xiao Nian somewhere Cheng Yi couldn't find them, because she didn't want Cheng Yi to feel obligated to be with her.

Chapter 128

'Tell everyone to eat without me,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I'm busy on a work trip. I'm not coming home tonight.'

'Oh...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu hung up the phone before Qiao Tan Yuan could ask him anything else. Her heart suddenly felt uneasy.

'Tan Yuan, what did Jiao Wu say?' Mrs Qiao asked. 'Why isn't he home yet?'

'He's busy at work,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Mum, let's eat. We don't need to wait for him.'

'OK,' Mrs Qiao said. 'It makes sense Jiao Wu needs to work overtime after taking sick leave absence.'

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to believe Gu Jiao Wu was working overtime. They were getting married soon, she should trust him.

At the cemetery, Gu Jiao Wu didn't look at his watch until he noticed the sky was dark and the moonlight shining on top of Chu Da's tombstone. He didn't know how long he sat there, he couldn't believe it was past ten at night.

'Chu Da, stay here and rest,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I'll come to see you again next week.'

Gu Jiao Wu left the cemetery and that night he drove back to the Gu Mansion instead of the Qiao Mansion.

Before Chu Da's anniversary, Gu Jiao Wu only returned to the Qiao Mansion in the middle of the night.

The night Gu Jiao Wu said he was on a work trip, he didn't return to the Qiao Mansion. Qiao Tan Yuan called his phone again that night, but his phone was switched off. The nights afterward, he came home in the middle of the night and slept with her. But he didn't look at her face while he slept with her.

The few nights after Gu Jiao Wu brought roses for Qiao Tan Yuan, she called his phone but it was always switched off. She couldn't sleep, and walked to the nursery to check-up on Xiao Bao.

'Jiao Wu?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Jiao Wu...'

Gu Jiao Wu was startled by Qiao Tan Yuan's voice, and he realised Xiao Bao was trying to grab the toy in his hand.

'Xiao Bao, this toy is for you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Jiao Wu, what's wrong?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

It was the sixth night since Qiao Tan Yuan noticed the change in Gu Jiao Wu. He was physically with her, but his mind was elsewhere.

'I'm OK,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I've been busy with work.'

'Oh,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Mum picked out a few wedding cakes. The new bedsheets were delivered to my bedroom today. Come to my bedroom, and see which one we should use on our wedding day.'

‘You can decide on the trivial matters,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu saw Qiao Tan Yuan took a step back, and he realised he said something carelessly. He stood and held her hand.

‘Let’s go and see the new bedsheets,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘If you’re tired... it’s my fault,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘It’s only a second wedding. I shouldn’t have turned it into a big event.’

‘Nonsense,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘For us this is our first wedding. Last time didn’t count.’

‘Really?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Let’s go,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan walked to her bedroom. He went through the motions of looking at the new bedsheets on the bed, and he randomly chose the red bedsheet.

‘I like this one too,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘It’s my favorite brand.’

‘As long as you like it,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Today’s a weekend. Do you want to go out?’

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘It’s cold this evening. I don’t want to leave Xiao Bao.’

‘Why not?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘We can go on an overnight trip just the two of us.’

‘Can we... leave Xiao Bao at home?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Xiao Bao has mum and aunty Chu to take care of her,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Besides, Xiao Bao stopped drinking breast milk.’

Gu Jiao Wu finally accepted it was true about women being overprotective of their children.

‘Jiao Wu, if you’re not tired then we can go,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I’m not tired,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

That evening, Gu Jiao Wu took Qiao Tan Yuan sightseeing. Then they checked into a hotel room.

When Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan walked into the hotel room, he didn't let her go.

'Jiao Wu, be gentle... ah... enough...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know why Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to stop after they were on the bed for hours.

'Not enough,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Ah...' Qiao Tan Yuan cried out and passed out from exhaustion.

In the morning, Gu Jiao Wu woke Qiao Tan Yuan up and he wanted her again.

'Jiao Wu... it's too early... I'm tired... ah...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Do you remember our night at the hospital?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'I want you that way again.'

Gu Jiao Wu rolled Qiao Tan Yuan over, and positioned her on top of him.

Later Qiao Tan Yuan collapsed on Gu Jiao Wu's chest, and he rolled her underneath him again. He didn't let her sleep until the afternoon.

Late in the afternoon, Gu Jiao Wu drove Qiao Tan Yuan back to the Qiao Mansion. She was tired from their overnight road trip, and slept after she played with Xiao Bao in the nursery.

On Monday morning, Gu Jiao Wu got out of bed early without disturbing Qiao Tan Yuan's sleep, and he drove to the cemetery.

At the cemetery, Gu Jiao Wu put a bouquet of white lilies in front of Chu Da's tombstone.

Li Lam arrived at the cemetery at ten in the morning. She carried a big bag, and another bouquet of cornflowers. She wasn't surprised Gu Jiao Wu arrived before her. She sat in front of Chu Da's tombstone, and took out a bottle of grape juice.

'Big sister, I know you hate drinking wine,' Li Lam said. 'I woke up early to make you a fresh bottle of grape juice.'

Li Lam poured some grape juice on the ground, and she took a sip of grape juice.

'Big sister, for three years there wasn't a day I didn't think about you,' Li Lam

said and cried. ‘I know you won’t hold my actions against me.’

Li Lam gestured for Gu Jiao Wu to sit.

‘Sit,’ Li Lam said. ‘It’ll take me a long time to tell you everything that happened to big sister.’

End of Chapter 128

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Chapter 129

Diary.

‘Four years ago I was a different person,’ Li Lam said to Gu Jiao Wu. ‘My parents were busy working and neglected me. I shopped, gambled, drank, smoked and hung out with a bad crowd. One night I was at a nightclub with people I thought were my friends. One of the men tried to rape me, I escaped to my car. I was too frightened, and forgot to wear a seatbelt. I got into a car accident, my face was scarred, one of my eyes became blind and I broke two rib bones. When I woke up at the hospital, I found out my parents called the doctors to do everything to save my life. But I didn’t want to live being blind and disfigured so I didn’t take the medication the doctors gave me and I didn’t let the nurses take care of me.’

Li Lam took out a tissue and dried her tears.

‘I trashed everything in my hospital room,’ Li Lam said to Gu Jiao Wu. ‘Then a young woman walked into my hospital room, and cleaned up broken glass pieces and the rubbish on the floor...’

‘If you’re in pain, reading a book can help you forget the pain,’ Chu Da said.

‘Get lost,’ Li Lam said. ‘Don’t be nosy.’

‘I’m a hospital volunteer,’ Chu Da said. ‘My name is Chu Da. You can call me by my nickname, Da Da.’

‘Go to hell,’ Li Lam said. ‘I hate everyone here. Get lost.’

‘If you don’t cooperate with your doctors and nurses then how can you

recover?’ Chu Da asked.

‘Look at me,’ Li Lam said. ‘Look at my scarred face. Look at my blind eye. I’m an invalid.’

‘As long as you’re alive there is hope,’ Chu Da said.

‘What would you know about hope?’ Li Lam asked. ‘Do you know important beauty is to a woman?’

‘There is plastic surgery and eye laser treatments,’ Chu Da said. ‘As long as you’re alive there is hope.’

‘What hope?’ Li Lam asked. ‘If you were me, I don’t think you’ll feel the same way.’

‘If I was you, I’m certain I’ll still believe there is hope,’ Chu Da said. ‘I have three months left to live. That is what I call not having hope left.’

Li Lam couldn’t stop crying, and took out another tissue.

‘Later I found out big sister had ovarian cancer,’ Li Lam said to Gu Jiao Wu. ‘I didn’t think someone who had three months left would volunteer their time left to help others. Big sister brought me new books every day...’

‘Don’t you have family members?’ Li Lam asked Chu Da. ‘How come none of your family members have come to visit you?’

‘No,’ Chu Da said. ‘I’m an orphan.’

‘What will happen to you...’ Li Lam asked.

‘Don’t worry,’ Chu Da said. ‘The hospital will take care of my ashes. Everyone turns to ashes after they die whether a person is an orphan or has a family.’

Li Lam poured more grape juice on the ground.

‘Big sister was the first person who truly cared about me,’ Li Lam said to Gu Jiao Wu. ‘She treated me like a little sister...’

‘Xiao Lam, after I die I want you to have my eyes,’ Chu Da said.

‘Big sister don’t joke like this,’ Li Lam said. ‘I believe you’ll live a long life.’

Li Lam stared at the photo of Chu Da smiling.

‘Two months later big sister looked like a skeleton,’ Li Lam said to Gu Jiao Wu. ‘She was in a lot of pain, but she didn’t complain and continued to bring me books. She loved reading, it helps her forget her pain after each cancer treatment session. She stopped treatments during her last month. I begged her to continue her treatments, I didn’t want her to leave me...’

‘Xiao Lam, I want you to help me with something,’ Chu Da said.

‘Big sister, I’ll do anything to help you,’ Li Lam said.

‘There is a man I love,’ Chu Da said. ‘I want you to have plastic surgery to look like me, and I want you take my eyes. After I die, I want you to go look at him with my eyes.’

‘Big sister told me everything about her relationship with you,’ Li Lam said to Gu Jiao Wu. ‘The day she closed her eyes for the last time was the most painful day in my life.’ She passed a diary to Gu Jiao Wu. ‘This is big sister’s diary. I believe big sister would want you to have it. After meeting big sister, I found out how I wasted my life. I kept my promise to big sister to look at you with her eyes. I thought you would believe I’m big sister, and be with me. I didn’t think I would fall in love with you. But after getting to know you... Gu Jiao Wu, I love you.’

End of Chapter 129

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Chapter 130

Happiness.

Although Li Lam had Chu Da's face and eyes, she failed to receive Gu Jiao Wu's love. At least it meant Gu Jiao Wu loved Chu Da for who Chu Da was, and he wasn't fooled by her deceit. She believed Chu Da would be happy to know how much Gu Jiao Wu loved Chu Da.

Li Lam didn't expect Gu Jiao Wu would be happy with another woman. When she saw Gu Jiao Wu bought Qiao Tan Yuan roses on Chu Da's birthday, she didn't want Gu Jiao Wu to forget how much Chu Da suffered and how deeply Chu Da loved Gu Jiao Wu. So she wanted to ruin Gu Jiao Wu's happiness.

'Big sister, I'm sorry for my selfish actions,' Li Lam said. 'I hope you can forgive me.' She picked up her bag, stood and looked at Gu Jiao Wu. 'Gu Jiao Wu, I won't appear in front of you anymore. I fulfilled my promise to big sister. Go and live your happy life.'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't notice when Li Lam left. He held Chu Da's diary, and he stared at the fallen leaves. He couldn't believe Chu Da died of ovarian cancer at such a young age. Memories of Chu Da slowly came back to him. She treasured every love token he gave her, regardless of the price tag. He once asked her why she liked to smile. She said if you smile at the world then the world would smile back at you.

Gu Jiao Wu read Chu Da's diary, and he cried after reading each page. The first part of her diary was how they met, how she fell in love with him and the days they lived together were the happiest days of her life.

The second part of Chu Da's diary, broke Gu Jiao Wu's heart. After she left him, she suffered a lot.

At the Qiao Mansion, Qiao Tan Yuan spent the morning feeding Xiao Bao and taking Xiao Bao for a stroll in the garden. When Xiao Bao napped, she asked Mrs Chu to watch over Xiao Bao then she took a nap too.

When Qiao Tan Yuan woke up it was the afternoon. Gu Jiao Wu was sitting on her bed.

‘Jiao Wu, why are you home early today?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Don’t you have to work overtime?’

Gu Jiao Wu only looked at Qiao Tan Yuan like he didn’t know what to do with her.

‘Jiao Wu, what’s wrong?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan was wearing a night gown, a strap fell off her shoulder and the vulnerable look on her face made her look more beautiful in Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes. She stretched an arm to touch his arm, but he held her arm and stopped her from touching him.

‘That year why didn’t you tell me Chu Da had ovarian cancer?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Why didn’t you tell me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu’s heart was broken because of Chu Da and Qiao Tan Yuan.

Gu Jiao Wu hated himself for not being there for Chu Da in her final months. Chu Da had no one to take care of her. He hated himself for making the wrong assumptions about where Chu Da would disappear to. Why did he look for her in different schools in the country and overseas? Why didn’t he think about looking for local places she would volunteer in? He hated himself for doubting Chu Da didn’t love him, and thinking she ran off with another man.

Qiao Tan Yuan was shocked to see the pain in Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes. It was the same look in his eyes years ago when he drank to forget Chu Da. She felt his warm hand on her arm, but she didn’t answer him. How could she say Chu Da’s illness was a blessing for her? It gave her a chance to be with Gu Jiao Wu if Chu Da left him to get treatments.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan's arm tighter.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, in your heart is another person's suffering insignificant?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'To get what you want, how can you not care about whether a person lives or dies?'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't deny Gu Jiao Wu's accusations. It was true, back then she was selfish and she only cared about how much she loved Gu Jiao Wu. She thought with Chu Da out of the picture, there was a chance Gu Jiao Wu would love her.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to believe Qiao Tan Yuan could be that cruel. His head kept replaying the second part of Chu Da's diary.

'Why is the heavens cruel to me? I have ovarian cancer. I can't have children. What am I supposed to do? I walked in a daze back to the hotel to find Jiao Wu. Would he accept being with me if he found out I have ovarian cancer, and I can't have children? At the hotel Qiao Tan Yuan stood in front of me, and told me I wasn't suited to being with Jiao Wu, and that the Gu Household wouldn't accept a daughter-in-law like me. I accepted her cheque, five hundred thousand dollars and left the hotel in a daze too. I wanted to tear the cheque, Jiao Wu's love is priceless. But I'm scared of dying. I used the money for treatments. I want to live a happy life with Jiao Wu. Jiao Wu, wait for me...'

Gu Jiao Wu wanted Qiao Tan Yuan to tell him it wasn't true that Qiao Tan Yuan wasn't a heartless person. Chu Da's diary didn't stop plaguing him.

'Jiao Wu, are you healthy? Having cancer treatments is painful. The doctor took out my ovaries, it was too late since the cancer spread to other organs. Jiao Wu, what should I do? If you're with me, I wouldn't feel as much pain. Jiao Wu, I don't want to die. I want to live and be with you. Jiao Wu, I want you to find me. I want you to tell me everything will be OK, and you'll help me get past this. Jiao Wu, I'm going to stay strong. Jiao Wu, wait for me...'

Gu Jiao Wu hated himself for using marriage to punish Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Jiao Wu, how can you be so cruel? I went to look for you on your wedding day with Qiao Tan Yuan. How can you forget me so soon, and marry another woman? Jiao Wu, did you love me? My heart hurts like being struck by lightning...'

Gu Jiao Wu wanted Qiao Tan Yuan to tell him Chu Da's diary was fake. He wanted to hear Qiao Tan Yuan say she didn't chase away Chu Da by attacking Chu Da's insecurities when Chu Da was sick. He didn't want to believe Qiao Tan Yuan was a selfish opportunist.

'Qiao Tan Yuan, tell me you didn't know Chu Da had ovarian cancer,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Tell me you didn't give her five hundred thousand dollars to chase her away.'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't deny the truth. Her shoulders felt lighter. But she forced herself to smile.

'I knew she had ovarian cancer,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I gave her five hundred thousand dollars to chase her away, because she isn't suitable to be with you.'

'Enough,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'How could you be like that?'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to believe Qiao Tan Yuan could take advantage of someone at the lowest point in their life.

Gu Jiao Wu regretted he couldn't stop Qiao Tan Yuan from saying all those heartless words to Chu Da that day. Then Chu Da wouldn't have left him, he wouldn't be drugged by Qiao Tan Yuan, and Chu Da wouldn't see him marry Qiao Tan Yuan. He would have stayed with Chu Da in her final months and took care of her. His regrets made it hard for him to face Qiao Tan Yuan and Chu Da.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't care about how hard Gu Jiao Wu gripped her arm. The pain and regret in Gu Jiao Wu's eyes showed her the truth, Chu Da won. It didn't matter how much Gu Jiao Wu cared about her, the woman Gu Jiao Wu loved the most and would always love was Chu Da.

'Why are you this emotional?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Did Chu Da come back? Did you realise you still love her, and you want to be with her?'

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yuan's arm. He thought the woman in front of him had turned into a stranger.

'Chu Da is dead!' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'She's been dead for three years!'

Qiao Tan Yuan was shocked. How could Chu Da be dead? She didn't want Chu

Da to be with Gu Jiao Wu, but she didn't want Chu Da to die.

'You knew she had ovarian cancer,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'You said all those things to her to get her to leave me.'

'I...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan bit her lips. She wanted Chu Da to leave Gu Jiao Wu, but she truly didn't want Chu Da to die.

Gu Jiao Wu clenched his hands. He knew Qiao Tan Yuan selfishly loved him in the past. But he thought deep down Qiao Tan Yuan had a good heart, and she wouldn't chase away a sick person.

'How could you be like that?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'How could you lie to me? Why didn't you tell me Chu Da had ovarian cancer, and that was why she left me? She's a timid person. How could you let her face death alone? Qiao Tan Yuan, how could you be like that?'

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't believe Chu Da died. She didn't want Chu Da to die. She looked at the disappointment and disgust in Gu Jiao Wu's eyes, and she carelessly opened her mouth.

'Why can't I?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Gu Jiao Wu, if she doesn't die then I'll never have a chance to be with you. In this world people die every day. Do I need to take responsibility for every person who dies?'

End of Chapter 130

Related



Chapter 131

Side Story.

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju's Side Story:

One of Zheng Jia Ju's exes before she married Cheng Yi came to see her. Her ex wanted to reconcile with her. She told her ex to leave. Her ex didn't leave until Cheng Yi forced her ex to leave.

'Zheng Jia Ju, give me a chance to take care of you and Xiao Nian,' Cheng Yi said.

'The truth is we're divorced,' Zheng Jia Ju lied.

'No,' Cheng Yi said. 'You're my wife, and Xiao Nian is my son. I don't remember divorcing you.'

'You don't remember the past,' Zheng Jia Ju. 'You don't remember marrying me, and you don't remember divorcing me.'

'We can remarry if we're divorced,' Cheng Yi said.

'No,' Zheng Jia Ju said. 'Stay away from me, and don't bother me anymore.'

'Zheng Jia Ju, what do you want me to do for you to let me take care of you and Xiao Nian?' Cheng Yi said.

'I don't need anything from you,' Zheng Jia Ju said. 'Except for you to stay away from me.'

'Don't even dream about it,' Cheng Yi said.

Cheng Yi lost his memories, but he felt he couldn't let go of Zheng Jia Ju and Xiao Nian. He felt they must have been important to him. When he kissed Zheng

Jia Ju, he felt everything was right and that he belonged with her and Xiao Nian.

Zheng Jia Ju wanted to pretend Cheng Yi died. She didn't want to remember how Cheng Yi abandoned her and Xiao Nian, how he shot her and almost killed Xiao Nian.

'If you're a man, you should let me live my life with my son,' Zheng Jia Ju said. 'Haven't you done enough?'

'Zheng Jia Ju, come back with me to the U.S.,' Cheng Yi said.

Zheng Jia Ju walked away, and she didn't look back. She didn't see Cheng Yi collapsed on the ground and she didn't hear a stranger passing by Cheng Yi call the ambulance to take Cheng Yi to the hospital.

Chapter 131

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to hold back the emotions in her heart. She got off the bed and stood tall.

'So what if Chu Da died?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Yes, I provoked her to leave. But just because I told her to leave does that mean she has to leave? The truth is she left because she didn't love you enough. She didn't believe you loved her enough. If she loved you enough, and believed you love her then how could she leave you?'

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu said. He couldn't believe what he was hearing. 'How can you still be like this? How can you not take responsibility for your actions, and pour all the blame on someone who is dead?'

'What do you expect?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked coldly. 'What do you want me to say? Do you want me to say I'm sorry? Do you want me to say I'm wrong?'

'Qiao Tan Yuan!' Gu Jiao Wu said. He held Qiao Tan Yuan's shoulders. He was scared of what he was hearing. 'Don't say that.'

'I will keep saying the truth,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She ignored the pain in her shoulders. 'Isn't it good she's dead? If she's alive, you'll be with her now. You only came to me after she's dead. Am I wrong? I got what I wanted, right?'

'Have you said enough?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Not enough,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know what Gu Jiao Wu was expecting from her, but she knew he was disappointed in her. She waved her white flag. She lost to Chu Da when Chu Da was alive, and she lost to Chu Da when Chu Da was dead. She was selfish in the past, but she had changed. Whereas Gu Jiao Wu’s heart didn’t change, he would always love Chu Da the most.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, this is me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m impulsive and selfish. I would do anything to get what I want. I loved you, and I wanted you to love me too. You didn’t love me, I didn’t hesitate to eliminate the biggest obstacle stopping you to love me. Now can you see who I am?’

Gu Jiao Wu stepped away from Qiao Tan Yuan, and looked at her face. She wasn’t the shy woman who he loved. The woman he loved wouldn’t be cruel and unremorseful. But the face he saw belonged to the woman he loved. Qiao Tan Yuan was the same woman from years ago, she was impatient, bitter and selfish. Back then she fought with him every day. Did he love her blindly or did he not understand her deeply enough?

Gu Jiao Wu hated himself. What did he want Qiao Tan Yuan to say? Chu Da died too suddenly, and pitifully. He hated himself for doubting Chu Da’s love, and letting Chu Da die alone. He was disappointed in Qiao Tan Yuan, he didn’t understand deeply who Qiao Tan Yuan was and he doubted if Qiao Tan Yuan loved him.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, do you truly love me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Do you love me? Or is it because you’re used to getting everything you wanted since you were a girl that you did everything to get me?’

Qiao Tan Yuan turned her head to the side to avoid looking at the disappointment in Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes. She dug her fingernails in her hands, and forced herself to look directly at his eyes.

‘You’re right,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t love you. I was infatuated with you. Because I couldn’t have you, I did everything to get you. Gu Jiao Wu, I don’t love you, not even a little.’

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan’s eyes. It was like her eyes stabbed his heart. Compared to the frustrations he felt for not finding Chu Da in the past,

Qiao Tan Yuan's words cut his heart infinitely deeper. Qiao Tan Yuan made his heart bleed.

'Qiao Tan Yan, you're a cruel woman,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Thank you for the compliment,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She forced herself to look calm. 'You've always known the truth, I'm cruel.'

Gu Jiao Wu nodded his head. He had always known Qiao Tan Yuan was a cruel woman toward others and toward him. But why was he heartbroken enough for his heart to bleed? Compared to finding out Chu Da died, Qiao Tan Yuan's cruelty gave him more pain. How could Qiao Tan Yuan be that cruel toward him?

Gu Jiao Wu took a deep breath. He needed time to calm down, and sort out his conflicted feelings. He didn't want to do anything irrational while in an emotional state. Everything that happened between him and Qiao Tan Yuan occupied most of his head space.

'Are you regretful?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu wanted to know if Qiao Tan Yuan regretted what she did in order to get him when she was young, and inexperienced. He wanted to know if she thought the price to pay to get someone she didn't love.

'Regret?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan forced herself to smile. She thought life was cruel not to let her undo her regrets. But she didn't want to admit she had regrets in front of Gu Jiao Wu.

'I have no regrets,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu only saw Qiao Tan Yuan smiling unremorsefully. He didn't notice the blood on her palms.

'Gu Jiao Wu, I have no regrets,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Even if I could turn back time, I wouldn't change anything.'

Qiao Tan Yuan knew her old self wouldn't listen to reason. Her old self would still pressure Chu Da to leave, and drug Gu Jiao Wu to force him to marry her. Her old self wouldn't regret.

‘Are you sure?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu took more steps away from Qiao Tan Yuan. He didn’t know what to say. He needed time to calm down, and to think rationally. He turned around to leave.

Qiao Tan Yuan watched Gu Jiao Wu slowly stepped to the door to leave her again.

‘At least this time we don’t have to divorce each other,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu stood frozen at the door. He clenched his hands, and thought about what he wanted most.

‘I’m not going to cancel our wedding,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘But I’m going to cancel the wedding,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. Gu Jiao Wu didn’t turn around to look at her. If he turned around, he would see tears in her eyes. ‘Gu Jiao Wu, I don’t need you. I’m not going to marry you.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t care about the veins popping out of his hands. All he cared about was that Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t love him.

‘Your choice,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan heard the finality in Gu Jiao Wu’s voice. He took the last step to go outside, and he closed her bedroom door tightly. She collapsed onto the floor, and she stared at the closed door. Memories of her and Gu Jiao Wu together crowded her head. She was hurting too much that she couldn’t cry. Her happiness was fleeting, she lost Gu Jiao Wu. She shook her head. She didn’t ever have Gu Jiao Wu so she couldn’t lose someone she didn’t have. Whether it was in the past or in the future, Gu Jiao Wu didn’t belong to her.

Qiao Tan Yuan accepted the short period with Gu Jiao Wu was the happiest days in her life. But those fleeting memories were only a dream. She had woken from the dream, and her happiness disappeared.

That afternoon Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know how long she laid motionless on the floor.

In the early morning, Mrs Qiao sensed something was wrong. Since Gu Jiao Wu left the day before, Qiao Tan Yuan looked lost. She wondered if Gu Jiao Wu and

Qiao Tan Yuan had a fight before the wedding. She wanted to believe Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan only had wedding jitters.

‘Tan Yuan, the hotel reception is booked,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘Do you want to go to the hotel with me this afternoon to see the layout of the hotel reception?’

‘Mum, we don’t need to,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She continued to pack hers and Xiao Bao’s belongings in a suitcase. ‘Mum, the wedding is cancelled.’

‘What?’ Mrs Qiao asked.

‘Mum, the wedding is cancelled,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I bought tickets for me and Xiao Bao. This weekend Xiao Bao and I are flying to Denmark.’

‘Tan Yuan... what are you saying?’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘Everything for the wedding is prepared. You and Jiao Wu agreed to remarry. Why are you and Jiao Wu suddenly cancelling the wedding?’

‘Mum, I’m sorry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘The wedding is cancelled. I’m not going to marry Gu Jiao Wu. I’m sorry for troubling you and dad.’

‘Tan Yuan, you haven’t troubled me and your dad,’ Mrs Qiao said. ‘What happened? Did Jiao Wu cancel the wedding or did you cancel the wedding?’

‘We mutually agreed to cancel the wedding,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘We’re not compatible.’

Mrs Qiao couldn’t believe what Qiao Tan Yuan was saying.

‘Mum, let it be,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She smiled sincerely. ‘Xiao Bao and I will live a good life together.’

A long drive away from the Qiao Mansion, Du Lei Xin didn’t know what to do with the drunk Gu Jiao Wu. Du Lei Xin looked at the empty beer cans on floor yet Gu Jiao Wu kept drinking.

‘Big brother, if you keep drinking you’ll harm your health,’ Du Lei Xin said.

Du Lei Xin grabbed the beer can out of Gu Jiao Wu’s hand. Gu Jiao Wu pushed his hand away, and snatched back the beer can.

‘Go away,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He gulped down the beer. ‘I don’t need you to care.’

‘Big brother...’ Du Lei Xin called.

Du Lei Xin didn’t want Gu Jiao Wu to drink to death.

‘Don’t yell,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I told you to go away. Why are you still here?’

Gu Jiao Wu opened another beer can. He could only see Qiao Tan Yuan in his head, and he couldn’t forget how she calmly told him she didn’t love him. Why couldn’t he stop feeling pain because she didn’t love him?

Du Lei Xin called Gu Jiao Wen to knock sense into Gu Jiao Wu.

Gu Jiao Wen arrived at one of Du Lei Xin’s private function rooms at eight in the morning. There was alcohol stench in the room, and Gu Jiao Wu was lying unconscious on the floor. He shook Gu Jiao Wu’s body until Gu Jiao Wu woke up.

‘Jiao Wen... why are you here?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked in a hoarse voice.

‘You’re awake,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

‘Why are you here,’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Big brother you should ask yourself why you’re here,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

Gu Jiao Wu rubbed his throbbing forehead.

‘Big brother, you’re getting married soon,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. ‘You should cut back on the drinking.’

Gu Jiao Wu grabbed his phone off the table full of empty beer cans. He received a text message from Xiao Lam, ‘Big brother, big sister booked tickets to Denmark. Are you and big sister going to Denmark for your honeymoon?’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to read the rest of the text message. He followed Gu Jiao Wen upstairs, and he showered while Gu Jiao Wen called for clothes to be delivered to the room.

Gu Jiao Wu walked out of the bathroom in a wrapped towel.

‘Why do you want to see me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I received news Qiao Tan Yuan booked a one way ticket to Denmark,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

‘What?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Big brother, aren’t you and Qiao Tan Yuan getting married soon?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked. ‘Why is she leaving to Denmark with Xiao Bao? Is the wedding cancelled?’

Gu Jiao Wu sat on the sofa. His conversation with Qiao Tan Yuan from the day before echoed in his throbbing head. She didn’t want to marry him, she didn’t need him and she didn’t love him.

‘Big brother...’ Gu Jiao Wen called. ‘Big brother, Qiao Tan Yuan is leaving to Denmark.’

Xiao Lam called Gu Jiao Wu’s phone before Gu Jiao Wu could answer Gu Jiao Wen.

‘Big brother, big sister booked a one way ticket to Denmark,’ Xiao Lam said. ‘Do you want us to stop big sister and Xiao Bao leaving like last time?’

End of Chapter 131

Related



Chapter 132

Side Story.

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju's Side Story: At the hospital Cheng Yi woke up and regained his memories. He regretted everything he did when he had amnesia.

Cheng Yi left the hospital to look for Zheng Jia Ju.

'Xiao Jia, I'm back,' Cheng Yi said. 'I'm sorry. Forgive me.'

Cheng Yi couldn't forgive himself for shooting Zheng Jia Ju.

Zheng Jia Ju slapped Cheng Yi's cheek hard.

'Don't call me!' Zheng Jia Ju said. 'You don't need my forgiveness. Stay away from me, I don't want to see you.'

'Xiao Jia, I lost...' Cheng Yi said.

‘You lost your memories,’ Zheng Jia Ju said. ‘It doesn’t change the truth that you did shoot me. I begged you to come to the hospital to be with me when I was scared of losing Xiao Nian. You lost your memories, but you trusted Fei Yan Niao over me. It shows your true colors.’

Chapter 132

Gu Jiao Wu gripped the phone.

‘Forget her,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Don’t report news about her to me anymore. She can go wherever she wants to go.’

Gu Jiao Wu hung up the phone, and he smashed the phone against a wall.

‘Big brother...’ Gu Jiao Wen called.

‘Go,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’m OK.’

Gu Jiao Wen didn’t believe Gu Jiao Wu was OK.

‘If Qiao Tan Yuan goes to Denmark, what about the wedding?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked.

‘There’s no wedding,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to marry someone who didn’t love him. He grabbed the clothes and dressed.

‘Big brother, eat the breakfast I ordered for you,’ Gu Jiao Wen said.

‘I’m not eating,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was in no mood to eat or drink. He was depressed enough to kill someone.

‘Big brother if you don’t get married, what about the elders?’ Gu Jiao Wen asked.

‘I’ll explain it to the elders,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu needed time to forget Qiao Tan Yuan

When Gu Jiao Wu arrived at the Gu Mansion, Wang Tu Ya was sitting on the sofa in his bedroom.

‘Jiao Wu, what are you doing?’ Wang Tu Ya asked. ‘I called Tan Yuan’s parents, and they told me the wedding is cancelled. Did you and Tan Yuan have a fight?’

‘There’s no wedding,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He didn’t want to feel pain at the mention of Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘Mum, in the future you don’t have to worry about my life.’

‘How can I not worry about you?’ Wang Tu Ya asked. ‘Why can’t you be like Jiao Wen and not make me worry as much?’

‘Mum, if you have nothing to do then you should go help Pan Ting and Jiao Wen’s mum take care of the twins,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You!’ Wang Tu Ya said. ‘Do you want me be angry to death? I have my own granddaughter. I don’t need to take care of another woman’s grandchildren. I don’t care if the wedding’s off. I want you to give back my granddaughter.’

Gu Jiao Wu fisted his hands. He didn’t want to think about Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao’s small innocent face.

‘Mum, in the future don’t mention them again,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu left his bedroom to find a peaceful place. He couldn’t go back to Du Lei Xin’s place and drink, and he couldn’t drink with Gu Jiao Wen who was a slave to Tan Pan Ting and the twins.

Gu Jiao Wu walked to his car, and drove off. When he realised he was driving in the direction of the Qiao Mansion, he braked on the side of a road. He couldn’t escape Qiao Tan Yuan, memories of them together in his car lingered in his head. He shook his head, turned the car around and drove to the airport.

At the airport, Qiao Tan Yuan’s family failed to persuade her to stay. She carried Xiao Bao to the VIP room, and she waited for them to board the plane to Denmark. She remembered how last time Gu Jiao Wu took her to the island to stop her from going to Denmark. She looked at the VIP door, and she knew Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t show up because he understood he couldn’t let go of Chu Da and Chu Da was the only woman he loved.

Qiao Tan Yuan accepted in Gu Jiao Wu’s eyes, the last few months he had taken the wrong medicine and deluded himself into thinking he loved her. It didn’t matter if Gu Jiao Wu loved her anymore. What was most important was

they weren't fated to be together. Gu Jiao Wu finally woke up, he understood he only loved Chu Da so she and Xiao Bao weren't important to him.

On the plane, Xiao Bao was sleeping soundly and Qiao Tan Yuan looked out the window. The plane was taking off into the clouds. She let go of everything. Her heart said good bye to the city she grew up in, good bye to Gu Jiao Wu and good bye to the past.

Gu Jiao Wu watched the plane to Denmark depart. He clenched his hands for hoping Qiao Tan Yuan would look for him, she would tell him she was wrong and she would tell him she loved him. But he was wrong, she didn't look for him and she didn't love him. Why was she so cruel toward him? Was it her revenge to make him love her, and hurt him like how he hurt her during their first marriage?

Gu Jiao Wu put the window down so he could see the plane in the sky clearer. The plane that was taking the woman he loved and his daughter far away from him.

Weeks later, Gu Jiao Wu returned to his life before loving Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao. After the wedding was cancelled, he returned to being a workaholic. Gu Tian Chu was disappointed in him the most, and wanted to disown him. Like Wang Tu Ya, Gu Tian Chu wanted Xiao Bao back.

At work, everyone knew it was an unspoken rule not to mention Qiao Tan Yuan's name in front of Gu Jiao Wu.

If Gu Jiao Wu couldn't work, he would drink with Du Lei Xin. When Du Lei Xing told him news about Shen Cheng visiting Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao in Denmark, he continued to drink like the news didn't affect him.

Gu Jiao Wu returned home, he was shocked to see the portraits and photo albums of pre-wedding photos delivered to his bedroom. In one of the portraits, Qiao Tan Yuan was hugging him and smiling at him. He wanted to get rid of the portraits but he couldn't. He sat on his bed, and he looked through the photo albums. His shaky fingers traced the photo of him kissing Qiao Tan Yuan's lips at the park. His heart ached each time he turned the page, and saw another photo of him and Qiao Tan Yuan together. He closed a photo album, and the words on the cover of the photo album mocked him, 'Mr and Mrs Gu's happiness.'

What happiness? Gu Jiao Wu could only feel pain, he lost his happiness.

Gu Jiao Wu's phone rang, it was Gu Jiao Wen.

'Big brother, Jiao Mai is in the hospital...' Gu Jiao Wen said in a panicked voice. 'Big brother, don't let the elders know. Come to hospital quickly.'

Gu Jiao Wu sped to the hospital. Du Lei Xin and Gu Jiao Wen were sitting like lost boys in the emergency waiting room.

Du Lei Xin stood, and he looked like a convicted criminal.

'Big brother, I didn't know...' Du Lei Xin said. 'It's my fault Jiao Mai is in the hospital... I didn't know she's pregnant.'

Gu Jiao Wu punched Du Lei Xin's face.

'Big brother, I deserve to be hit,' Du Lei Xin said and he didn't avoid Gu Jiao Wu's fist.

A doctor came out of the emergency operating room.

'Who is the patient's family member?' the doctor asked.

All three men said they were Gu Jiao Mai's family.

'I'm sorry,' the doctor said. 'We saved the patient, but we couldn't save the baby.'

End of Chapter 132

Related



Chapter 133

Forgiveness.

‘The patient has an existing leg injury,’ the doctor said. ‘Having a ladder fall on the patient put more pressure on the patient’s body. I’m sorry we couldn’t save the patient’s baby.’

The three men stood frozen. One man lost his child and the other two men lost their niece or nephew.

‘Du Lei Xin you MF!’ Gu Jiao Wu cursed.

Gu Jiao Wen restrained Gu Jiao Wu’s arm to stop Gu Jiao Wu from punching Du Lei Xin again. Gu Jiao Wen remembered how he blamed himself for Tan Pan Ting’s miscarrying their first child. Gu Jiao Wen understood Du Lei Xin never wished for Gu Jiao Mai to miscarry Du Lei Xin’s child.

‘Big brother, this isn’t the right time to point fingers,’ Gu Jiao Wen said. ‘We need to focus on how to help Jiao Mai’s body recover. My mum will be here soon to be with Jiao Mai.’

‘I’ll call the best surgeons and orthopedists to consult with Jiao Mai about options to treat her leg injury,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wen nodded his head, and he let go of Gu Jiao Wu’s arm.

Chen Ting Yu and Gu Qi Jiang rushed to the hospital. When Chen Ting Yu heard the news Gu Jiao Mai was pregnant but miscarried after the accident, Chen Ting Yu cried for another lost grandchild.

In Gu Jiao Mai's hospital room, Chen Ting Yu looked at the men's solemn faces. She saw Du Lei Xin's bruised face and deduced he was the father of her lost grandchild.

In the afternoon Gu Jiao Mai woke up. She didn't care about the people around her. She rubbed her stomach, and felt the void in her heart widen.

Du Lei Xin held Gu Jiao Mai's hand.

'Jiao Mai, how are you feeling?' Du Lei Xin asked. 'Where does it hurt? Do want to drink something?'

Gu Jiao Mai couldn't look at Du Lei Xin and not remember seeing him in bed with another woman. She looked at her family members who loved her.

'Is my baby gone?' Gu Jiao Mai asked Chen Ting Yu.

'Jiao Mai, you don't have to be like this,' Du Lei Xin said. 'In the future will have another child together.'

Gu Jiao Mai pulled her hand out of Du Lei Xin's hand. She closed her eyes to not cry. When she opened her eyes again, she looked pleadingly at Chen Ting Yu.

'Mum, I want to go home,' Gu Jiao Mai said.

Gu Jiao Mai didn't want to see Du Lei Xin.

'Jiao Mai... you need to stay here for monitoring,' Chen Ting Yu said.

Chen Ting Yu wanted to cry seeing the blank helplessness in Gu Jiao Mai's eyes. Five years ago, after Gu Jiao Mai returned home after being kidnapped, she saw the same look in Gu Jiao Mai's eyes.

'Mum, it's the same situation even if I'm at home,' Gu Jiao Mai said. 'Mum, take me home.'

'Jiao Mai, listen to your mum,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I invited a famous surgeon for you, Dr. Locker to consult you about a leg surgery. Dr. Locker said there is a sixty percent chance you'll recover your leg movements post-surgery. But if you don't have a leg surgery soon, you'll be confined in a wheelchair for the rest of your life.'

'Big brother, who said I want to have a leg surgery?' Gu Jiao Mai asked. 'Mum,

take me home.'

'Big sister!' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'You have a chance to walk again. Why won't you seize the chance given to you?'

'Gu Jiao Wen, whether I have a leg surgery or not is my choice,' Gu Jiao Mai said. 'Mum, I want to go home.'

'Enough,' Gu Qi Jiang said. 'Jiao Mai, don't be unreasonable. You need to think of your health, and stay in the hospital to recover.'

'Dad...' Gu Jiao Mai called.

It was the first time Gu Qi Jiang used a stern tone of voice to talk to Gu Jiao Mai.

'Jiao Mai, if you want to go home then you can walk home,' Gu Qi Jiang said. He let Gu Jiao Mai have her way since she was kidnapped, because he felt guilty he didn't protect her as a father. But he wasn't going to let Gu Jiao Mai ruin her last chance to walk again. 'No one here is allowed to take Jiao Mai home.'

'Dad, if you want me to have a leg surgery then I will,' Gu Jiao Mai said. 'On one condition. Get rid of this stranger.'

'Big sister...' Gu Jiao Wen called.

'If no one gets rid of this stranger, I'll crawl home myself,' Gu Jiao Mai threatened.

'Jiao Mai... I'll go,' Du Lei Xin said. 'Have a good night sleep. Tomorrow I'll come back to see you again.'

Gu Jiao Mai closed her eyes like she couldn't hear Du Lei Xin.

Du Lei Xin reluctantly left the room.

'Jiao Mai, are you hungry?' Chen Ting Yu asked. 'I'll ask aunty to bring a home cooked meal for you.'

'Mum, I'm not hungry,' Gu Jiao Mai said. 'I'm tired and I want to sleep. Everyone can leave.'

'But...' Chen Ting Yu said.

'No but,' Gu Jiao Mai said. 'I'm not a child. Go home and take care of the

twins.'

'Everyone should go home and let Jiao Mai sleep,' Gu Qi Jiang said.

Outside the hospital room, Gu Jiao Wen stalled Gu Jiao Wu.

'Big brother did you know about Jiao Mai and Lei Xin?' Gu Jiao Wen asked.

'Yes,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I found out about them last year.'

'Last year?' Gu Jiao Wen asked. 'How come I didn't know anything about them being together?'

'What would you know?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'You're a slave to Pan Ting and the twins. You've forgotten you have a big brother and a big sister.'

Gu Jiao Wen didn't deny he had neglected Gu Jiao Mai after Tan Pan Ting gave birth to their boys.

'Forget it,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Go home and ask aunty to send someone to deliver nutritious food for Jiao Mai. I'll stay here with her. You're useless if you stay here, and only worry about being away from Pan Ting and the twins.'

Gu Jiao Wen couldn't deny the truth so he drove home.

Gu Jiao Wu walked back into Gu Jiao Mai's room.

'Big brother, why are you still here?' Gu Jiao Mai asked.

'I'm worried about you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'What is there to worry about me?' Gu Jiao Mai asked.

Gu Jiao Wu sat on the chair next to Gu Jiao Mai's bed.

'If you were pregnant, why didn't you two get married?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'I heard a ladder fell on you. How did it happen?'

'Big brother, I don't want to talk about it,' Gu Jiao Mai said.

'Jiao Mai, Lei Xin loves you...' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'What love?' Gu Jiao Mai asked. 'If he loves me why did he sleep with another woman on the same bed he slept with me? If that is what you call love then there is something wrong with my eyes.'

'What?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Lei Xin wouldn't be unfaithful to you. He loved you

for years.'

'I saw him in bed with another woman,' Gu Jiao Mai said. 'Last night I found out I was pregnant. It was hard for me to decide to tell him I was pregnant. But I didn't expect to see him in bed with another woman when I went to see him this morning.'

'Jiao Mai, perhaps it's a misunderstanding,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Really?' Gu Jiao Mai asked. 'Big brother, I want to sleep.'

'Jiao Mai...' Gu Jiao Wu called.

Chen Ting Yu returned to Gu Jiao Mai's room with soup, and Gu Jiao Wu left to get answers from Du Lei Xin.

Later in Du Lei Xin's living room, he gestured for Gu Jiao Wu to sit on the sofa.

'Big brother, if you want to beat me to death I won't stop you,' Du Lei Xin said. 'I deserve to die.'

Gu Jiao Wu shoved Du Lei Xin on the sofa.

'You MF!' Gu Jiao Wu cursed. 'If you loved Jiao Mai for years, how could you be unfaithful to Jiao Mai?'

'She told you?' Du Lei Xin asked. It was his chance to provoke Gu Jiao Wu to kill him. 'It's true I slept with another woman in the same bed I slept with Jiao Mai. So what? At least when I slept with another woman, in my heart there is only Jiao Mai. What about Jiao Mai? She sleeps with me, but in her heart there is only Liang Hao Cheng.'

Du Lei Xin kicked the coffee table.

'Gu Jiao Wu, you're a man,' Du Lei Xin said. 'How would you feel if the woman you loved slept with you while thinking about another man? How would you feel if the woman you loved didn't love you, and she couldn't let go memories of another man? Her body is with me, but her heart is somewhere else. Do you understand how tiring it is to compete with a dead man?'

'Impossible... Jiao Mai wouldn't be with you if she didn't love you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Why is it impossible?’ Du Lei Xin.

Du Lei Xin regretted he didn’t know Gu Jiao Mai was pregnant. It was his fault she lost their child. He didn’t know she would come to see him in the morning to tell him she was pregnant.

‘Big brother, I’ve loved Jiao Mai for most my life,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘Since our school years, in my heart there was only Jiao Mai. If she’s happy, I’m happy. If she’s sad, I’m sad. When she was engaged with another man, I was heartbroken. But I told myself as long as she’s happy, I’m happy.’

Gu Jiao Wu silently listened to Du Lei Xin’s explanation.

‘After Liang Hao Cheng died, I thought it’s my chance to be with Jiao Mai,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘I did everything to get Jiao Mai to see me. If she lost sleep, I lost sleep. If her heart aches, my heart aches. If she needs time, I gave her time. If she wants to keep our relationship private, I didn’t tell our parents my intention to marry her. I’m a fool. I thought after four years even if her heart’s frozen, I could melt her frozen heart.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t know what to say.

‘But I was wrong,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘Her heart’s frozen in time. Her heart doesn’t want to let go of Liang Hao Cheng. Sometimes I resent Liang Hao Cheng for dying. If he’s alive, I can compete with him above ground. But he’s six feet under, and I’m alive. How can I compete with a dead person?’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t stop Du Lei Xin drinking a glass of wine.

‘I know if Liang Hao Cheng is still alive then I wouldn’t have a chance to be with Jiao Mai,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘The truth is I’m lucky Liang Hao Cheng is dead, and I got a chance to be with Jiao Mai. But Liang Hao Cheng is alive in Jiao Mai’s heart. There’s no room for me in Jiao Mai’s heart.’

Gu Jiao Wu’s body stiffened. Du Lei Xin’s words made him remember Qiao Tan Yuan’s words, ‘It’s good she’s dead. If she’s alive, I won’t have a chance to be with you.’

Gu Jiao Wu sat on the sofa lifeless. His thoughts were about Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘I am a MF,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘Last night a hostess asked if I wanted her to serve

me. I didn't reject her offer, and I brought her home. I wanted to show Jiao Mai, I didn't need her. The truth is I need Jiao Mai. I didn't do anything with the hostess, we only slept in the same bed. This morning, Jiao Mai walked into my bedroom and I regretted wanting to hurt Jiao Mai. I chased after Jiao Mai to explain, and to ask her to forgive me for hurting her. She wheeled her wheelchair faster. She didn't see where she was going, and she bumped into a ladder. The ladder fell onto her body... I didn't know she was pregnant. If I knew I wouldn't have...'

Du Lei Xin laughed at his own stupidity.

'You can't bring the baby back,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'But you can take responsibility for your actions. Go and beg Jiao Mai for forgiveness.'

'Forgiveness?' Du Lei Xin asked. 'Jiao Mai won't forgive me. I've hurt her, and killed our baby. Would you forgive me if you're Jiao Mai?'

End of Chapter 133

Related



Chapter 134

Scarf.

‘If you sincerely beg for forgiveness at least you have a chance to be with Jiao Mai again,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘She won’t forgive me because I wouldn’t forgive me if I’m her,’ Du Lei Xin said.

Du Lei Xin drank another glass of wine.

‘Big brother, I’ve lost her,’ Du Lei Xin said.

‘Lei Xin, don’t be like this,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Jiao Mai actually has a soft heart. She’ll forgive you.’

‘She won’t forgive me,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘What woman would forgive a man if she saw him in bed with another woman, and lost her baby as well?’

‘Go and beg her for forgiveness,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You won’t know until you try.’

‘Big brother, I promise you I didn’t sleep with the hostess,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘If I explain the truth to Jiao Mai, do you think she’ll forgive me?’

‘Lei Xin, what you said before, is it true?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Yes,’ Du Lei Xin. ‘My body has no interest in any woman except Jiao Mai since we became lovers. Last night I drank, and slept on my bed the moment I got home. I didn’t sleep with the hostess.’

Gu Jiao Wu believed Du Lei Xin loved Gu Jiao Mai so Du Lei Xin wouldn’t be unfaithful to Gu Jiao Mai. The problem was he didn’t know if Gu Jiao Mai would believe Du Lei Xin.

Gu Jiao Wu sighed. He wished he could see Qiao Tan Yuan, and ask her if they were Du Lei Xin and Gu Jiao Mai, would she believe he wouldn’t be unfaithful to her.

At the hospital Dr. Locker scheduled Gu Jiao Mai’s leg surgery in a week.

Du Lei Xin brought nutritious meals for Gu Jiao Mai to the hospital every day before her leg surgery. Gu Jiao Mai ignored him, but he didn’t give up.

Mr and Mrs Du visited the elders at the Gu Mansion, and they apologised for Du Lei Xin’s irresponsible behavior.

On the day of the surgery, Du Lei Xin visited Gu Jiao Mai at the hospital as usual.

‘Jiao Mai, after the surgery I promise you can hit me, curse me and spit on me

as often as you want,’ Du Lei Xin said and held Gu Jiao Mai’s hand. ‘Jiao Mai, I love you.’

Gu Jiao Mai pulled her hand out of Du Lei Xin’s hand, and she closed her eyes. She didn’t believe Du Lei Xin’s lies. He slept with another woman, and she lost her child. The reason she wanted to walk again was so she could walk away from him, and not see him anymore.

Later in the morning, Dr. Locker performed Gu Jiao Mai’s leg surgery in the operating room.

In the afternoon, Dr. Locker walked outside the operating room.

‘Dr. Locker, how is Jiao Mai?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘The leg surgery was successful,’ Dr. Locker said. ‘The patient will need months of rehab to learn to walk again.’

‘Thank you Dr. Locker,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu and everyone else were relieved to hear the good news.

In the evening, Gu Jiao Mai woke up and she felt thirsty.

‘Water,’ Gu Jiao Mai said.

‘Jiao Mai, you’re awake,’ Du Lei Xin said and he poured Gu Jiao Mai a glass of water.

Gu Jiao Mai pursed her lips, and turned her head to the side.

Gu Jiao Wu poured another glass of water for Gu Jiao Mai.

‘Thank you big brother,’ Gu Jiao Mai said. ‘Where are the elders?’

Du Lei Xin put his rejected glass of water on the table.

‘At home,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘They were worried sick about you. They wouldn’t leave until after they found out your leg surgery’s successful.’

Hu Zui Ren, Tong Shang Wen and Shen Cheng walked into the room carrying bouquet of flowers, and get well gifts.

‘Jiao Mai, Tan Yuan heard about your surgery and she asked me to send you her get well wishes,’ Shen Cheng said.

‘Really?’ Gu Jiao Mai asked.

Gu Jiao Mai glanced at Gu Jiao Wu who was glaring at Shen Cheng the moment Shen Cheng walked into the room.

‘Yes,’ Shen Cheng said. He held up the wallpaper photo of Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao on his phone proudly. ‘Jiao Mai, this is a photo I took of Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao when I visited them in Denmark. Xiao Bao is nine months old, and she’s starting to say simple words like mama.’

Gu Jiao Mai looked at Xiao Bao’s adorable smiling small face, and she wondered if her child would have looked as adorable as Xiao Bao.

‘Jiao Mai, take good care of yourself,’ Shen Cheng said. ‘I believe you’ll be running soon.’

‘Thank you,’ Gu Jiao Mai said.

Shen Cheng left first, and Gu Jiao Wu followed him outside.

‘Big brother?’ Shen Cheng called.

‘Phone,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘What?’ Shen Cheng asked. ‘Big brother if you want to call someone there is a public phone booth outside. I have somewhere I need to be.’

‘Shen Cheng!’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Phone.’

Gu Jiao Wu snatched Shen Cheng’s phone, and he took out his phone.

‘Big brother, what are you doing with my phone?’ Shen Cheng asked.

Gu Jiao Wu stared at the photo of Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao on Shen Cheng’s phone. Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao were dressed in winter clothes, they wore matching scarves around their necks and they were smiling. Qiao Tan Yuan was his woman, and Xiao Bao was his daughter. He activated his and Shen Cheng’s blue tooth, sent the photo to his phone and erased the photo on Shen Cheng’s phone.

‘Big brother!’ Shen Cheng said. ‘Why did you erase my photo?’

Gu Jiao Wu returned Shen Cheng’s phone, and he looked coldly at Shen Cheng.

‘Stay away from Tan Yuan,’ Gu Jiao Wu warned.

‘Big brother, now there isn’t anything between you and Tan Yuan,’ Shen Cheng said.

‘That is between me and Tan Yuan,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You better stay away from Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao. You won’t ever get my permission to be Xiao Bao’s father.’

End of Chapter 134

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Chapter 135

Side Story

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju’s Side Story: Cheng Yi relived his past memories of Zheng Jia Ju. He remembered he didn’t want to use Zheng Jia Ju for Fei Yan Niao to kidnap Tan Pan Ting. How happy he was on his and Zheng Jia Ju’s wedding day, and how scared he was Fei Yan Niao would hurt Zheng Jia Ju if he

helped Tan Pan Ting escape.

Chapter 135

‘If I need permission then it’ll be Tan Yuan’s permission that is important,’ Shen Cheng said.

Shen Cheng couldn’t stand being on the sideline, and watch Gu Jiao Wu hurt Qiao Tan Yuan again and again. If Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t give Qiao Tan Yuan happiness then he wanted to be the man who made Qiao Tan Yuan happy.

‘Tan Yuan wouldn’t agree to be with you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Shen Cheng, you and Tan Yuan are not compatible.’

Gu Jiao Wu returned to Gu Jiao Mai’s hospital room.

Shen Cheng stood on the same spot looking at his phone. The photo of Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao was erased. Although he knew Qiao Tan Yuan saw him as a friend, it was hard for him to accept the truth.

A week after Gu Jiao Mai was discharged from the hospital, she was able to take baby steps using crutches. Du Lei Xin visited her every day at the Gu Mansion, but she ignored him.

Chen Ting Yu was moved by Du Lei Xin’s perseverance, and she gave her blessing for Du Lei Xin to marry Gu Jiao Mai if Gu Jiao Mai agreed.

Gu Jiao Wu knocked on Gu Jiao Mai’s bedroom door.

‘Big brother, is something wrong?’ Gu Jiao Mai asked.

‘I came to see how you are,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Don’t push yourself too hard.’

‘I’m OK,’ Gu Jiao Mai said. ‘I can train my legs to move around my room for another half an hour.’

‘Sit down and take a rest first,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu helped Gu Jiao Mai sit on the sofa.

‘Big brother, I want to leave home,’ Gu Jiao Mai said. ‘I want to go anywhere overseas.’

‘Jiao Mai, if you leave, what about Lei Xin?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘There is nothing between us,’ Gu Jiao Mai said.

‘But Lei Xin loves you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Jiao Mai, I promise you that you won’t find another man in the world who loves you more than Lei Xin.’

‘I don’t need his kind of love,’ Gu Jiao Mai said. ‘He can sleep with all the women in the world, and I wouldn’t care.’

‘Jiao Mai, what you saw is a misunderstanding,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I promise Lei Xin wasn’t unfaithful to you. Lei Xin said you can’t let go of Liang Hao Cheng. Is it true?’

Gu Jiao Wu couldn’t believe the guilty look in Gu Jiao Mai’s eyes.

‘Jiao Mai, Liang Hao Cheng left years ago,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Why can’t you let go of him?’

‘Who are you to preach?’ Gu Jiao Mai asked. ‘Can you honestly say you’re not like me? Chu Da left years ago too. But you can’t let go of Chu Da, and you still think of Chu Da.’

End of Chapter 135

Related



Chapter 136

Who?

It was the first time Gu Jiao Wu heard Gu Jiao Mai spoke down to him.

‘I rarely thought about Liang Hao Cheng during the time Du Lei Xin and I were together,’ Gu Jiao Mai said.

‘Then why would Lei Xin accuse you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘There were many things that stopped me agreeing to be with Du Lei Xin at the start,’ Gu Jiao Mai said. ‘I’m older than Du Lei Xin, my legs and Liang Hao Cheng

dying to save me. But I'm flesh and bones too. Slowly I began to believe Du Lei Xin loved me because of everything he did for me.'

Gu Jiao Mai didn't regret being with Du Lei Xin even if it was a lie, because he did make her happy.

'Liang Hao Cheng's parents called me on Liang Hao Cheng's anniversary,' Gu Jiao Mai said. 'It was the first year I forgot Liang Hao Cheng's anniversary. It was also the night I found out I was pregnant. I felt guilty for forgetting. Liang Hao Cheng's parents drove me to the cemetery. I asked Liang Hao Cheng to forgive me for forgetting, and I told him how happy I was to have a baby with Du Lei Xin. But Du Lei Xin was waiting for hours for me at home to eat dinner together. I left my phone at home, and I received miss calls from Du Lei Xin. When I called Du Lei Xin, I only had a chance to say I went to visit Liang Hao Cheng, and Du Lei Xin hung up on me. I thought I could tell Du Lei Xin the good news, and clear his misunderstanding about me not being able to accept his love in the morning.'

Gu Jiao Mai was happy she could walk even a little with crutches. The exercise helped keep her mind busy.

'I thought Du Lei Xin would always be faithful to me,' Gu Jiao Mai said. 'Big brother, I was wrong. When I saw him in bed with another woman, I found out how much I did love him, which was why I was hurting more than when Liang Hao Cheng died.'

'Jiao Mai, if you love Lei Xin, forgive him for hurting you and give him another chance,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'What you saw that morning was a misunderstanding. Lei Xin didn't sleep with another woman. He drank because he misunderstood you didn't love him, and he only slept when he got home. Jiao Mai, ask your heart if you love Lei Xin or Liang Hao Cheng more.'

'I can say four years ago I loved Liang Hao Cheng and I wanted to marry Liang Hao Cheng,' Gu Jiao Mai said. 'Now I can say the man I love was Du Lei Xin. Du Lei Xin's love is the slow burn kind of love, I didn't see coming. Liang Hao Cheng now only has a faint corner of my heart.'

'Jiao Mai, if you and Lei Xin love each other then you should give Lei Xin another chance,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'What about you?' Gu Jiao Mai. 'Tan Yuan loves you, and you love Tan Yuan.'

Why didn't you marry Tan Yuan? Why did Tan Yuan leave you? You say Du Lei Xin is the man who loves me the most in the world. But do you understand how much Tan Yuan loves you?'

Cheng Ting Yu walked into the room, and interrupted Gu Jiao Wu and Gu Jiao Mai's conversation to call them to eat dinner.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't want to eat dinner. He drove to the apartment he bought for Qiao Tan Yuan. He had hung up their portraits on the wall of their bedroom, and he kept their photo albums in the drawers of their bedside tables.

The lighting in the bedroom was dim. But Gu Jiao Wu could still see Qiao Tan Yuan smiling at him in the photo albums.

Gu Jiao Mai's words affected Gu Jiao Wu, 'Do you understand how much Tan Yuan loves you?'

Then Gu Jiao Wu remembered Qiao Tan Yuan cried when Cheng Yi shot him, 'Jiao Wu, you can't die.'

Gu Jiao Wu realised that day was the first time Qiao Tan Yuan cried in front of him. During their first marriage, no matter what hurtful words he said to her, she didn't cry in front of him. She didn't cry when they were trapped in the elevator, she only held his hand and begged him to save Xiao Bao.

Gu Jiao Wu picked up his phone, and he looked at how happy Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao looked in the photo without him in their lives. Qiao Tan Yuan could live happily without him, but he couldn't live happily without Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao in his life.

The day Gu Jiao Wu read Chu Da's diary, like how Liang Hao Cheng had a faint corner in Gu Jiao Mai's heart, he discovered Chu Da had a faint corner of his heart. He loved Chu Da four years ago, but four years later the woman he loved was Qiao Tan Yuan.

End of Chapter 136

Related



Chapter 137

Odense.

Two months later, Du Lei Xin and Gu Jiao Mai reconciled. She could walk on her own for short distances, and he hired a nurse to take care of Gu Jiao Mai when he wasn't at the Gu Mansion.

On the night of Gu Tian Chu's birthday dinner at a restaurant, all of Gu Tian Chu's acquaintances were invited, including Mr and Mrs Qiao.

Mrs Qiao showed photos of Xiao Bao to Wang Tu Ya.

'Big sister, look how big Xiao Bao has grown,' Mrs Qiao said. 'Her face is more adorable by the day.'

Gu Jiao Wu walked past Mrs Qiao and Wang Tu Ya's table at that moment, and Mrs Qiao felt awkward. Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao were living a peaceful life in Denmark, and Qiao Tan Yuan refused to listen to any news about Gu Jiao Wu from Mr and Mrs Qiao.

Suddenly a spotlight was shone on Du Lei Xin and Gu Jiao Mai's table.

Du Lei Xin knelt in front of Gu Jiao Mai, and he proposed.

'Jiao Mai, will you marry me?' Du Lei Xin asked.

'What a cheap proposal,' Gu Jiao Mai said. 'You didn't even get me ring.'

Everyone pitied the nervous Du Lei Xin, and they didn't dare to laugh.

'But as long as your love isn't cheap then I'll marry you,' Gu Jiao Mai said.

Du Lei Xin lifted Gu Jiao Mai in his arms.

'Jiao Mai, thank you,' Du Lei Xin said. 'I promise I'll make you happy. I love you. I'm sorry for hurting you. About that day, I...'

'It's OK,' Gu Jiao Mai said. 'Big brother Jiao Wu explained to me what happened. I believe you. Lei Xin, I'm sorry too for making you wait a long time to accept and return your love.'

'You have nothing to be sorry about,' Du Lei Xin said. 'I promise I won't hurt you or make you cry again.'

'I believe you,' Gu Jiao Mai said. 'You have to promise you'll give me another child too.'

'I promise,' Du Lei Xin said. 'I'll also listen to you too.'

'Lei Xin, I love you,' Gu Jiao Mai said.

Du Lei Xin didn't give up two months ago, because he overheard Gu Jiao Mai and Gu Jiao Wu's conversation. He was an idiot for doubting and hurting Gu Jiao Mai.

'Jiao Mai, I love you,' Du Lei Xin said. 'I love you, I love you, I love you.'

For the next month, Gu Jiao Wu worked to keep busy and he didn't drink at night. At home Chen Ting Yu and Mrs Du were busy planning Du Lei Xin and Gu Jiao Mai's wedding. It was a familiar sight to Gu Jiao Wu, he remembered not long ago Wang Tu Ya and Mrs Qiao were planning his and Qiao Tan Yuan's wedding.

Gu Jiao Wu knew everyone was worried he was living a lonely life. But he wasn't worried, he boarded a plane to Denmark.

Odense, Denmark was Han Christian Andersen's native city. Qiao Tan Yuan had taken Xiao Bao for a stroll around Odense before returning home for the day. She and Xiao Bao lived a peaceful life in Denmark the last three months. Xiao Bao could take baby steps, and speak simple phrases. When she put Xiao Bao down to unlock the front door, Xiao Bao would take baby steps on the front lawn.

After Qiao Tan Yuan opened the door, she turned around and Xiao Bao nearly fell on the lawn if someone she hadn't seen for three months didn't pick up Xiao Bao into their arm.

'Mama,' Xiao Bao called.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't believe Gu Jiao Wu was holding Xiao Bao in one arm, and holding a suitcase in the other arm. She thought he looked a little gaunt since the last time she saw him.

'Mama,' Xiao Bao called again.

Xiao Bao didn't like strangers holding her.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to carry Xiao Bao inside their house, and lock the doors. But Gu Jiao Wu carried Xiao Bao inside, and she followed behind them.

Gu Jiao Wu opened his suitcase, and took out a singing teddy bear for Xiao Bao. Xiao Bao's attention was instantly drawn to the singing teddy bear.

The teddy bear was too heavy for Xiao Bao to lift on her own. Gu Jiao Wu put the teddy bear on the coffee table, and he showed Xiao Bao what buttons to push.

'Xiao Bao, if you press the teddy bear's hand then it'll talk to you and sing to you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Xiao Bao happily pressed the teddy bear's hand.

'Hello there,' the teddy bear said.

Xiao Bao laughed, and Gu Jiao Wu laughed too.

Gu Jiao Wu let Xiao Bao play with the teddy bear. He stood and walked to Qiao Tan Yuan. Before she could ask him to leave, he hugged her. She had missed being hugged by him, but in that moment it felt like the distance between them were miles apart.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't miss Gu Jiao Wu blindly. She didn't forget to slap his cheek.

Gu Jiao Wu was taken by surprise. Xiao Bao heard a noise, she looked away from the teddy bear and she saw Qiao Tan Yuan looking upset. Xiao Bao ran baby steps to Qiao Tan Yuan, and tugged Qiao Tan Yuan's hand.

'Mama,' Xiao Bao called.

'Xiao Bai, go and play for mummy,' Qiao Tan Yuan said and smiled to reassure Xiao Bao.

Xiao Bao nodded and she went back to playing with the teddy bear.

'Why did you come here?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked softly.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want Xiao Bao to hear her fighting with Gu Jiao Wu.

'Tomorrow is Xiao Bao's first birthday,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Can't I celebrate Xiao Bao's birthday?'

Qiao Tan Yuan understood Gu Jiao Wu didn't love her, but she didn't have a right to stop Gu Jiao Wu celebrating Xiao Bao's birthday. For three months, Gu Jiao Wu didn't even pick up a phone to ask if she and Xiao Bao were happy living in Denmark. Gu Jiao Wu suddenly showing up to celebrate Xiao Bao's birthday sent a clear message to her. She wasn't important to Gu Jiao Wu, but it didn't mean Xiao Bao wasn't important to him.

'You're right,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Tomorrow is Xiao Bao's birthday. You can carry your suitcase, and stay somewhere else tonight.'

'Tan Yuan, I'm jet lagged,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Is it too much to ask you to let me stay here for one night?'

'You're not welcome to stay here because I don't want to fight with you in front of Xiao Bao,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Xiao Bao played with the teddy bear, but she looked occasionally at Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu. When she saw Qiao Tan Yuan waving at the door, she was worried Gu Jiao Wu made Qiao Tan Yuan angry.

'Mama,' Xiao Bao called. 'Mama, angry, no, no.'

End of Chapter 137

Related



Chapter 138

Pooh Bear.

‘Xiao Bao, mummy’s not angry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Go play first, and mummy will come play with you soon.’

Xiao Bao looked at Gu Jiao Wu smiling at her then she pressed the teddy bear’s hand again.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I don’t want to see you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said calmly. ‘Go somewhere else tonight.’

Qiao Tan Yuan’s phone rang. It was her Danish chef she hired who knew how to cook European and Asian meals. She didn’t think Gu Jiao Wu knew how to speak Danish so she answered the phone. Her chef apologised, and was too sick to come to her house to cook dinner.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Gu Jiao Wu who took off his coat, and he sat next to Xiao Bao. He gave Xiao Bao a new children’s book, and he showed Xiao Bao what buttons to press to make the book tell her a story. Xiao Bao clapped her hands, and she listened attentively to the story. Qiao Tan Yuan turned her head to look at the kitchen. Xiao Bao didn’t like eating at restaurants, and she wondered what she should cook for Xiao Bao to eat for dinner.

Xiao Bao laughed when Gu Jiao Wu turned another page, and she pressed one of the book buttons. It made Qiao Tan Yuan remembered the times Gu Jiao Wu failed to win Xiao Bao over when Xiao Bao didn’t know how to walk and talk. She

suppressed the pain in her heart, and she didn't ask Gu Jiao Wu to leave. Since Xiao Bao accepted Gu Jiao Wu, she was willing to wait until after Xiao Bao's birthday to kick Gu Jiao Wu out.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked into the kitchen, she opened the cupboards to see if there was anything edible, and easy for her to cook. There were the instant noodles she bought for emergencies. She couldn't let Xiao Bao eat instant noodles so she called a restaurant to deliver congee for Xiao Bao.

Gu Jiao Wu walked into the kitchen, Qiao Tan Yuan was holding a packet of instant noodles while waiting on the phone.

'You feed Xiao Bao instant noodles?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan glared at Gu Jiao Wu, and she waited for the restaurant owner to answer her phone call.

'The instant noodles are for me to eat,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Xiao Bao is eating congee, and I'll make her a bottle of formula milk after dinner.'

Gu Jiao Wu grabbed Qiao Tan Yuan's phone, he ended the phone call and put the phone into her pocket. He looked around the kitchen for cooking equipment, and cooking ingredients in the fridge. The kitchen was clean and organised. It was obvious to him Qiao Tan Yuan hired a chef to cook for her and Xiao Bao, by the way Qiao Tan Yuan searched for pots and pans.

'Tan Yuan, where are the kitchen knives?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Mmm... if it's not in that drawer then it's in another drawer,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu knew it would be quicker if he looked for all the cooking equipment himself. First he made enough congee for the three of them to eat. Then he washed vegetables, and marinated the fish he found in the fridge.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to watch Gu Jiao Wu cook like he was familiar with her kitchen. It brought back too many memories she wanted to forget. She put back the packet of noodles, walked out of the kitchen, and she sat next to Xiao Bao in the living room.

'Mama,' Xiao Bao called. She pointed at the picture of Pooh Bear in the book.

‘Sing, sing.’

‘Xiao Bao, do you want mummy to listen to Pooh Bear sing with you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan put Xiao Bao on her lap, and Xiao Bao pressed one of the buttons on the book.

Xiao Bao clapped her hands, and she sang along with Pooh Bear and his friends.

Gu Jiao Wu set dinner on the dining table, and he walked to the living room.

‘Let’s eat dinner,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know what to do. She didn’t want to eat dinner with Gu Jiao Wu, but she didn’t want to fight with him in front of Xiao Bao.

‘Tan Yuan, even if you don’t want to eat, do you want to starve Xiao Bao too?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Xiao Bao playing happily, and she knew Xiao Bao would be hungry after they came back from their stroll around Odense.

‘Xiao Bao, let’s eat dinner,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘We’ll play after we eat dinner.’

‘Bear,’ Xiao Bao said. She pointed at the teddy bear and the book. ‘Sing, sing.’

Gu Jiao Wu picked up Xiao Bao, and he carried her to the baby high chair at the dining table. After Xiao Bao sat in the baby chair, he scooped congee for Xiao Bao to eat into Xiao Bao’s baby bowl.

‘Bear,’ Xiao Bao said and pointed at the bear in the living room.

‘Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu called. He put the baby bowl of congee in front of Xiao Bao, and he put a baby spoon in her small hand. ‘Bear is hungry and wants to eat dinner. Xiao Bao should eat dinner too. After dinner, bear will sing for Xiao Bao.’

Xiao Bao pouted her lips, and she looked pitifully at Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan held Xiao Bao’s hand.

‘Xiao Bao, be good and eat dinner,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Mummy will ask Bear to sing for you after you eat dinner.’

Xiao Bao looked at the teddy bear and the book then she cried. Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to pick up Xiao Bao from the baby chair, and comfort Xiao Bao, but Gu Jiao Wu shook his head.

‘We need to set good habits for Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If Xiao Bao wants to cry, we should let her cry and eat our dinner.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, how can we do nothing and let Xiao Bao cry?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Tan Yuan, I know you’re thinking I’m being cruel,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘But if we let Xiao Bao have her way all the time, it’s harming her development.’

Qiao Tan Yuan thought about the last three months she lived with Xiao Bao in Denmark. She wanted Xiao Bao to be happy so she let Xiao Bao eat when Xiao Bao was hungry, and she played with Xiao Bao when Xiao Bao wanted to play.

Gu Jiao Wu scooped a bowl of congee, and a plate of fish and vegetables for Qiao Tan Yuan. It reminded her of the times Gu Jiao Wu cooked for her.

‘Tan Yuan, the food on the table belongs to you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Do you want to waste your food?’

Qiao Tan Yuan tried to calm her chaotic heart. She didn’t want to acknowledge the last three months she consciously put in effort to forget Gu Jiao Wu was wasted. She still loved Gu Jiao Wu, and seeing him intensified her heart break.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I don’t want to see you or eat the dishes you cooked,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I want you to leave.’

End of Chapter 138

Related



Chapter 139

Silver spoon.

‘Dinner’s cooked,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Think of letting me eat dinner as repaying me for cooking dinner.’

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t believe Gu Jiao Wu sat and ate calmly at the dining table. Did she ask him to cook dinner? She could order take away food or eat instant noodles, she didn’t need him to cook for her.

Xiao Bao’s crying snapped Qiao Tan Yuan out of her thoughts.

‘Xiao Bao, eat your dinner,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Bear will sing for you after you eat dinner.’

Gu Jiao Wu gave Qiao Tan Yuan a warning look not to let Xiao Bao play without eating dinner.

‘Tan Yuan, eat your dinner and set a good example for Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan forced herself not to look at Xiao Bao. She picked up her bowl of congee and ate.

Xiao Bao stopped crying when no one paid attention to her.

‘Mama,’ Xiao Bao called pitifully.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t dare look at Xiao Bao’s tearful small face.

‘Xiao Bao, be good and eat dinner,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Xiao Bao sniffed her nose. She picked up her baby spoon, and scooped congee into her mouth. Each time she scooped, a little congee splattered on the baby high chair table.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t stand watching Xiao Bao struggle to eat, and she stood.

‘Tan Yuan, even if Xiao Bao spills food, you should let Xiao Bao feed herself,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I... Xiao Bao is still little,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu scooped another bowl of congee for himself and Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Think about it,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If Xiao Bao only eats if you feed her, what will happen on the days you’re too sick to feed Xiao Bao?’

Qiao Tan Yuan sat down and she continued eating dinner. But she was too worried about Xiao Bao to register the taste of the dishes she ate.

Xiao Bao didn’t care if congee fell on her clothes or on the table. She kept feeding herself spoon by spoon.

When Xiao Bao almost ate all the baby bowl of congee, Gu Jiao Wu scooped soup into a clean baby bowl for Xiao Bao.

Xiao Bao finished the delicious congee. She thought the soup would taste delicious too. She picked up the bowl of soup to her mouth, and she slurped the soup into her mouth. But some of the soup dripped down her clothes.

Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu pretended they couldn’t see how soaked Xiao Bao’s clothes were, and they let Xiao Bao to finish her dinner on her own.

After dinner, Gu Jiao Wu picked up Xiao Bao and he carried Xiao Bao toward

the bathroom.

‘Tan Yuan, I’ll bathe Xiao Bao while you wash the dishes,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I’ll bathe Xiao Bao,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Tan Yuan, don’t worry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I have a lot of practice bathing children.’

Gu Jiao Wu thought about the times he helped bathe his little twin menace nephews so bathing his daughter wouldn’t be hard for him.

Xiao Bao didn’t like strangers holding her. She stretched out her arms for Qiao Tan Yuan to hold her. But by the time Gu Jiao Wu took off Xiao Bao’s soaked clothes from the congee and soup, and put her in a warm bubble bath, Xiao Bao forgot about looking for Qiao Tan Yuan. Xiao Bao played with her water toys in the bath while Gu Jiao Wu gently washed her hair.

In the kitchen Qiao Tan Yuan was contemplating whether to tidy up the kitchen or let the chef tidy up the kitchen. Then she wondered why Gu Jiao Wu acted like they were still together. She wasn’t certain if Gu Jiao Wu only came to Denmark to celebrate Xiao Bao’s birthday. It didn’t matter what was Gu Jiao Wu’s ulterior motive, she loved living in Denmark with Xiao Bao and she wasn’t going to let him chase her out of her own house. She decided after Xiao Bao’s birthday, she was going to kick Gu Jiao Wu out of her house.

Half an hour later, Gu Jiao Wu carried Xiao Bao from the bathroom to Xiao Bao’s bedroom to look for Xiao Bao’s clothes.

In the kitchen Qiao Tan Yuan rolled up her sleeves to wash dishes, and tidy the kitchen, because she didn’t know if the chef would be well enough to cook and clean on Xiao Bao’s birthday.

After Gu Jiao Wu dressed Xiao Bao, he carried Xiao Bao into the living room to play then he walked to the kitchen to help Qiao Tan Yuan. As he expected, there were broken dishes on the kitchen floor. He suspected Qiao Tan Yuan hadn’t washed dishes in months.

‘Tan Yuan, I’ll sweep the floor,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu quickly tidied the kitchen floor.

‘I thought you would be used to this kitchen after living here for a couple of months,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I don’t need your help,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I can tidy the kitchen on my own.’

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t want to upset Qiao Tan Yuan so he walked back to the living room to play with Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to give Gu Jiao Wu the opportunity to look down on her in her own house. She washed the rest of the dishes on her own then she walked to the living room. Xiao Bao was dressed in clean clothes, and Xiao Bao sat next to Gu Jiao Wu listening to the teddy bear sing songs. Qiao Tan Yuan turned around, and walked toward her bedroom because she didn’t want to cry after seeing how happy Xiao Bao looked playing with Gu Jiao Wu.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know when Gu Jiao Wu stood behind her, he held her hand and led her to the living room. After he forced her to sit on the sofa next to him, he took out a tube of soothing cream.

‘Gu Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan called.

Gu Jiao Wu pretended he couldn’t hear Qiao Tan Yuan. He rubbed soothing cream on her swollen hands.

Qiao Tan Yuan pulled her hands out of Gu Jiao Wu’s hands. She didn’t know why he acted like he cared about her, but she wasn’t going to be fooled by him again.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you’ve eaten dinner,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said calmly. ‘Now you can leave.’

Qiao Tan Yuan sat next to Xiao Bao in front of the coffee table, and she played with Xiao Bao.

‘Mama,’ Xiao Bao called. ‘Bear, talk, talk.’

Xiao Bao pressed the teddy bear’s hand.

‘Hello there,’ the teddy bear said.

Xiao Bao laughed, and she pressed the teddy bear’s other hand to hear the teddy bear sing.

Gu Jiao Wu sat on the sofa, and he watched Qiao Tan Yuan play with Xiao Bao. When Qiao Tan Yuan looked at him, there was only weariness and anger in Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes. But the moment Qiao Tan Yuan sat next to Xiao Bao, Qiao Tan Yuan's eyes lit up and she smiled at Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan sensed Gu Jiao Wu was staring at her. She ignored him, and played with Xiao Bao until half past nine, Xiao Bao's usual bedtime. She carried the sleepy Xiao Bao to Xiao Bao's bedroom, and she tucked Xiao Bao in bed.

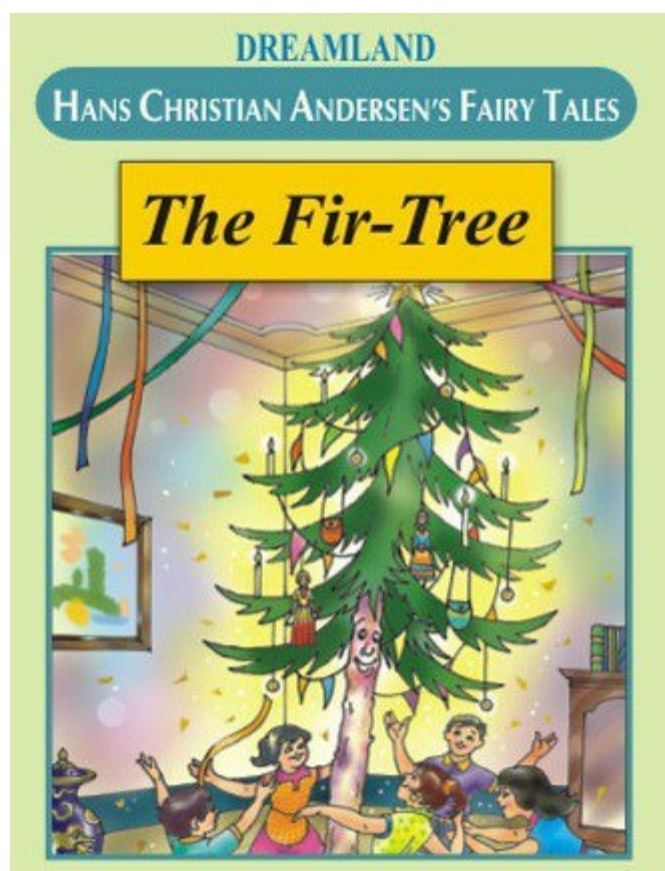
Qiao Tan Yuan returned to the living room, Gu Jiao Wu was still sitting on the sofa.

'Tan Yuan, sit here with me and we can talk,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'I have nothing to say to you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Except I want you to leave. Xiao Bao is sleeping, you can see Xiao Bao on her birthday.'

End of Chapter 139

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Chapter 140

Fir-tree.

Qiao Tan Yuan ran to her bedroom. She locked the door, and sat on the floor. Her heart was racing. She couldn't bear to hear Gu Jiao Wu talk about getting back together for Xiao Bao's sake. He didn't care about her, he waited until Xiao Bao's birthday to come to Denmark. She laughed at herself for being disappointed he didn't come for her.

Qiao Tan Yuan stood, changed into night clothes, brushed her teeth and laid on her bed. She wanted to sleep so she would be refreshed in the morning to give Xiao Bao a fun and a memorable first birthday.

Qiao Tan Yuan rolled around the bed for half a night, she couldn't sleep. She looked at the clock on the wall, it was one in the morning. She couldn't hear any sounds from outside, and assumed Gu Jiao Wu left. She got out of bed, unlocked her door and walked to the living room. She was surprised to see Gu Jiao Wu sleeping on the sofa. He folded his arms, and scrunched his face in his sleep. It wasn't a chilly night, but he didn't look like he slept comfortably. She would have

woken him up if he didn't look unusually gaunt like he hadn't been eating or sleeping well for months.

Qiao Tan Yuan turned around, and she walked back to her bedroom. After tossing and turning on the bed for a long time, she finally slept. That night she dreamt about Gu Jiao Wu.

On the morning of Xiao Bao's birthday, Qiao Tan Yuan woke up with a headache from lack of sleep. She walked to Xiao Bao's bedroom, Xiao Bao was awake. Xiao Bao smiled when Xiao Bao saw her.

'Mama,' Xiao Bao called.

Xiao Bao's smile brightened Qiao Tan Yuan's mood. She carried Xiao Bao to the bathroom. Then she brushed Xiao Bao's teeth, and washed Xiao Bao's face before brushing and washing herself.

A while later, Qiao Tan Yuan held Xiao Bao's hand and they walked outside the bathroom. The smell of breakfast startled Qiao Tan Yuan, she remembered Gu Jiao Wu came to her house last night.

Xiao Bao spotted her teddy bear on the coffee table, and ran baby steps to the teddy bear.

'Bear, bear,' Xiao Bao called.

Gu Jiao Wu was setting the table for breakfast. After he heard Xiao Bao's voice, he walked to the living room.

'Tan Yuan, Xiao Bao, come to the table and eat breakfast,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'I didn't ask you to cook breakfast,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Breakfast is cooked,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He squatted in front of Xiao Bao and smiled. 'Xiao Bao, happy birthday.'

Xiao Bao looked at Gu Jiao Wu for a long time. She thought he looked like the tall fir-tree from one of the books Qiao Tan Yuan read to her at bedtime.

'Thank you fir-tree,' Xiao Bao said.

Gu Jiao Wu was surprised Xiao Bao thought he was a fir-tree. What was Qiao Tan Yuan teaching Xiao Bao?

‘Xiao Bao, daddy isn’t a fir-tree,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Daddy is Xiao Bao’s daddy. Xiao Bao, say dada.’

‘Fir-da,’ Xiao Bao called.

Xiao Bao didn’t know why the fir-tree didn’t like being called a tree, and she thought fir-da was a strange name for a tree.

Gu Jiao Wu smiled, and he held Xiao Bao’s hands.

‘Daddy isn’t fir-da,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Xiao Bao, say dada.’

‘Dada,’ Xiao Bao called.

Gu Jiao Wu hugged Xiao Bao.

‘Xiao Bao is daddy’s good little girl,’ Gu Jiao Wu praised.

Xiao Bao didn’t like strangers hugging her. But she let the strange fir-tree hug her.

Qiao Tan Yuan should have been moved by the warm father and daughter moment, but she only felt weary. If Gu Jiao Wu’s motive was to take Xiao Bao back to the Gu Household, she wouldn’t let him take Xiao Bao.

Gu Jiao Wu carried Xiao Bao to the dining table.

‘Tan Yuan, today is Xiao Bao’s birthday,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘After breakfast, let’s take Xiao Bao out to play.’

‘Do you really think you’ll let me say no?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘I think you’ll say yes,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and put Xiao Bao into the baby chair.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat next to Xiao Bao. She was surprised to see toast, omelettes and cups of milk on the table. She thought the fridge was empty since last night.

‘The fridge is almost empty,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘We’ll buy groceries on the way home.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I don’t want to see...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Tan Yuan, we can talk later,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Xiao Bao was reaching for the toast. Gu Jiao Wu put a piece of toast, and scooped an omelette into Xiao Bao’s baby bowl.

Xiao Bao ate a bit of toast and omelette, it was delicious.

‘Mama,’ Xiao Bao called. ‘Egg, yum, yum.’

Qiao Tan Yuan smiled at Xiao Bao, and she reluctantly drank the cup of milk.

‘Tan Yuan, you should eat breakfast like Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan gave in, and ate the toast and omelette. Xiao Bao was telling the truth, the bread Gu Jiao Wu made from scratch was delicious as the omelette.

Xiao Bao ate all her breakfast, and the fir-tree played with her in the living room.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t hear dishes breaking from the kitchen while he played with Xiao Bao.

Qiao Tan Yuan washed the dishes then she walked to the living room. When she saw the tube of soothing cream on the sofa, she put her swollen hands behind her back.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, after we celebrate Xiao Bao’s birthday, you have to leave,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t want to see you.’

Xiao Bao was busy playing with the new toys the fir-tree gave her that she didn’t hear Qiao Tan Yuan say anything.

Gu Jiao Wu stood in front of Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Give me a good reason why you don’t want to see me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan took a step back.

‘I... I don’t need a reason why I don’t want to see you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Then it’s settled,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Xiao Bao is our daughter. I’m staying here to be with our daughter.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, who do you think you are?’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Do you think you’re being a loving father by showing up on Xiao Bao’s birthday, and giving her toys? You don’t have the right to be Xiao Bao’s father.’

‘Tan Yuan, I don’t think buying toys for Xiao Bao is a way to be a loving father,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I only want to be spend time with Xiao Bao, and be by her side

to watch over her. Tan Yuan, as for having the right to be Xiao Bao's father, there is no perfect parent in the world. Parents make mistakes, and they learn from their mistakes to become good parents for their children.'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't refute Gu Jiao Wu's truthful words. She was learning to be a good mother to Xiao Bao every day.

Gu Jiao Wu carried Xiao Bao in his arms, and he picked up the teddy bear for Xiao Bao. He was satisfied Xiao Bao was dressed in suitable clothes to go outside. Xiao Bao wore a pink dress and a cardigan. Although it was a warm day, he didn't want Xiao Bao to catch a cold if it was windy outside.

'Xiao Bao, do you want to go outside and play with daddy and mummy?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Play, play,' Xiao Bao said and smiled at the fir-tree.

Gu Jiao Wu carried Xiao Bao to a nearby Odense park. Qiao Tan Yuan locked the door, and followed them to the park.

At the park, Gu Jiao Wu showed Xiao Bao the rose bushes.

'Xiao Bao, this is a rose,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Rose, rose,' Xiao Bao said and she tried to pick a rose.

Gu Jiao Wu held Xiao Bao's stretched hand.

'Xiao Bao, roses are for looking,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Xiao Bao and daddy can't pick roses. Roses will make our fingers ouchy if we pick them.'

'Rose, ouchy,' Xiao Bao said.

'Tan Yuan, where should we take Xiao Bao next?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'We can take Xiao Bao to the amusement park,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'If you're tired, I can carry Xiao Bao.'

Gu Jiao Wu saw the driver parked the car he hired so he let Qiao Tan Yuan carry Xiao Bao.

'Um, carry Xiao Bao to the car,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan carried Xiao Bao to the car Gu Jiao Wu pointed at. When the driver gave the car key to Gu Jiao Wu, she suspected Gu Jiao Wu had prepared

everything for Xiao Bao’s birthday.

End of Chapter 140

Related



Chapter 141

Legoland, Billund.

At Legoland, Xiao Bao was excited to see the small lego houses.

‘Mama,’ Xiao Bao called. She pointed at the lego houses. ‘Small house.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was worried pointlessly. Xiao Bao wasn’t scared to be in an unfamiliar place. Xiao Bao was fascinated by everything Xiao Bao saw.

‘Xiao Bao, look at the small ants too,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and she pointed at the lego ants.

‘Ant, no, no,’ Xiao Bao said.

Gu Jiao Wu saw the adorable confused look on Xiao Bao’s face, and he carried her in his arms. He searched ants on his phone, and he showed the photo to Xiao Bao.

‘Xiao Bao, look at daddy’s phone,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘This is what an ant looks like.’

Xiao Bao looked at the ant on the fir-tree’s phone then she pointed at the lego ant.

‘Ant, ant,’ Xiao Bao said.

Gu Jiao Wu took advantage while Qiao Tan Yuan was distracted looking at the lego displays, he wrapped an arm around Qiao Tan Yuan’s shoulder and he took

a photo of them together with Xiao Bao. Afterward he set their family photo as his phone wallpaper.

Qiao Tan Yuan let the photo slide, because it was Xiao Bao's birthday. She freed herself from Gu Jiao Wu's arm, and she looked for other lego animals to show Xiao Bao.

'Xiao Bao, look at the small bird,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Bird, bird,' Xiao Bao said.

'Xiao Bao, do you want daddy to show you small angels?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Gel, gel,' Xiao Bao said.

Gu Jiao Wu laughed, Xiao Bao turned an angel into gel.

It was the first time Qiao Tan Yuan heard Gu Jiao Wu laughed so much in one day, and she couldn't stop her heart racing.

Qiao Tan Yuan carried Xiao Bao to see the lego angels, because Gu Jiao Wu wanted to take photos of Xiao Bao and the lego angels together. But she sensed he was looking at her through the camera lens.

'Gu Jiao Wu, I don't want you to take photos of me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'I'm taking photos of Xiao Bao,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan chanted to herself to focus on Xiao Bao, and ignore Gu Jiao Wu.

In the afternoon, Gu Jiao Wu took Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao to eat lunch at a restaurant outside Legoland. Then he drove them to Copenhagen to go sightseeing.

It was a sunny afternoon, Qiao Tan Yuan envied the families who were riding bicycles together. She had dreamt of having a happy family of her own. But she thought it would be meaningless to be a family with Gu Jiao Wu if he didn't love her. She cleared her thoughts. It was Xiao Bao's birthday, she should focus her attentions on giving Xiao Bao a happy birthday.

Gu Jiao Wu took many photos of Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao that strangers would have mistaken him as a photographer.

'We've taken Xiao Bao out for most of the day,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Xiao Bao

must be tired by now.'

'Um, I arranged Xiao Bao's birthday cake to be delivered to the house at dinner time,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Let's take Xiao Bao home to eat her birthday cake before her bedtime.'

Qiao Tan Yuan carried Xiao Bao to the car, and Xiao Bao napped on the way home. At home, she changed Xiao Bao's dress to comfortable clothes and washed Xiao Bao's hands in the bathroom. When she and Xiao Bao walked to the dining room, Gu Jiao Wu had lit candles on Xiao Bao's birthday cake.

Qiao Tan Yuan was surprised Gu Jiao Wu bought a raspberry cake. Xiao Bao only began to like eating raspberries since they moved to Denmark. She wondered how Gu Jiao Wu knew Xiao Bao liked raspberries.

Xiao Bao blew out the lit candles, and she clapped her hands.

Qiao Tan Yuan fed Xiao Bao a slice of raspberry cake.

Gu Jiao Wu gave Xiao Bao a wrapped birthday gift.

'Xiao Bao, daddy wishes you a happy birthday,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Daddy hopes you'll always be happy like today.'

Xiao Bao didn't know how to open her gift so she waited for the fir-tree to unwrap her gift.

Gu Jiao Wu showed Xiao Bao what ribbon to pull to unwrap the gift. Inside was a red electronic Ferrari toy car that was too heavy for Xiao Bao to carry.

'Xiao Bao is still little,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Xiao Bao can't use the car remote on her own.'

'It's OK,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I chose a car model that is easy for Xiao Bao to move the car around.'

Gu Jiao Wu put the toy car on the floor, and he showed Xiao Bao how to move the car around using the car remote.

Xiao Bao chased the car the fir-tree gave her around the room, and she laughed when the car moved a different direction if she almost caught it.

At bedtime, Xiao Bao ran baby steps to Qiao Tan Yuan, and Qiao Tan Yuan

prepared Xiao Bao for bed.

After Xiao Bao fell asleep, Qiao Tan Yuan walked outside Xiao Bao's bedroom. She was surprised to see Gu Jiao Wu didn't leave.

'Why haven't you left?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu was looking through the photos he took of Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao on the sofa.

'You want me to leave?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Yes,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'This is my house.'

'We haven't eaten dinner yet,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'What do you want to eat?'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't count cake as dinner.

'I don't want to eat dinner with you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I want you to leave my house.'

Gu Jiao Wu stood, stepped toward Qiao Tan Yuan and he hugged her.

'Tan Yuan, I missed you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

End of Chapter 141

Related



Chapter 142

Arm.

Qiao Tan Yuan bit her lips. She couldn't forget the cutting words Gu Jiao Wu said to her that day. During the nights she would dream about that day.

Qiao Tan Yuan bit Gu Jiao Wu's arm until she drew blood. He didn't care about the pain, and held onto her.

'I don't want to see you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Have you bitten me enough?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'If not, bite the other arm too.'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't understand why Gu Jiao Wu acted like that day didn't happen. There was no wedding, and they weren't together anymore.

Qiao Tan Yuan grabbed Gu Jiao Wu's other arm to bite. She saw the scar on his hand from a year ago when she gave birth to Xiao Bao, and bit his hand in the delivery room.

'I'm not a dog,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She let go of Gu Jiao Wu's arm. 'I don't need to bite you. I want you to leave my house.'

'You're not going to bite?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'There is no reason for you to be here,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Tan Yuan, I missed you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'A pity, I didn't miss you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Really?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Why would I miss you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘It’s not me you missed. You missed Xiao Bao.’

‘I missed Xiao Bao but I missed you more,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I don’t believe you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu loosened his hold, and Qiao Tan Yuan walked to the living room window.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, can’t you let me and Xiao Bao live a peaceful life without you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Tan Yuan, Xiao Bao turned one today,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Xiao Bao needs a mother and a father’s love.’

‘These past months, Xiao Bao and I lived a good life without you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I believe you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘But there’s something you haven’t considered.’

‘What?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘You and Xiao Bao would live a happier life with me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Gu Jiao Wu aren’t you tired?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Tired?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Why are you forcing yourself to act like you care about for Xiao Bao’s sake when you don’t love me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Who said I didn’t love you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘You don’t have to lie to yourself,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘The woman you love is Chu Da, not me.’

‘Chu Da is dead,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Chu Da is dead,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘But Chu Da lives in your heart. You can’t let her go. She’s always on your mind. You’re here in the flesh, but your heart is with her. No matter how years past, you can’t forget her.’

Gu Jiao Wu could see the sadness, and pain in Qiao Tan Yuan’s eyes through

the window reflection. He looked out the window at the thorny roses, and wished he knew how to get Qiao Tan Yuan to take off her thorns.

Gu Jiao Wu hugged Qiao Tan Yuan from behind.

‘I loved her,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, let go of me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I loved her but she’s my past,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu could feel how much flesh Qiao Tan Yuan lost. Why was it hard for Qiao Tan Yuan to acknowledge she missed him, and loved him?

‘I loved her in the past,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘At that time, being with her made me happy. She’s different to you and other arrogant heiresses. She’s a genuinely gentle and a caring woman. It didn’t matter how late I came home, she cooked dinner for me and waited for me to come home to eat dinner. At that time I wanted to marry her, give her a good life and make her happy.’

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know Gu Jiao Wu was easily moved by a home cooked meal.

‘After she agreed to marry me, she left me suddenly,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I didn’t know why she left me. I’m a man who also has pride. I wanted to find her, and ask her why she left me to get closure. Tan yuan, can you understand why she was on my mind during the years I didn’t know what happened to her?’

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know what to say or believe.

‘Then you drugged me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I know I didn’t touch you. But I wanted to give you a lesson. Since I couldn’t find Chu Da, it didn’t matter who I married. You wanted to marry me so I married you. Back then I hated and resented you. You said you loved me, but you didn’t understand what I needed.’

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know why Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t let her go if he hated her.

‘Tan Yuan, I’m sorry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I was wrong to use marriage to take revenge on you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan lived through Gu Jiao Wu’s cruel revenge for three years. She didn’t want to live through those same days for the rest of her life.

‘Tan Yuan, everything changed that day in the elevator you held onto me and begged me to save Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I became curious about the different sides to you. At the start if I was away on work trips, I thought of Xiao Bao first then I thought of you. But the more I got to learn about you, I began to think about you before I thought about Xiao Bao. You made me frustrated when you wouldn’t believe I loved you, and you wanted to take Xiao Bao to leave me. I took you to the island to get you to believe I loved you, and I wanted to be with you not because of Xiao Bao or anyone else. Tan Yuan, I love you, and I don’t want to lose you.’

‘You don’t love me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Tan Yuan, I love you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘The day Cheng Yi kidnapped you, I wanted to tear apart the city. I didn’t want to lose you. I rather lose my life than lose you. Isn’t that enough to make you believe I love you?’

‘I don’t know,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘But I do know if the woman who was kidnapped that day was Chu Da, you would have risked your life to save Chu Da.’

Qiao Tan Yuan accepted Gu Jiao Wu saved her life because she was the mother of his daughter. But he would save Chu Da’s life because he loved Chu Da.

‘Where’s the arrogant Qiao Tan Yuan?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Why don’t you believe in yourself how loveable you are?’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, even if I believe you do love me a bit, Chu Da has most of your heart,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Before you said it yourself, you love Chu Da deeply for everything she did to take care of you. I’ve done nothing for you. I do believe a small corner of your heart wants to live with me, because of Xiao Bao. If Xiao Bao didn’t exist, we would be strangers. Can you say I’m wrong?’

‘True,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘We would be strangers if Xiao Bao didn’t exist. But in this world you can’t undo the past. Xiao Bao’s existence is real.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, you’ve acknowledged the truth,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You don’t love me, and you want to be with me because Xiao Bao exists.’

Related



Chapter 143

The sleepy dwarf.

Gu Jiao Wu pulled Qiao Tan Yuan to the sofa, and trapped her on his lap to stop her from running away.

‘Tan Yuan, our daughter exists,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I don’t know when I began to love you. Perhaps it was that day in the elevator you cared about our daughter’s life more than your own life. If our daughter didn’t exist, you wouldn’t show your vulnerable and maternal sides to me. Why is it so hard for you to believe I love you?’

‘You risked your life to save me but you would risk your life to save Chu Da too,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I’m sorry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I didn’t want to hurt you that day.’

‘You did hurt me that day,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You showed me your true heart. Your love for me pales in comparison to your love for Chu Da. I can’t win against Chu Da. Chu Da’s dead, and I’m alive. I can’t compete with a dead person.’

Qiao Tan Yuan’s words made Gu Jiao Wu remembered what Du Lei Xin said to him on the day of Gu Jiao Mai’s accident.

‘Tan Yuan that day I was angry at myself and shocked,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I didn’t want to hurt you. Chu Da died too suddenly. If I knew she was sick, I would have stayed with her in the final days of her life so she wouldn’t die on her own. Tan Yuan, I would want to be with a friend in their final days let alone Chu Da who I was engaged to.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu ask yourself if Chu Da’s alive if you would only regret losing her,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘The truth is if Chu Da’s alive, you would want to be with Chu Da.’

‘Tan Yuan, even if Chu Da’s alive, I can say I wouldn’t want to be with Chu Da,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

If Li Lam didn’t show up at the florist shop, Gu Jiao Wu would have forgotten nearly everything about Chu Da. The only reason he asked Li Lam to take him to see Chu Da was to get closure, and tell Chu Da he loved Qiao Tan Yuan and wanted to be with Qiao Tan Yuan. He didn’t expect to find out Chu Da died. On the day he found out Chu Da died from ovarian cancer, he regretted not being there for Chu Da when Chu Da was suffering on her own. That day he found out how much he loved Qiao Tan Yuan, he couldn’t accept the woman he loved would chase away a sick person. But after he had time to reflect, he understood

he and Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't change the past, and if he truly loved Qiao Tan Yuan then he needed to accept Qiao Tan Yuan for who she was.

'Tan Yuan, I'm sorry for those hurtful words I said to you out of anger and regret,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'That day it was hard for me to accept you chased away Chu Da knowing Chu Da was sick. After I cooled down, I wished I had directed my anger at myself. But Chu Da is dead. Even if Chu Da is alive, the woman I want to be with is you. Tan Yuan, I love you. You don't need to compete with a dead person. Tan Yuan, you have my heart.'

'Jiao Wu...' Qiao Tan Yuan called.

'Tan Yuan, you know what kind of man I am,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If I say I hate someone, I hate someone. If I say I love someone then I truly love someone. Tan Yuan, I love you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to believe Gu Jiao Wu. She was moved by his words. But there was a small part of her heart that doubted Gu Jiao Wu loved her.

'Tan Yuan, there hasn't been a night I slept well since you left me,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I didn't sleep well last night either, because you won't sleeping next to me.'

'If you're tired then go to sleep,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Tan Yuan, I don't want to sleep on the sofa,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Then you can sleep in the bedroom,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Tan Yuan, will you sleep in the bedroom with me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'You can sleep in the bedroom and I'll sleep with Xiao Bao in Xiao Bao's bedroom,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Tan Yuan, I want to sleep with you,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'If you sleep with me then I'll think you want my body and you don't love me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

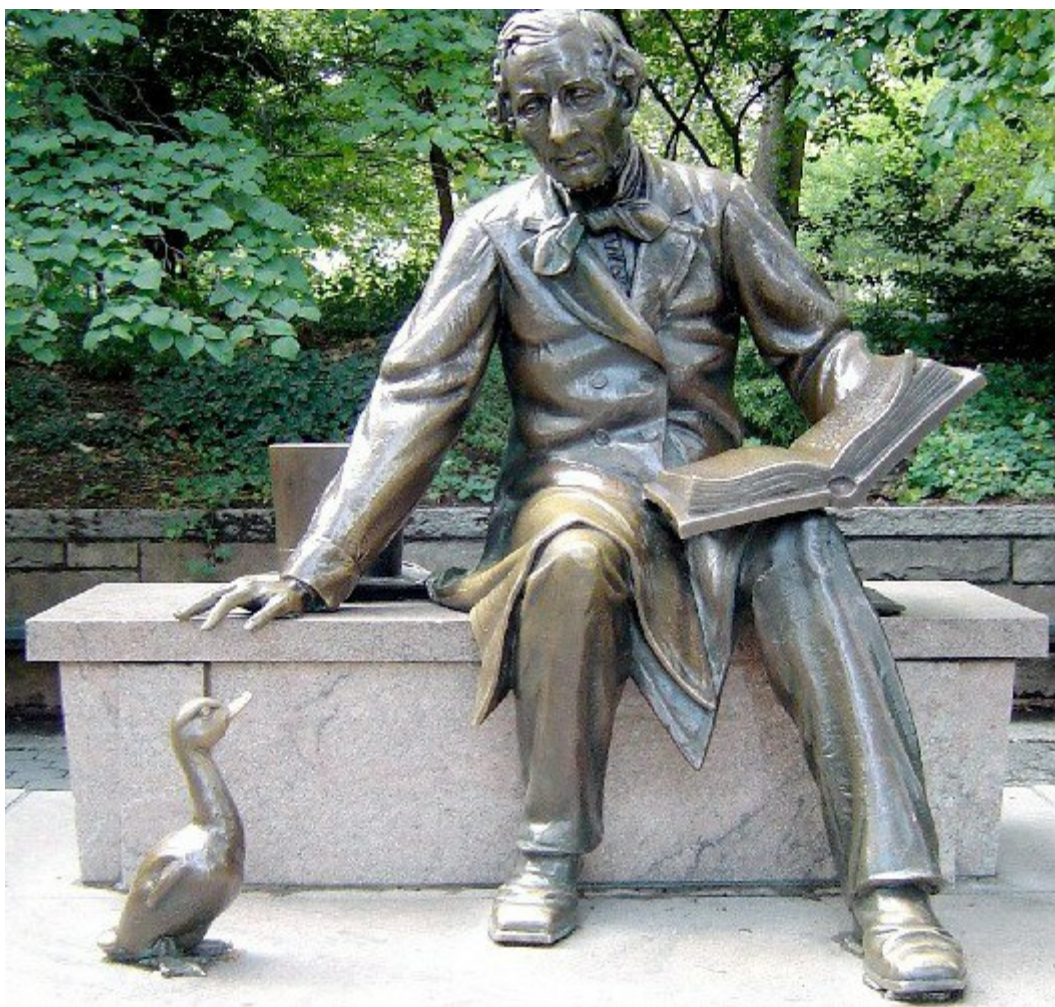
Qiao Tan Yuan's heart was conflicted, she needed space to think clearly about Gu Jiao Wu's words.

'Alright, I'll sleep on the sofa,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'But last night you were heartless. You saw me freezing on the sofa, but you didn't give me a bedsheet.'

‘You... you won’t sleeping...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

End of Chapter 143

Related



Chapter 144

Museum.

‘Tan Yuan, you’re lucky I’m young and healthy otherwise you’ll be taking me to the hospital,’ Gu Jiao Wu teased.

‘You can sleep with no bedsheet tonight,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘OK,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘It’s late. Go and sleep off your panda eyes.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was careful last night not to make a noise, she didn’t think Gu Jiao Wu would hear her footsteps.

Gu Jiao Wu walked Qiao Tan Yuan to her bedroom.

‘Tan Yuan, are you sure you’re not hungry?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Um, I’m full from Xiao Bao’s birthday cake,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘What about my goodnight kiss?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked and pointed at his cheek.

‘What?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Tan Yuan, don’t be petty,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘It’s only one kiss.’

Qiao Tan Yuan kissed Gu Jiao Wu’s cheek, but he turned his face and kissed her lips. He pulled her close to him, and she wrapped her arms around his neck. It was their first kiss since they were separated. Neither of them wanted to pull away from the kiss.

A long time later, Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s waist and he leaned his forehead on Qiao Tan Yuan’s forehead.

‘Tan Yuan, can you stand steady on your feet?’ Gu Jiao Wu teased.

‘What?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Go to sleep,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If you don’t then I won’t let you sleep tonight.’

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yuan, he knew he wasn’t going to get any sleep after their kiss because his bottom half was stiffer than Tan Yuan’s bedhead.

Qiao Tan Yuan ran to her bedroom, and she locked the door. She was lucky Gu Jiao Wu was a merciful monk, and let her escape otherwise her panda eyes would last another day. She patted her racing heart, and laid on her bed. She thought about what Gu Jiao Wu said before. The small part of her heart that doubted Gu Jiao Wu was asking why he waited months to show up on Xiao Bao’s birthday. If Gu Jiao Wu loved her, why didn’t he come for her sooner?

Later Qiao Tan Yuan fell asleep, and she dreamt she was happy to hear Gu Jiao Wu say he loved her.

The following morning, Gu Jiao Wu woke up first to cook breakfast for Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao. After Qiao Tan Yuan woke up, she went to see if Xiao Bao was awake. Xiao Bao was sleeping soundly in bed, because Xiao Bao had an eventful first birthday.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked into the kitchen, the sight of Gu Jiao Wu cooking in the kitchen reminded her of the good days they were together.

‘Morning,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and smiled at Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Morning,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Do you need any help?’

‘No,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’m scared of your help.’

‘Then later I don’t need to wash the dishes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘How did you sleep last night?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Good,’ Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘How did you sleep with a bedsheet?’

‘Not good,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I didn’t have you sleep next to me so I couldn’t sleep.’

‘What about the past months?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Not good too,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I wake up in the middle of the night missing you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan’s phone rang, and saved her from embarrassment. Her chef called in sick again. She hung up the phone, and she looked suspiciously at Gu Jiao Wu in the kitchen. It was too much of a coincidence her chef had been sick the moment Gu Jiao Wu arrived in her house.

Xiao Bao rubbed her sleepy eyes, and she walked outside to look for Qiao Tan Yuan and the strange fir-tree. The fir-tree was putting breakfast on the dining table. She ran baby steps to the fir-tree, and she smiled at the fir-tree.

‘Dada,’ Xiao Bao called.

Gu Jiao Wu put the last plate of cooked food on the dining table. Then he picked up Xiao Bao, kissed Xiao Bao’s cheek and put her in the baby chair.

‘Morning Xiao Bao,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu loved hearing Xiao Bao call him dada.

Qiao Tan Yuan ate breakfast, and wondered why Xiao Bao was smiling at Gu Jiao Wu while Xiao Bao ate breakfast. It was different to the times Xiao Bao cried whenever Gu Jiao Wu wanted to hold Xiao Bao.

‘Xiao Bao, do you want daddy and mummy to take you out to play after breakfast?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Dada, mama, play,’ Xiao Bao said.

‘Tan Yuan, what do you think?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

After breakfast, Qiao Tan Yuan was surprised Gu Jiao Wu drove her and Xiao Bao to the Hans Christian Anderson’s Museum.

Gu Jiao Wu carried Xiao Bao to the museum. Qiao Tan Yuan sensed strangers would have mistaken them as a happy family of three. Qiao Tan Yuan believed Gu Jiao Wu would be a good father to Xiao Bao, and a good husband to her if she married him again. But she was scared after Xiao Bao grew up, Gu Jiao Wu would have no reason left to want to be with her.

‘Tan Yuan, what’s wrong?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Do you want me to take you and Xiao Bao somewhere else?’

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I haven’t taken our little monkey here before, because I was waiting for her to be a little bigger.’

‘Um,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Our little monkey needs to grow a little bigger to appreciate the museum. But I hope our little monkey will have a fairy tale life.’

‘I hope our little monkey will have a fairy tale life too,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Tan Yuan, in my fairy tale for Xiao Bao, I hope Xiao Bao grows up with her mummy, daddy, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Gu Jiao Wu, don’t pressure me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Last night you promised to give me time.’

‘Tan Yuan, I’ve given you months already,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘It’s been this long, can’t you understand my heart yet?’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, let’s take Xiao Bao around to play today,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘We can talk about us another day.’

‘OK,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was happy to hear Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t going to kick him out of her house, and she wasn’t going to run away. He carried Xiao Bao into the museum, and Xiao Bao wanted to walk around to touch the fairy tale animal statues.

Gu Jiao Wu took many photos of Xiao Bao. Xiao Bao was photogenic, and she liked posing with the animal statues.

Qiao Tan Yuan watched Xiao Bao pout and smile whenever Gu Jiao Wu took a photo of Xiao Bao in the museum. Qiao Tan Yuan could see how happy Xiao Bao was to have her and Gu Jiao Wu in Xiao Bao's life. It made Qiao Tan Yuan think about Gu Jiao Wu's words. Even if she didn't want to see Gu Jiao Wu, Xiao Bao was happier with more family members to love Xiao Bao. She missed her parents and little brother, and she knew they must miss her and Xiao Bao too.

End of Chapter 144

Related



Chapter 145

Jacket.

Qiao Tan Yuan watched Xiao Bao interact with Gu Jiao Wu for a long time. Xiao Bao loved to pinch Gu Jiao Wu's face if he carried Xiao Bao. He was a good sport to let Xiao Bao pinch his face. Sometimes Xiao Bao called him fir-da instead of dada, but he laughed it off and kissed Xiao Bao's cheek.

In the evening, Xiao Bao fell asleep on the way home. At home Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu tucked Xiao Bao in bed. Then they walked to the living room and they sat on the sofa. He massaged Qiao Tan Yuan's tensed shoulders.

'Tan Yuan are you tired?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Um, I want to sleep,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Then go to sleep,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I'll go cook dinner, and I'll wake you up for dinner.'

‘Is there anything left in the fridge?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Don’t worry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I bought groceries in the morning.’

Gu Jiao Wu noticed Qiao Tan Yuan could barely keep her eyes open. He stopped massaging her shoulders, and he carried her to her bed.

‘Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan called in her sleepy state.

‘Sleep,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Xiao Bao... milk...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and closed her eyes.

‘If Xiao Bao wakes up, she has me to take care of her,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Don’t forget I have two nephews the same age as Xiao Bao.’

‘OK...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said and fell asleep.

Qiao Tan Yuan slept to the morning. She woke up, but she didn’t see Gu Jiao Wu next to her. During the night, she felt him lying next to her and hugging her while she was sleeping.

Qiao Tan Yuan got out of bed, and walked to Xiao Bao’s bedroom. Xiao Bao was sleeping soundly. Afterward she walked to the living to look for Gu Jiao Wu. But only his jacket was draped on a sofa arm. She picked it up to wash his jacket for him. It made her think about how Chu Da did many things to take care of him. Whereas she didn’t do anything to care of him like wash his clothes before. She loved him, but she didn’t think about what she could have done to be a good wife to him.

Qiao Tan Yuan sat on the sofa and held Gu Jiao Wu’s jacket. Since she lived in Denmark, apart from washing clothes and taking care of Xiao Bao, she had her chef to cook and clean the kitchen. She hated housework. If Gu Jiao Wu wanted a housewife, she wouldn’t be a good housewife. After Xiao Bao went to preschool, she planned to work again. She didn’t want to change into someone else, like being a good housewife. If Gu Jiao Wu could accept her for who she was, what reason did she have left to hesitate?

Qiao Tan Yuan stood, and checked Gu Jiao Wu’s jacket pockets for any loose items before washing his jacket. She found a medical report for... bowel cancer. Why didn’t Gu Jiao Wu say anything? She sat back on the sofa, and she cried for

a long time. She had to be strong. She wiped her eyes, put the medical report back and draped the jacket on the same sofa arm.

‘You’re awake,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He waved a bag of food. ‘I went to an Asian restaurant nearby. I bought you and Xiao Bao buns and soybean milk for breakfast.’

Qiao Tan Yuan saw Gu Jiao Wu putting on a brave act for her, and she wanted to cry again.

‘Tan Yuan, what’s wrong?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Were you crying?’

‘I... I woke up and I thought you flew back home,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu put the bag on the coffee table, and he hugged Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Tan Yuan, you dummy,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I wouldn’t fly home without you and Xiao Bao. Besides you love living here. Of course I’ll stay here with you and Xiao Bao.’

‘But... don’t you need to work?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘I’m planning to resign,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Don’t worry, I can still take care of you and Xiao Bao even if I don’t work.’

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan hugged Gu Jiao Wu tightly. She knew the real reason why he wanted to resign.

‘Tan Yuan, what’s wrong?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I’m OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘What do you want to do after you resign?’

‘Mum is getting older and she wants me to help with her company,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew Wang Tu Ya was an only child, and Wang Tu Ya’s father passed Wang’s company to Wang Tu Ya after he died. She also knew Gu Jiao Wu had a lot on his plate managing Gu’s company so Wang Tu Ya didn’t pressure Gu Jiao Wu to manage Wang’s company too. Was Gu Jiao Wu resigning to help Wang Tu Ya as a final filial son gesture?

‘Breakfast is getting cold,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘We’ll wake up Xiao Bao for

breakfast. I'll take you and Xiao Bao to Copenhagen to play after breakfast.'

'Jiao Wu...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

End of Chapter 145

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Chapter 146

Swing.

‘Jiao Wu, I don’t want to go out today,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I want to stay home.’

‘Tan Yuan, are you feeling sick?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. He put his hand on Qiao Tan Yuan’s forehead. ‘You don’t have a fever. Where are hurt?’

‘I’m OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Can we stay home?’

‘Alright,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘We’ll stay home. We’ll have breakfast with Xiao Bao. After breakfast I’ll teach Xiao Bao new words. Xiao Bao is a fast learner.’

Yesterday I taught her many new words, and she memorised them.'

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded, and she went to wake up Xiao Bao.

After breakfast, Gu Jiao Wu taught Xiao Bao new words in the living room while Qiao Tan Yuan tidied the kitchen.

'Xiao Bao, this is a motor bike,' Gu Jiao Wu said and pointed at a flashcard of a motor bike.

'Car,' Xiao Bao said.

'Motor bike,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Car,' Xiao Bao said. 'Dada, car, play.'

Gu Jiao Wu smiled. He patiently taught Xiao Bao new words all morning. But he understood Xiao Bao was a young child who loved to play. He took out the red electronic car model he bought for Xiao Bao's birthday, and he moved the car around the living room. Xiao Bao clapped her hands, and she ran baby steps around the living room chasing the car.

In the afternoon, Gu Jiao Wu cooked lunch for Xiao Bao and Qiao Tan Yuan. Xiao Bao had an afternoon nap after lunch. Qiao Tan Yuan washed dishes, and he looked at the photos of Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao on his phone.

Qiao Tan Yuan dried her hands after she washed the dishes. She walked into the living room, and she saw Gu Jiao Wu looking at photos of her and Xiao Bao on his phone. She finally understood why he took so many photos of them.

'Jiao Wu, do you think you've taken too many photos?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Too many?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'No. In the past months I wasn't here with you and Xiao Bao. Now I want to make up for lost time.'

Qiao Tan Yuan sat on the sofa next to Gu Jiao Wu, and she held his hand.

'Jiao Wu, why did you wait until now to see me?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Why did you let me be on my own for so long?'

'Tan Yuan, you know about Jiao Mai's accident and miscarriage,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Jiao Mai and Lei Xin had a misunderstanding after her accident. She didn't want Lei Xin to help her after her leg surgery. So I wanted to help her walk again,

and wait for her and Lei Xin to reconcile before I came here to see you and Xiao Bao.'

Gu Jiao Wu stroked Qiao Tan Yuan's cheeks and he smiled shyly.

'The main reason it took me so long to come see you and Xiao Bao is because I was learning to speak Danish,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I wanted to surprise you, by saying I love you in Danish. I also wanted to speak Danish so I can take better care of you and Xiao Bao in Denmark.'

'Jiao Wu... you learned to speak Danish for me?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Yes,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan hugged Gu Jiao Wu.

'Jiao Wu, I forgive you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'm not angry at you anymore.'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't expect Gu Jiao Wu would do so much for her like learning to speak Danish, because she loved living in Denmark.

'Really?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'You're not scared I'm lying to you?'

'Not scared,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Jiao Wu, I love you.'

'I love you too,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'The truth is I wanted to see you a lot sooner. But I was scared you wouldn't want to see me. I waited until Xiao Bao's birthday, because I knew you wouldn't stop me spending time with you and Xiao Bao if it's Xiao Bao's birthday.'

'Jiao Wu... don't say anymore,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She cried on Gu Jiao Wu's shoulders. 'I'm sorry. That day I didn't mean to say all those things to hurt you...'

'Tan Yuan, you don't have to explain,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He patted Qiao Tan Yuan's back. 'It's my fault for not understanding how much you loved me. I shouldn't have doubted you.'

'Jiao Wu... the truth is I didn't want Chu Da to die and I regret what I...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Tan Yuan, you don't have to explain,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'The truth is if the situation was reverse, I would have done the same thing if I was you in order to be with the person I love. You, I and Chu Da need to take responsibility for what

happened in the past. If Chu Da truly loved me, she should have faith in me and she wouldn't have left me easily because you said some harsh words to her. She should have given me the chance to choose to stay by her side and take care of her before she died. Tan Yuan, let's leave the past in the past. I want to spend my future with you and Xiao Bao.'

'Jiao Wu, thank you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Dummy, you don't have to thank me,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Tan Yuan, I can accept all of you. Your arrogance, impulsiveness, impatience and all your loveable traits.'

'Jiao Wu, I love you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Do I only get to hear you say you love me?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. He carried Qiao Tan Yuan to the bedroom. 'How do I know you're sincere?'

'You...' Qiao Tan Yuan said and wrapped her arms around Gu Jiao Wu's neck to stop herself from falling.

'Tan Yuan, isn't it enough you've starved me for months?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'If you're sincere, shouldn't you comfort me a little?'

'Jiao Wu... what about Xiao Bao?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Xiao Bao's sleeping,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Tan Yuan, shouldn't you be paying attention to me?'

'Jiao Wu...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan's lips, he locked the bedroom door and laid her on the bed.

Later in the afternoon, Qiao Tan Yuan napped and Gu Jiao Wu went to wake up Xiao Bao. He knew if Xiao Bao had a long afternoon nap, Xiao Bao wouldn't have a good night sleep.

'Dada,' Xiao Bao called and rubbed her eyes.

'Xiao Bao, let's go play,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu carried Xiao Bao to the living room. He listened to children's songs with Xiao Bao. Then he held Xiao Bao in the air. Xiao Bao loved him holding her in

the air.

‘Dada,’ Xiao Bao called and laughed in the air.

Qiao Tan Yuan woke up from her nap. When she saw Gu Jiao Wu and Xiao Bao happily playing together in the living room, she wished time would stop for the three of them.

‘Tan Yuan, you’re awake,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘It’s still sunny outside. Should we take Xiao Bao outside to play?’

‘Um, let’s take Xiao Bao to the children’s playground in the park,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu carried Xiao Bao and held Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand to the closest park.

‘Dada, mama, swing,’ Xiao Bao said and pointed at the baby swing.

Gu Jiao Wu buckled Xiao Bao on the baby swing, and he gently pushed the swing.

‘Dada, up, up,’ Xiao Bao said and laughed.

‘Tan Yuan, when we take Xiao Bao to see her grandparents, I’ll build a swing set for her at both her grandparents’ homes,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Jiao Wu, when do you want us to take Xiao Bao to see her grandparents?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘You can decide,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll go wherever you and Xiao Bao want to go.’

‘Jiao Wu, let’s book tickets to go home tonight,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘There’s no rush,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I know you love living in Denmark.’

‘Jiao Wu, I want to fly home with you and Xiao Bao,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You don’t need to hide the truth from me anymore.’

‘What?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan took out the medical report from the pocket of Gu Jiao Wu’s jacket.

‘Jiao Wu, why didn’t you tell me about this?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘How long did you plan to hide the truth from me?’

‘I thought I threw the medical report away,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I didn’t know it was still in my jacket.’

‘Jiao Wu, why didn’t you tell me sooner?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked and cried.

‘Tan Yuan, listen to me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He let go of the swing, and hugged Qiao Tan Yuan. ‘It’s not what you’re thinking.’

‘Jiao Wu... why... if you told me sooner... I...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Tan Yuan, did you forgive me because you saw this medical report?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Are you saying if I told you I’m dying sooner, you would forgive me and come home with me sooner?’

‘Jiao Wu... I don’t want you to sick,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t want you to die. Let’s fly home. I believe you’ll recover after cancer treatments. Jiao Wu, I don’t want you to die...’

‘Tan Yuan, if I say I’m not sick, would you have forgiven me and believe I love you as easily?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Jiao Wu, the past doesn’t matter anymore,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I love you. I won’t let anything happen to you. Let’s fly home. I’ll find the best hospital, doctors and medicine for your cancer treatments. Let’s not delay your cancer treatments. I believe you’ll recover after your cancer treatments. Jiao Wu, nothing will happen to you.’

End of Chapter 146

Related



Chapter 147

Emerald.

‘Tan Yuan, there’s nothing for you to worry about me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I don’t want to use sickness for you to pity, believe and accept me. If you forgave me because of this, I don’t want us to fly home. I want to stay here to keep

taking care of you and Xiao Bao until you truly accept me.'

'Jiao Wu, I do believe you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I only needed time to work through my doubts. Even if I didn't find out you're sick, later on I would have forgiven you.'

'Tan Yuan, thank you for believing me,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Now if I die, I won't have any regrets.'

'Jiao Wu, I'm begging you not say you'll die,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'We'll go to the hospital, and let the doctors examine you. You're still young and strong. I don't believe the heavens will take you away from me and Xiao Bao like this.'

'Tan Yuan, you don't need to worry about me,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I'm OK.'

'Jiao Wu how can you be this nonchalant?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'Can't you listen to me? We'll go to the hospital for your cancer treatments. You'll recover, and live a long life with me and Xiao Bao...'

'Tan Yuan, I'm not sick,' Gu Jiao Wu said and let go of Qiao Tan Yuan. 'Let's go home.'

Xiao Bao looked curiously at Qiao Tan Yuan and the fir-tree. She didn't know why they looked sad.

Gu Jiao Wu unbuckled Xiao Bao, picked up Xiao Bao and he carried Xiao Bao home.

Qiao Tan Yuan followed Gu Jiao Wu and Xiao Bao home in a daze.

At home, Gu Jiao Wu put Xiao Bao down in front of the coffee table and he gave Xiao Bao the teddy bear to play with. Then he opened his suitcase, he took out another medical report and he showed it to Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Jiao Wu, what is this?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Tan Yuan, my bad lifestyle habits gave me stomach ulcers,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'But after I took medication for my stomach ulcers, I was still in pain. The doctor gave me a faecal occult blood test, and a referral to have a colonoscopy. The results you saw was my faecal occult blood test results. When the doctor told me I had bowel cancer, my first reaction was I needed to take you and Xiao Bao home. Lucky I went to get a colonoscopy. This is the results of my colonoscopy.'

Tan Yuan, I don't have bowel cancer. The lab accidentally mixed up my faecal occult blood test results with another patient.'

'Jiao Wu, tell me you're not joking,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Tell me you're not sick.'

'Tan Yuan, I'm not joking,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'But I need to eat and sleep better.'

Qiao Tan Yuan hit Gu Jiao Wu's chest lightly.

'Jiao Wu, you're too much,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Why didn't you throw out the results you left in your jacket? Do you know how much you scared me? I thought you were sick... I thought you were dying... I...'

Qiao Tan Yuan cried joyful tears. When she thought Gu Jiao Wu was dying, her world collapsed.

'Tan Yuan, don't cry anymore,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I'm OK. You don't know how scared I was when I thought I had to leave you and Xiao Bao. You and Xiao Bao are my world.'

'Jiao Wu, you're hateful,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Yes, I'm hateful,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'The truth is I thought about showing you the wrong results to get you to forgive me. But I didn't want you to forgive me out of pity. I wanted you to forgive me because you love me.'

'Jiao Wu, you're hateful...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Yes, yes,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Will you forgive me, and accept my love?'

'Do I have a choice to say no?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Yes,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If you say no, I'll stay here with you and Xiao Bao until you forgive me.'

'What if I don't forgive you?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Then I'll stay here forever with you and Xiao Bao,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'As long as I'm with you and Xiao Bao, I'll wait how long it takes for you to forgive me.'

'You only know how to trick me,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Yes, yes,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'But you're the only person I want to trick.'

Gu Jiao Wu was a serious man by nature. In the past he rarely joked and bantered with Chu Da. Qiao Tan Yuan was the only exception. He joked and bantered with Qiao Tan Yuan often because he wanted to see her smile.

‘Really?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She looked at Xiao Bao playing with the teddy bear. ‘What about Xiao Bao?’

‘Tan Yuan, are you jealous of our daughter?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked and smiled.

‘Why would I be jealous of our daughter?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. Her face turned pink. ‘In the future you can’t scare me and Xiao Bao.’

Gu Jiao Wu hugged Qiao Tan Yuan, and he kissed her embarrassed lips. She wrapped her arms around his neck, and she kissed him back. He pressed her closer to him, and she felt his erection against her stomach. They kissed each other until they ran out of breath.

‘Dada, mama,’ Xiao Bao called.

Qiao Tan Yuan squatted in front of Xiao Bao.

‘Xiao Bao, what’s wrong?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Dada, mama, kiss, kiss,’ Xiao Bao said.

Qiao Tan Yuan gave Gu Jiao Wu a look that told him to take care of the embarrassing situation.

Gu Jiao Wu smiled, he picked up Xiao Bao and he kissed Xiao Bao’s cheeks.

‘Xiao Bao, daddy kiss mummy because daddy loves mummy,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Daddy kiss Xiao Bao because daddy loves Xiao Bao too.’

‘Dada, love,’ Xiao Bao said.

Qiao Tan Yuan kissed Xiao Bao’s cheeks too.

‘Mummy loves Xiao Bao too,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Love, love,’ Xiao Bao said.

‘Tan Yuan, let’s go home together,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Um, let’s go home together,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu, Qiao Tan Yuan and Xiao Bao flew home to the Gu Mansion. The elders loved having Xiao Bao home, especially Wang Tu Ya who took Xiao Bao everywhere to show off Xiao Bao.

Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan were reassured Xiao Bao was well looked after at the Gu Mansion. Gu Jiao Wu helped Wang Tu Ya manage Wang's company, and Qiao Tan Yuan returned to work at Qiao's company. Occasionally Gu Jiao Wu would take Qiao Tan Yuan out to eat dinner with just the two of them.

A week later, Gu Jiao Wu reserved a restaurant for dinner. Qiao Tan Yuan wanted to take Xiao Bao out to eat dinner with them that night, but he was adamant Xiao Bao had to stay home with the elders that night.

At the restaurant Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan sat at their reserved table. He thought she looked beautiful in the green dress and emerald necklace.

'Tan Yuan, you look beautiful today,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'What about other days?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Tan Yuan, you're beautiful on other days too,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'But you're especially beautiful today.'

'You're becoming more of a sweet talker by the day,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was happy to hear Gu Jiao Wu praised her, because in the past he didn't praise her unless he praised her to mock her.

The waiter brought the dinner dishes Gu Jiao Wu ordered to the table.

Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan happily ate their dinner together in a comfortable silence.

The waiter cleared Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan's table after dinner, and another waiter wheeled out a heart shaped birthday cake. An orchestra and a singer appeared on stage to play and sing a happy birthday song for Qiao Tan Yuan.

'Tan Yuan, happy birthday,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was too moved to speak. She didn't think Gu Jiao Wu remembered her birthday.

Gu Jiao Wu knelt in front of Qiao Tan Yuan, and he presented her a diamond ring.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, will you marry me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘I promise I’ll love you, cherish you and to make you happy for the rest of our lives.’

‘Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She was nervous to have everyone at the restaurant looking at her and Gu Jiao Wu. ‘I thought you forgot.’

‘Tan Yuan, I promise I won’t forget your birthday, Xiao Bao’s birthday and our wedding anniversary,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Miss Qiao Tan Yuan, can you give me another chance to be your husband and let me make you happy?’

‘Jiao Wu... I... yes...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

End of Chapter 147

Related



Chapter 148

Ring.

Gu Jiao Wu put the diamond ring on Qiao Tan Yuan's ring finger. He hugged her, and he kissed her lips gently.

'Tan Yuan, thank you,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I was scared you would reject me.'

'You know how to be scared?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at the ring on her ring finger. Gu Jiao Wu chose a princess style ring for her. She didn't care about how expensive the diamond ring was, she cared about the man who gave her the ring.

'Jiao Wu, why did you choose this ring for me?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Because in my eyes, you're my queen,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I do love all of you, even your arrogance. I want you to always be my queen.'

'Jiao Wu, I'm really happy,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'This is only the start of the night,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I have another surprise for you.'

Gu Jiao Wu lit the birthday cake candles. Qiao Tan Yuan made a wish, and blew out the candles.

‘Tan Yuan, what did you wish for?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu fed Qiao Tan Yuan a piece of cake.

‘My wish won’t come true if I tell you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘If you tell me your wish, I’ll make your wish come true,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I’m not going to tell you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Are we going home now?’

‘Yes, let’s go home,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

In the car, Gu Jiao Wu didn’t take the road back to the Gu Mansion.

‘Tan Yuan, I want to give you your birthday gift,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Isn’t my ring your gift?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘The ring is your engagement ring,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Do you want to see your birthday gift?’

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu parked the car on the side of the road, and he took off his tie.

‘Jiao Wu... what do you want to do?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Do you trust me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Then you can’t take off your blindfold before I take it off,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and used his tie to blindfold Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan trusted Gu Jiao Wu because he accepted all of her. Since they returned home from Denmark, he had been attentive and loving toward her.

Gu Jiao Wu drove the car to an apartment complex near Qiao Tan Yuan’s office.

After Gu Jiao Wu parked the car, he carried Qiao Tan Yuan to the elevators.

‘Jiao Wu, where are you taking me?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan heard the elevator doors opened, and she knew Gu Jiao Wu didn’t take her back to the Gu Mansion.

‘Don’t worry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I promise I won’t drop you.’

Gu Jiao Wu carried Qiao Tan Yuan into their new home, and he took off her blindfold.

‘Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan called.

Qiao Tan Yuan was surprised Gu Jiao Wu took her to the apartment he bought for her. The construction company joined two floors together. Gu Jiao Wu furnished the renovated apartment himself. From the Italian leather sofa to the wine bar and the chandelier above the spiral stairs.

‘Tan Yuan, downstairs is our living room, dining room, study room, kitchen and the guest rooms,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I want to show you our rooms upstairs.’

Qiao Tan Yuan followed Gu Jiao Wu upstairs. He brought her to a pink princess room. She knew he designed the room for Xiao Bao.

‘This is Xiao Bao’s bedroom,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu guided Qiao Tan Yuan to the connecting rooms to Xiao Bao’s bedroom. The first connecting room was full of musical and plush toys Xiao Bao loved to play with. The second connecting room was a spare room elegantly furnished.

‘Tan Yuan, these two rooms are Xiao Bao’s play room and a spare room for your own private use,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu took Qiao Tan Yuan to the master bedroom. She was surprised to see their pre-wedding portraits hung on the wall. When she returned to the Gu Mansion she didn’t ask Gu Jiao Wu about their pre-wedding portraits because she thought he threw them away. She looked at the bed, vanity table, walk-in-wardrobe and bathroom. Gu Jiao Wu furnished the master bedroom according to her taste.

‘Jiao Wu... this is really a happy surprise...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Tan Yuan, the title deed is under your name,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘This is my birthday gift to you.’

Qiao Tan Yuan hugged Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Jiao Wu, I love you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips, and he pulled her toward the bed.

‘Jiao Wu... the curtains,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu pressed a concealed button on the side of the bed, and the curtains closed. He undressed them, and he teased her body for a long a time.

‘Jiao Wu... I want you inside...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t bear Gu Jiao Wu’s teasing any longer.

Gu Jiao Wu happily complied, and he kept Qiao Tan Yuan up all night.

In the morning, Qiao Tan Yuan woke up happy and sore. She thought about last night, she didn’t know if Gu Jiao Wu’s proposal or his birthday gift to her made her happier. She looked at the clock on the wall, it was time for her to get ready for work. She got out of bed too quick, she fell onto the bed and landed on Gu Jiao Wu’s body.

‘Tan Yuan, do you want me this early in the morning?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

End of Chapter 148

Related



Chapter 149

Best man.

‘Tan Yuan, are you sure you can go to work in this condition?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Do you want me to help you dress?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked and smiled.

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Stay away.’

‘Alright,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll go cook breakfast for you. Come downstairs when you’re dressed.’

‘OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked to the wardrobe, and she chose one of the new outfits Gu Jiao Wu bought her.

Qiao Tan Yuan dressed, prepared for work and she walked downstairs to the dining room to have breakfast with Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Tan Yuan, I want to marry you soon,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Jiao Wu... our parents...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t want to give hers and Gu Jiao Wu’s parents the same

grief as last time. She was scarred from a failed marriage, and a cancelled wedding.

‘Tan Yuan, don’t worry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll explain everything to our parents and the elders. I’ll let them know this time we’ll be doing all the wedding planning ourselves.’

‘OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

In the evening, Gu Jiao Wu picked up Qiao Tan Yuan from work and drove them to the Qiao Mansion.

‘Dad, mum, this time I promise I’m marrying Tan Yuan,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Jiao Wu, I can forget about the past but I truly hope this time you can make Tan Yuan happy,’ Mrs Qiao said.

‘Mum, I promise I’ll make Tan Yuan happy,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Mr Qiao agreed with Mrs Qiao, as long as Qiao Tan Yuan was happy, they were willing to give their blessing.

After Gu Jiao Wu received Mr and Mrs Qiao’s blessing to marry Qiao Tan Yuan, he and Qiao Tan Yuan returned to the Gu Mansion.

‘I promise this time I’ll marry Tan Yuan,’ Gu Jiao Wu said to the elders.

‘Xiao Bao isn’t getting any younger,’ Wang Tu Ya said. ‘You and Tan Yuan should get married before Xiao Bao’s wedding.’

‘Yes mum,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Jiao Wu, if you hurt Tan Yuan again, I’ll disown you,’ Gu Tian Chu threatened.

‘Yes grandpa,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Since the elders from the Gu and Qiao Households gave their blessing, Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan planned their wedding together.

The following week, Qiao Tan Yuan received an uninvited visitor in her work office.

‘Mr Quan, don’t you know it’s polite to knock before you enter someone else’s office?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked coldly.

‘You’re getting married?’ Quan Zheng Hao asked.

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘My wedding has nothing to do with you.’

‘Your wedding is my business,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘Why are you marrying him? My company’s products are ready to be launched.’

‘Congratulations,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Hopefully both our companies will profit.’

‘You promised you’ll give me a chance to be with you if I succeed,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘Mr Quan, I’ll never be with you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I love my husband. Mr Quan, I hope we’ll continue to have a good work relationship.’

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I love you,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘What do you want me to say?’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I told you, I love my husband. I hope you understand.’

Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu had registered their marriage. They were legally married. But she didn’t want to share the good news with outsiders.

Quan Zheng Hao grabbed Qiao Tan Yuan’s arm.

‘Qiao Tan Yuan, I love you,’ Quan Zheng Hao said. ‘Don’t marry him. Give me a chance to make you happy. You can’t marry him, it’s not fair to me if you marry him.’

‘Fair?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Mr Quan, I don’t like you. Also, you need to be respectful and call me Mrs Gu.’

Suddenly Quan Zheng Hao pulled Qiao Tan Yuan close to him, and he lowered his head to kiss her.

The door slammed opened, Gu Jiao Wu strode into the room ready to kill Quan Zheng Hao.

Qiao Tan Yuan pushed the shocked Quan Zheng Hao away from her, she walked to Gu Jiao Wu and she linked arms with Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Jiao Wu, why are you here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Our wedding reception is booked,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I wanted to take you to

the hotel to see the reception hall layout.’ He walked Qiao Tan Yuan to the door then he turned around to glare at Quan Zheng Hao. ‘Mr Quan, Tan Yuan is my wife. I hope in the future you’ll be respectful toward my wife.’

‘Gu Jiao Wu, I want to compete fairly with you,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘Mrs Gu, I didn’t know you were this sought after,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You’re my wife, but you still have other men’s admiration.’

‘Now you know,’ Qiao Tan Yuan teased. ‘There are many men lining up to take your wife away.’

‘Mr Quan, you don’t have a chance to compete with me,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Last weekend Tan Yuan and I registered our marriage. Tan Yuan is legally my wife. You need to call her Mrs Gu.’

‘Impossible,’ Quan Zheng Hao said.

‘It’s true,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Jiao Wu and I are married. Mr Quan, you don’t have a chance to be with me. I love my husband. The truth is you don’t love me. You’re only infatuated with me because I’m different to the women you’ve met in the past. There are many available women who are more suited to you than me. You should go find one of those women.’

‘Tan Yuan, let’s go,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu led Qiao Tan Yuan to the elevator.

‘Tan Yuan, before I wanted to punch him,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and he hugged Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Jiao Wu, there are cameras in the elevator,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Let go.’

‘In the future if he comes into your office, call your secretary and ask her to get rid of him,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Jiao Wu, I believe he has given up hope,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘If he hasn’t, it won’t be too late for me to punch him,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Tan Yuan, about our wedding. I want to ask Shen Cheng to be my best man.’

‘Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘You don’t want Shen Cheng to be my best man?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I... Jiao Wu... what about Zui Ren or Shang Wen?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Shen Cheng avoided Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Wu since they returned to the Gu Mansion. She didn’t want to hurt Shen Cheng anymore.

‘Are you sad for Shen Cheng?’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

End of Chapter 149

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Chapter 150

Flower girl.

‘Jiao Wu, can you choose someone else?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘No,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Because you feel sad for Shen Cheng, I want Shen Cheng to be my best man.’

Gu Jiao Wu drove Qiao Tan Yuan straight home.

‘Jiao Wu, you said if I feel sorry toward Shen Cheng, I shouldn’t hurt him anymore,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Do you think I’m being cruel to Shen Cheng?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded.

‘Alright,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll ask Shen Cheng’s opinion. If he declines, I won’t

force him.'

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn't believe Gu Jiao Wu still wanted to ask Shen Cheng to be his best man. She hoped Shen Cheng would find the right woman for Shen Cheng.

All the Du, Qiao and Gu Households' acquaintances were invited to the joint wedding of Du Lei Xin and Gu Jiao Mai's wedding, and Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan's wedding.

Out of Gu Tian Chu's great-grandchildren, he loved and doted on Gu Ting Ding the most.

'Big brother, our elders favor girls over boys,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'If only Pan Ting and I had twin girls instead of twin boys.'

'Ask your wife to give you a daughter,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was proud of Gu Ting Ding. He thought it was only natural the elders would favour his smart and loveable daughter over his twin menace nephews.

'No,' Gu Jiao Wen said. 'Pan Ting had a painful childbirth. I don't want her to have another child.'

Gu Jiao Wu agreed with Gu Jiao Wen. After Gu Jiao Wu witnessed how much pain Qiao Tan Yuan went through to give birth to Gu Ting Ding, he didn't want Qiao Tan Yuan to have another child. Gu Jiao Wu was happy to be a family of three with Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Ting Ding.

In the bridal waiting room, Gu Jiao Mai and Qiao Tan Yuan were nervous brides.

'Big sister, is your heart racing?' Gu Jiao Mai asked.

'Yes,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Shen Cheng carried two boxes into the room.

'Shen Cheng...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't know what Gu Jiao Wu said to Shen Cheng to make Shen

Cheng agree to be Gu Jiao Wu's best man.

'Tan Yuan, you look beautiful today,' Shen Cheng said. He gave Qiao Tan Yuan one of the boxes. 'It's for you. I wish you a happy marriage.'

'Shen Cheng, thank you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Jiao Mai, I wish you a happy marriage too,' Shen Cheng said and gave Gu Jiao Mai the second box.

'Thank you,' Gu Jiao Mai said.

Gu Jiao Mai thought Gu Jiao Wu was blessed Gu Ting Ding was his daughter. Otherwise Qiao Tan Yuan wouldn't be her sister-in-law since Shen Cheng was a better catch than Gu Jiao Wu.

'I should go outside and perform my best man's duties,' Shen Cheng said.

'Shen Cheng... thank you...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't want to see Shen Cheng looking sad.

Shen Cheng hugged Qiao Tan Yuan.

'You don't have to thank me,' Shen Cheng said. 'I sincerely wish you happiness.'

'Shen Cheng, don't forget you're the best man today,' Gu Jiao Wu said from outside the door.

'Big brother, I know,' Shen Cheng said and reluctantly let go of Qiao Tan Yuan.

Shen Cheng walked outside, and he waited with Gu Jiao Wu for Mr Qiao to arrive to give Qiao Tan Yuan away to Gu Jiao Wu.

End of Chapter 150

Related



Chapter 151

Misunderstanding.

‘I didn’t touch you that night,’ Qiao Jie said.

Gu Jiao Wu heard Qiao Jie’s frustrated tone of voice. He walked toward Qiao Jie in case someone wanted to disrupt the wedding.

‘Chen Tan Yi, I didn’t touch you that night,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘That night someone drugged you and my brother-in-law. My big sister didn’t want you to sleep with her husband in your drugged state. Big sister asked me to take you to another room to sleep off the drug effect.’

‘Are you saying nothing happened between you and me that night?’ Chen Tan Yi asked.

Gu Jiao Wu vaguely remembered Chen Tan Yi, she was Tan Pan Ting’s little cousin. He remembered he met Chen Tan Yi once when he was with Qiao Tan Yuan before their divorce. That night he met Chen Tan Yi, he thought she had the same smile as Chu Da so he helped to sober her. But afterward he was drugged and he slept with Qiao Tan Yuan, it was the night they conceived Gu Ting Ding.

‘I’m not a saint but there is one thing I wouldn’t do,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘I wouldn’t rape a woman. If you’re denying you were drugged, are you saying you were the one who drugged my brother-in-law?’

‘I didn’t drug anyone,’ Chen Tan Yi said. ‘I remember when I woke up I saw you.’

You said nothing happened and you disappeared.'

'Forget it,' Qiao Jie said. 'Now you know the truth. I'm innocent.'

'I'm sorry,' Chen Tan Yi said. 'Thank you for helping me that night.'

Qiao Jie was relieved Chen Tan Yi finally believed he was innocent. He didn't want to take responsibility for something he didn't do.

Chen Tan Yi walked away from Qiao Jie, and she bumped into Gu Jiao Wu. She apologised and left. Years ago, she was infatuated with Gu Jiao Wu, but Gu Jiao Wu was indifferent to her.

'Big brother,' Qiao Jie greeted.

'Qiao Jie, tell me what happened that night I was drugged in the hotel,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Big brother, are you saying big sister didn't explain how someone drugged you that night?' Qiao Jie asked.

'What?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'That night big sister attended the business function at the hotel because you and big sister won't divorced yet,' Qiao Jie said. 'She and I looked for you at the hotel function room, but we couldn't find you. Then we found you and Pan Ting's cousin lying together in a hotel room. We didn't know what happened, but we believed you wouldn't sleep with another woman while married to big sister. Big sister asked me to take Pan Ting's cousin to another room and make sure nothing happened to her.'

Gu Jiao Wu's body shivered, he remembered that night Qiao Tan Yuan begged him to believe her that she didn't drug him to sleep with her.

'Big brother, are you OK?' Qiao Jie asked. 'Did you think big sister...'

'I'm OK,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Today is your big sister's wedding. Be a good little brother, and go greet the wedding guests.'

'Yes big brother,' Qiao Jie said and went to greet the wedding guests.

Du Lei Xin overheard Qiao Jie and Gu Jiao Wu's conversation.

'Big brother is everything OK?' Du Lei Xin asked.

‘Yes,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I want to make a phone call.’

‘Big brother... are you having cold feet and you want to run away?’ Du Lei Xin asked. ‘You can’t do this to big sister.’

‘Lei Xin!’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Don’t say nonsense. Why would I want to run away from my wife?’

‘Good,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘If big brother ran away, big sister and Jiao Mai would kill me first.’

Mr Qiao arrived at the wedding, and he found Gu Jiao Wu with Du Lei Xin.

‘Son, I’m giving Tan Yuan to you,’ Mr Qiao said. ‘I hope this time you’ll make Tan Yuan happy.’

‘Dad, I promise I’ll make Tan Yuan happy,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Good,’ Mr Qiao said. ‘You better keep your promise.’

An hour later, Mrs Qiao and Chen Ting Yu were crying happy tears to see their daughters being married off to the men they loved.

After the wedding ceremony, Hu Zui Ren and Tong Shang Wen drank with the heartbroken Shen Cheng at the reception.

Many wedding guests asked the two brides and two grooms where they were going on their honeymoons. Du Lei Xin said he was taking Gu Jiao Mai to a beach resort near the Aegean Sea, and Gu Jiao Wu was taking Qiao Tan Yuan to a friend’s island.

Late at night Gu Jiao Wu drove Qiao Tan Yuan to their apartment. She sat on their bed in her wedding dress.

Gu Jiao Wu answered a phone call downstairs before he walked upstairs to the master bedroom. He sat next to Qiao Tan Yuan on their bed.

‘Tan Yuan, today you look beautiful in your wedding dress,’ Gu Jiao Wu praised.

Qiao Tan Yuan felt shy. Although it wasn’t her first night, but it was hers and Gu Jiao Wu’s fresh start.

‘Jiao Wu... I’m tired and I want to sleep,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu laid on the bed, he pulled Qiao Tan Yuan down next to him and he kissed her lips gently.

‘Tan Yuan... was your first night painful?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘What?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘I thought we agreed to forget the past.’

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s wrist.

‘Today I found out something,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘What?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Tan Yuan, you didn’t drug me that night at the hotel,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu was talking to Xiao Lam on the phone downstairs. Xiao Lam reported the two rats that betrayed him were taken care of. But it was Qiao Tan Yuan who he cared about. When he was drugged at the hotel that year, he thought he slept Chu Da. It wasn’t Chu Da, it was Qian Tan Yuan who he slept with.

‘It’s in the past,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t want to think about it.’

‘Tan Yuan...’ Gu Jiao Wu called.

Gu Jiao Wu hugged Qiao Tan Yuan. How much did she love him to forgive him? He had accused her wrongly of drugging him to have a child with him, and hang onto to him.

‘Tan Yuan, did you hate me for being so cruel to you?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You were only cruel to me. But you were good to everyone else. You were good to your family, friends and colleagues.’

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips gently again.

‘Tan Yuan, I’m sorry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘No one could fault you for not loving me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t care about the past anymore. She believed Gu Jiao Wu would be good to her in the future.

‘Tan Yuan, promise me one thing,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘What?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

End of Chapter 151

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Baby One More Time



Chapter 152

Baby.

‘Tan Yuan, I didn’t love you before so I didn’t care about hurting you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Now I love you. I promise in the future I’ll always believe you, and I won’t do anything to hurt you. Tan Yuan, let’s forget the past. Let today be the start of our new lives together.’

‘Um, today’s the start of our new lives together,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was happy Gu Jiao Wu accepted all of her, and he loved her for who she was.

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips gently. His gentle thoughts disappeared

when he noticed their body positions, and how tight her corset was, which gave him a beautiful view of her cleavage.

The following afternoon, Qiao Tan Yuan woke up in a familiar tropical bedroom. She remembered how demanding Gu Jiao Wu was on their wedding night, and she blushed.

‘You’re awake,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘How long did I sleep for?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘The whole morning,’ Gu Jiao Wu said and smiled. ‘I thought you’re sleeping beauty, and I needed to wake you up with a kiss.’

‘It’s your fault,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Yes, yes,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Your Majesty, let your humble servant cook you dinner while you rest.’

‘You have my permission to go the kitchen,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s forehead then he went to cook dinner.

The next seven days, Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan spent their time relaxing on the island. During the mornings they swam and snorkelled. In the afternoons they read or watched TV together. During the nights they watched the stars and played strip chess... she usually lost and he won even if he lost.

On the eighth day of their honeymoon, Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan met up with Du Lei Xin and Gu Jiao Mai at the resort near the Aegean Sea to fly back home together.

When Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan returned home, they were happy to see Gu Ting Ding. On the weekdays, they worked and Wang Tu Ya looked after Gu Ting Ding. On the weekends they took Gu Ting Ding sightseeing.

A month later, Gu Ting Ding ran into the master room and she pulled Qiao Tan Yuan’s sleeve to wake up and take her out to play with Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Tan Yuan, if you’re tired then sleep in,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll take Xiao Bao out to play while you sleep.’

‘No,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘We were busy working all week. Xiao Bao will be sad

if we don't take her out together.'

'OK,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu regretted picking up Gu Ting Ding from the Gu Mansion last night. Lately Qiao Tan Yuan was overworked, and she didn't get enough sleep on the weekends to reboot because they took Gu Ting Ding out on the weekends.

Gu Jiao Wu passed Qiao Tan Yuan a glass of milk.

'Tan Yuan, have you considered offloading some of your workload to Qiao Jie?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'He looks too free to me.'

'Qiao Jie has a lot on his plate too,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan drank a sip of milk, and she ran to the toilet to vomit.

Gu Jiao Wu and Gu Ting Ding followed Qiao Tan Yuan to the toilet.

'Tan Yuan, are you OK?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Is it the milk?'

'I'm OK,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'You don't look and sound OK,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I'll drop off Xiao Bao at the Gu Mansion, and I'll take you to the hospital.'

'It's nothing,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Perhaps I caught a cold.'

Qiao Tan Yuan rubbed her stomach that felt a little rounder. It was more than a month since she returned from her honeymoon, and she didn't have her period since the day before her wedding.

'Jiao Wu, we don't need to go to the hospital,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Why?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Perhaps I'm pregnant,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'What?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Impossible.'

Gu Jiao Wu didn't want Qiao Tan Yuan to go through another painful childbirth. He was careful to use protection with Qiao Tan Yuan except... on their wedding night. He thought it was safe not to use protection, because she finished her period the day before their wedding.

'Anything is possible,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan vomited again. Gu Jiao Wu rubbed her back.

‘Jiao Wu, what if I’m pregnant?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu had Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Ting Ding, he didn’t think about adding another child to their family.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know what to do. Gu Ting Ding was little, and she was busy managing Qiao’s company.

‘Tan Yuan, if you don’t want to have this child, you don’t have to,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘It’s enough that we have Xiao Bao.’

‘Jiao Wu, I don’t know,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘We’ll drop Xiao Bao off at the Gu Mansion,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Then I’ll take you to the hospital for a doctor to examine you. If you’re pregnant, we can consult a doctor about not having this child.’

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Gu Ting Ding’s adorable rosy small face. If she had a second daughter, her second daughter would be as adorable as Gu Ting Ding. If she had a son, she wondered if her son would look like her or Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Jiao Wu, should we discuss this with our parents before we make a decision?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Tan Yuan, are you worried our parents will disapprove about us not having this child?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

End of Chapter 152

Related



Chapter 153

Seven weeks.

‘Jiao Wu, this is our baby,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Do you want to have this child?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I don’t know,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Tan Yuan, if you want to have this child then you can,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know if she could go through another difficult pregnancy and childbirth, but she didn’t want to lose hers and Gu Jiao Wu’s child either.

An hour later, at the hospital.

‘Jiao Wu, it’s your fault,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘What do we do now?’

The doctor examined Qiao Tan Yuan, she was seven weeks pregnant.

On the drive back home, Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan didn’t know what to do. Gu Ting Ding was a little older than a year old. They felt guilty they didn’t spend enough time with Gu Ting Ding, and they didn’t know how they would cope with a second child.

At Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan’s apartment, they sat on the sofa.

‘Tan Yuan, I didn’t think I would get you pregnant,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘It was only one time.’

‘What one time?’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘It was many times. It would be strange if I wasn’t pregnant.’

‘On our wedding night you looked too beautiful,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Too beautiful?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘The curtains were closed.’

‘Yes, yes,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You can hit me how many times you want. But not while you’re pregnant. If you want this child, I’ll support your decision.’

‘It’s easy for you to say to have our baby,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘When I was pregnant with Xiao Bao. I was bedridden the first two months. I had bad morning sickness, I couldn’t eat anything without throwing up and I couldn’t sleep.’

Gu Jiao Wu remembered Shen Cheng once asked him where he was when Qiao Tan Yuan was bedridden and suffered while she was pregnant with Gu Ting Ding. He regretted he wasn’t by Qiao Tan Yuan’s side when she was pregnant with Gu Ting Ding.

Gu Jiao Wu hugged Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Tan Yuan, let’s abort this child,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I don’t want you to suffer. I’ll book a hospital appointment for tomorrow to abort this child.’

‘But...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘No but,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Didn’t you hear the doctor say if we want to about this child then we need to do it soon otherwise your life is at risk.’

Gu Jiao Wu supported Qiao Tan Yuan upstairs to their master bedroom to let her take a nap.

When Qiao Tan Yuan woke up, Gu Jiao Wu brought a dinner tray for her to eat in bed.

‘Jiao Wu, didn’t you say we’ll abort our baby?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Why do I have to eat nutritious meals, and drink herbal tonics?’

‘Your body needs nourishment to recover after an abortion,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan drank a sip of the herbal tonic, and she ran to the toilet to vomit. Gu Jiao Wu followed her, and he held her hair up while she vomited.

‘Tan Yuan, it’s settled,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Tomorrow I’m taking you to the hospital to abort this child.’

The following morning, Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan’s sweaty hand at the

maternity ward while they sat waiting for her appointment.

‘Tan Yuan, the procedure will be quick,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan nodded. But she had cold feet about going through with aborting hers and Gu Jiao Wu’s child.

‘Mrs Gu,’ a nurse called.

Gu Jiao Wu squeezed Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand, and she followed the nurse to the operating room.

‘Big brother, what are you doing here?’ Du Lei Xin asked.

‘What are you and Jiao Mai doing here?’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan decided not to tell their families that she was pregnant. So he was surprised to see Du Lei Xin and Gu Jiao Mai at the maternity ward.

‘Jiao Mai’s pregnant,’ Du Lei Xin said and smiled. ‘I took her here for the doctor to confirm she’s pregnant.’

‘Really?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘That’s good news. Congratulations to both of you.’

‘Thank you big brother,’ Du Lei Xin said.

‘Jiao Mai have you told your mum the good news yet?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Not yet,’ Gu Jiao Mai said. ‘We’re waiting for the doctor to confirm my pregnancy before we tell our families. Big brother, why are you here?’

End of Chapter 153

Related



Chapter 154

Home.

‘Big brother, is big sister pregnant?’ Gu Jiao Mai asked.

‘It’s not what you’re thinking...’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked out of the operating room with teary eyes. She wanted Gu Jiao Wu to comfort her, but she was surprised to see Du Lei Xin and Gu Jiao Mai.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t care about the people around him, he rushed to Qiao Tan Yuan’s side.

‘Done?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Are you in pain anywhere? Do you want to stay in the hospital for monitoring?’

‘Jiao Wu, I didn’t...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Big sister, are you OK?’ Gu Jiao Mai asked.

‘I’m OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Jiao Mai, why are you here?’

‘I’m pregnant,’ Gu Jiao Mai said.

‘Congratulations,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Big sister, are you pregnant...’ Gu Jiao Mai asked.

‘Jiao Mai,’ Du Lei Xin called. ‘Let’s go home to tell the good news to our

families.'

'Um,' Gu Jiao Mai said and followed Du Lei Xin to the car.

'Tan Yuan, before did you want to say you didn't have the procedure?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Jiao Wu... I couldn't kill our baby,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'When I was pregnant with Xiao Bao, I lost all hope to be with you. But Xiao Bao saved me. I'm not saying this to hurt you. I'm saying this for you to understand why I want this baby. This baby is different to Xiao Bao, we conceived this baby out of love.'

Gu Jiao Wu hugged Qiao Tan Yuan. In the past he didn't love Qiao Tan Yuan, he heartlessly told her to abort Gu Ting Ding. But toward the Qiao Tan Yuan he fell in love with, she was his number one priority. He would support her decision whether to keep their second child or not except he was reluctant to let her suffer to give birth to their second child.

'Jiao Wu, I want to give birth to our baby,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Tan Yuan, I don't want you to suffer,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'I'll be OK,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Jiao Wu, I promise after this baby is born, I won't have another child.'

'Tan Yuan if you want this baby then you have to promise you'll listen to me,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'I promise,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu took Qiao Tan Yuan to the Gu Mansion to see Gu Ting Ding, and to tell the elders the good news.

Gu Tian Chu was the happiest to hear good news about Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Mai's pregnancy.

Wang Tu Ya was elated to hear she would have a second grandchild, and she suggested for Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan to live at the Gu Mansion while Qiao Tan Yuan was pregnant for her to help take care of Qiao Tan Yuan and her second grandchild.

Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan agreed. After dinner at the Gu Mansion they went home to pack and sleep.

Gu Jiao Wu helped Qiao Tan Yuan to lie on their bed.

‘Tan Yuan, are you sure you want to keep this baby?’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu didn’t favor girls or boys. Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Ting Ding were his world. He didn’t desire to have a son like most men.

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘It’s good this time I have you by my side to see our baby grow in my stomach.’

‘There’s nothing good about seeing you suffer,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘It’s worth it to have this baby to hear you care about me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s black nightgown was slipping off her shoulder. Gu Jiao Wu put his hands on her shoulders to help it slip further down her body.

‘Jiao Wu... the doctor said it’s not safe for us to do it during the first trimester,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu’s hands froze, and he cursed himself for not using protection on his wedding night.

‘Jiao Wu, our baby is seven weeks old,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Another month will fly by fast.’

‘One month?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu thought if he had to endure one month, at least he could still kiss Qiao Tan Yuan. He pulled her close to him, he kissed her lips and tasted her sweet mouth.

Gu Jiao Wu let go of Qiao Tan Yuan before he couldn’t let go of her anymore.

‘Tan Yuan, if you want another child after giving birth to this child, my limit is three children,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘We can’t have more than three children.’

‘Three?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Am I a pig? Three children is too much. I don’t know if we can cope with two children.’

‘Alright,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Go to sleep. I’ll suffer for you and our baby.’

‘What suffer?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘Jiao Wu, I’m the one who has to suffer to have our baby.’

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan's forehead, and closed his eyes. He pictured their second child would be smart and adorable like Gu Ting Ding, and he felt blessed to have a second child with Qiao Tan Yuan.

In the morning when Gu Jiao Wu saw Qiao Tan Yuan vomit in the toilet, he didn't think having a second child was a blessing anymore.

'Tan Yuan, are OK?' Gu Jiao Wu asked and patted Qiao Tan Yuan's back.

End of Chapter 154

Related



Chapter 155

Worm.

‘I’m OK,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘It’s only the first two months. I’m mentally prepared.’

‘Tan Yuan, you’re mentally prepared but I’m not,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Come downstairs, I made you breakfast. If anything makes you nauseous I’ll throw it away.’

Gu Jiao Wu helped Qiao Tan Yuan downstairs. At the dining table, Qiao Tan Yuan held one spoonful of congee to her mouth, and she put it down.

‘Jiao Wu, I can’t eat,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I want to sleep.’

‘I’ll take you upstairs to sleep but you need to at least eat a little congee,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If you don’t eat, we’re not keeping the baby. I need you, I don’t need the baby.’

‘You don’t need our baby but I need our baby,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Then you should finish the bowl of congee,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If you don’t eat, I don’t mind helping you eat.’

Qiao Tan Yuan slowly ate the bowl of congee.

Weeks later, Gu Jiao Wu decided it was best if he took care of Qiao Tan Yuan in their home, and for Gu Ting Ding to stay at the Gu Mansion with Wang Tu Da. He also loaded off Qiao Tan Yuan’s work to Qiao Jie, and he took Qiao Tan Yuan to work with him where she could sleep and eat in his office.

‘Big brother, this isn’t fair,’ Qiao Jie said. ‘Big sister worked when she was

pregnant with Xiao Bao.'

'I'll find someone else to manage Qiao's company while Tan Yuan is on maternity leave if you don't think you're capable,' Gu Jiao Wu threatened.

Qiao Jie's pride closed his mouth, and he accepted his fate.

When Qiao Tan Yuan was more than three months pregnant, she was eating in Gu Jiao Wu's office and missing work.

'Jiao Wu, I want to go back to work at Qiao's company,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'No,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'I'm scared you'll skip meals if I don't see you eat myself.'

Qiao Tan Yuan was frustrated to see Gu Jiao Wu overworking while she slept and ate like a pig in his office.

'Tan Yuan, be good and listen to me,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'When your morning sickness isn't severe, and you can eat and drink like usual then you can go back to work.'

'Jiao Wu, I promise I'll eat and drink more if you let me go back to work,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'No,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'If you don't let me go back to work, I'll go on a hunger strike,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Tan Yuan, don't be reckless,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Jiao Wu, I don't want to watch you work while I turn into a pig,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Think of it as you're on a holiday,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Jiao Wu, be reasonable,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I'm pregnant, not sick.'

'Alright,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'You can go back to work. But you're working here. I need your help.'

Gu Jiao Wu called his secretary to bring reports for Qiao Tan Yuan to review.

'Jiao Wu...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Tan Yuan, this is my final offer,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll worry about you if you’re not with me.’

Qiao Tan Yuan accepted Gu Jiao Wu’s offer, to her working for him was better than turning into a pig.

Gu Jiao Wu regretted letting Qiao Tan Yuan help him with his work, because she was a diligent worker and he didn’t want her to over exert herself.

‘Jiao Wu, who is responsible for managing these investments?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘I summed up the raw data, but the reported profits are misappropriated between three to five percent for each investment. Someone’s stealing money from your company.’

Qiao Tan Yuan experienced the same obstacles at work when she began to manage Qiao’s company years ago. Her employees underestimated her, and they thought they could get away with embezzlement under her watch. She thought Gu Jiao Wu’s employees were foolish if they assumed Gu Jiao Wu wasn’t capable as Wang Tu Ya.

Gu Jiao Wu hugged Qiao Tan Yuan on the sofa, and he rubbed her round stomach.

‘Tan Yuan, don’t be angry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You’re pregnant, it’s not good for our baby if you’re angry.’

‘Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Tan Yuan, you’re right,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I discovered which employees were secretly stealing money from my company months ago.’

‘Jiao Wu, why haven’t you fired them?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘I want to bait the big fish who is directing the little thieves,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If the big fish believes it’s getting away with immaterial theft, it’ll take the bait and make a material mistake.’

‘Jiao Wu, if you knew about the misappropriations, why did you give me reports you’ve reviewed?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan thought Gu Jiao Wu trusted her work ethics and assigned her proper work. She was angry he gave her reports he had reviewed.

Gu Jiao Wu regretted Qiao Tan Yuan cornered him.

‘Jiao Wu, you don’t trust me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Wife, you’ve accused me wrongly,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If I didn’t trust you then I wouldn’t show you these reports.’

‘Jiao Wu, you’ve reviewed these reports and you knew what was happening behind your back,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Wife, look at how quickly you discovered the little thieves,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘My wife is impressive.’

‘Jiao Wu, you’re looking down on me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Wow, there is a beautiful worm in your mouth,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips, and he gently squeezed her rounder cheeks.

‘Tan Yuan, don’t be angry anymore,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You know I don’t want you to over exert yourself.’

‘You tricked me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Tan Yuan, don’t be angry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘There are many managers who have worked for my mum for years. Some of them believe they are more deserving of my position than me. Out of respect they were loyal to my mum and they contributed to the company for years, I didn’t fire them. But if they are stealing money behind my back then I’m not going to show them mercy.’

‘Jiao Wu, let me deal with them,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan hated employees who put their own self-interests ahead of their colleagues’ livelihoods.

‘Tan Yuan, do you really want to receive a hot potato?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I believe I can handle a hot potato.’

‘Alright, I’ll give this hot potato to you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu understood he and Qiao Tan Yuan shared the same traits when it came to defeating their enemies. If a year ago someone told him that he would fall in love with a woman similar to him, he would tell them they were crazy. But

he did love Qiao Tan Yuan, and he believed she would use suitable methods to defeat his enemies.

‘Jiao Wu, promise me you won’t interfere,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I promise,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He rubbed Qiao Tan Yuan’s stomach. ‘But you have to promise you won’t overwork yourself.’

‘Don’t worry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’ll make sure these worms have nowhere to hide.’

‘I’m more worried about your health,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He massaged Qiao Tan Yuan’s shoulders. ‘If you neglect your health then I won’t let you work.’

‘Yes Mr Nag,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was happy to have Gu Jiao Wu take care of her while she was pregnant with their second child, but she thought he was being overprotective.

‘Who are you calling Mr Nag?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Who else but you?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu looked at Qiao Tan Yuan’s round stomach, and he remembered she was past the first trimester. His hands slid under her maternity dress.

‘Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Tan Yuan, I gave you work, shouldn’t you give me a little reward?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘What?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s neck.

‘Tan Yuan, you’re more than three months pregnant,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Jiao Wu... we’re in your office,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu went to lock the door, and he returned to the sofa.

‘It adds a thrilling element,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Jiao Wu... you have to be careful... our baby...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Don’t worry,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I’ll be careful.’

‘Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan’s maternity dress quickly fell on the floor with Gu Jiao Wu’s clothes.

End of Chapter 155

Related

156 – 157



Chapters 156 & 157

Side Story

Summary of Cheng Yi and Zheng Jia Ju’s Side Story:

Cheng Yi warned Zheng Jia Ju’s ex to stay away from Zheng Jia Ju.

Cheng Yi begged Zheng Jia Ju to forgive him.

Zheng Jia Ju rejected Cheng Yi, and she asked him for a divorce.

Cheng Yi refused to divorce Zheng Jia Ju. He said he loved her, and she still loved him. They slept together for the first time since Fei Yan Niao shot Cheng Yi in TRB I.

End of Chapter 156

Chapter 157

Qiao Tan Yuan investigated the employees who stole money from Gu Jiao Wu’s company. They dipped into many investments, and it would be hard to deal with them individually. They made her angry, and she wanted to throw all of them in prison.

Gu Jiao Wu walked to Qiao Tan Yuan's desk that he added to his office, and he massaged her tensed shoulders.

'What's wrong?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Are you tired?'

'No,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'If we get rid of all the worms involved, it would affect your company substantially.'

'Are you scared?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'No,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'I believe there's a discreet way to deal with the worms, and keep your company intact. I'm not scared of them unlike the period I used to be scared of you.'

'Am I scary?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu sat on the chair, and Qiao Tan Yuan sat on his lap.

'It's not news to you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Back then when you did come home, you looked at me like I owed you money. When I called you to eat a meal with me, you said you were busy and switched off your phone. Over time, I was scared to look at you.'

Gu Jiao Wu squeezed Qiao Tan Yuan's cheeks.

'I'm that scary yet you loved me to death,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Go to hell,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Who loved you to death? I was young and inexperienced back then. When I grew up it was too late, I couldn't get rid of my bad habit of loving you.'

'Young and inexperienced?' Gu Jiao Wu asked. 'Who was it that followed me everywhere, and admired me since she was a little girl?'

'Who would admire someone heartless who used a slingshot to steal someone else's heart?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Slingshot?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Don't you remember?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'When I was a little girl I fell in the garden and I cried. You helped me to stand up, and you told me girls who cried weren't beautiful. Then you gave me a slingshot, and you told me if I flick it at my face when I want to cry, it would stop me from crying.'

Qiao Tan Yuan hit Gu Jiao Wu's chest.

'You lied,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You said you hated girls who cried. So I always smiled in front of you, but you didn't even look my way once.'

Gu Jiao Wu finally knew why Qiao Tan Yuan didn't cry in front of him no matter how much he hurt her.

'Why didn't you tell me about this years ago?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu didn't remember that day in the garden. He didn't know Qiao Tan Yuan would take to heart something he said in passing.

'Why would I tell you years ago?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'If I told you years ago, you would have used it as a chance to laugh at me.'

Gu Jiao Wu stroked Qiao Tan Yuan's hair.

'Dummy,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If you told me years ago, I would have told you it's not good to bottle up your feelings. If you want to cry then cry, and if you want to laugh then laugh.'

'What about you?' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'You only wore one cold face.'

'Bottling up feelings and looking indifferent are two different things,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Back then I was starting to build my career. I didn't let work pressures affect me, but I didn't deny my feelings.'

'Do you regret managing your mum's company?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'No,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Tan Yuan, if you want, I can hand over my mum's company to you and I can go back to my old position.'

End of Chapter 157

Related



Chapter 158

Vixen.

‘Don’t think I don’t know what you’re doing,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Isn’t it enough you’re drowning me?’

‘We can drown together,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Jiao Wu, what are you going to do about the worms?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Why don’t you tell me?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘You said you thought of a way to deal with them.’

‘You’re not going to interfere?’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I trust you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘What’s your plan?’

‘I want them to return everything they stole before I fire them,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I’ll support your decision,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You don’t have to hold back.’

‘Jiao Wu, why are you being good to me today?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘I’m good to you on other days too,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Tan Yuan, I want to do it

with you here again.'

'Jiao Wu... can't you live a day without wanting to...' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Wanting what?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

Gu Jiao Wu carried Qiao Tan Yuan to lock the door. Then he spent time with her on the sofa.

The following weeks, Qiao Tan Yuan was busy overseeing the marketing department, approving TV commercials and magazine advertisements of new products launched by Gu Jiao Wu's company. She used the launching of new products as a reason to recruit the best college graduates, and give them on the job training in different departments.

As Qiao Tan Yuan expected, the worms didn't like their positions being threatened.

'Uncles and aunts,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Isn't lightening your workload a good thing?'

The worms couldn't argue with Qiao Tan Yuan's rationale so they left the meeting room.

Qiao Tan Yuan worked during the day, and held secret meetings with the new employees after work. Not even Gu Jiao Wu knew what she discussed with the new employees.

'Tan Yuan, what are you planning?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Nothing,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'What do you talk about with the new employees?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Jiao Wu, let me guess, the worms are whispering in your ear in an attempt to get you to put me in my place,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Smart guess,' Gu Jiao Wu said. He trusted Qiao Tan Yuan, but he was curious what she talked about during the secret meetings. 'Tan Yuan, can't you tell me a bit about what you talk about with the new employees?'

Gu Jiao Wu waited in his office while Qiao Tan Yuan held the secret meetings. He didn't want his pregnant wife to overwork when he could help her.

‘Jiao Wu, think about it,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘If the worms feel their positions are threatened, it wouldn’t be long before they turn on each other to protect their positions.’

Qiao Tan Yuan used the new employees as her eyes and ears. During the secret meetings they reported to her the worms’ daily activities.

‘Tan Yuan, it’s a good thing I’m your husband and not your enemy,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I support your plan. My wife is impressive.’

‘Did you only discovered today how impressive your wife is?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t an arrogant boss. She respected all employees who performed their work duties diligently, no matter their position. But she had no tolerance for employees who put their company at risk of insolvency.

Gu Jiao Wu felt Qiao Tan Yuan looked beautiful when she used her skills to overcome obstacles. He had reviewed the latest reports since he gave her the authorisation to manage his company. The latest reports were favorable, the worms were behaving and the discrepancies between reported profits and actual profits dwindled.

‘What does my impressive wife want as a reward?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘I don’t need a reward,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Helping you is enough for me.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was happy she could help Gu Jiao Wu. He had taken good care of her during her pregnancy, and he gave her anything she wanted.

‘Are you sure?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Yes,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Alright,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘What do you want to eat for lunch?’

‘I’m not hungry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at her stomach that was growing rounder by the day. Gu Jiao Wu had bought a fridge to put in his office. He stocked fruits and other healthy snacks for her. He fed her constantly at work. When she was pregnant with Gu Ting Ding, she looked forward to giving birth to Gu Ting Ding, but being divorced from Gu Jiao Wu weighed on her mind and affected her appetite. Her

second pregnancy was different, Gu Jiao Wu was by her side and he made her eat regular meals. So at four month pregnant she was a lot fatter than when she was pregnant with Gu Ting Ding.

‘Tan Yuan, what’s wrong?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Are you feeling pain anywhere? Do you want to take a nap?’

‘Look at me,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘It’s all your fault. You forced me to eat, sleep, eat and sleep every day. You’re turning me into a fat pig.’

‘Fat?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘Where are you fat?’

Gu Jiao Wu thought Qiao Tan Yuan looked too skinny for a pregnant woman.

Qiao Tan Yuan showed Gu Jiao Wu her arms.

‘Can’t you see I’m fat everywhere?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu hugged Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘You’re not fat,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘You look beautiful.’

‘You’re lying,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’ve been sitting for a long time. I want to go outside for a bit.’

‘Where do you want to go?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. ‘I’ll take you.’

‘I can go on my own,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I’m only going somewhere near your office. You have work to do, you don’t have to worry about me.’

‘My work can wait,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Jiao Wu, do you want your employees to think I’m a vixen who is going to topple your company?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Qiao Tan Yuan escaped while Gu Jiao Wu didn’t know what to say.

Gu Jiao Wu believed Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t going anywhere far from his office. He let her go, and planned to find her if she didn’t come back soon.

End of Chapter 158

Related



Chapter 159

Love child.

Wang Tu Ya offered to hire a chef to cook healthy meals for Qiao Tan Yuan. Gu Jiao Wu declined. He loved to cook meals for Qiao Tan Yuan, and watch her eat his cooked meals. Qiao Tan Yuan didn't need a house husband, she loved to eat his cooking because they loved and understood each other. She didn't think there would be a day he would love her and dote on her.

Qiao Tan Yuan walked to a children's clothing shop near Gu Jiao Wu's office. She rubbed her stomach, and smiled. She, Gu Jiao Wu, Gu Ting Ding would be a happy of family of four soon. Gu Jiao Wu told her that he didn't care if their

second child was a boy or a girl as long as she had a safe delivery.

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at children's clothing. It was too soon to buy children's clothes so she walked to a men's clothing shop to buy clothes for Gu Jiao Wu.

On the way out of the men's clothing shop, a little boy who looked around four years old bumped into Qiao Tan Yuan and he fell on the floor.

'Little friend, are you OK?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

The little boy looked at Qiao Tan Yuan like he was about to cry. She was startled his eyes looked similar to Gu Jiao Wu's eyes.

'Xiao Bao, didn't mum tell you not to run?' Li Lam asked. She helped Xiao Bao up, and turned to look at Qiao Tan Yuan. 'Hello Mrs Gu.'

Qiao Tan Yuan remembered the woman who looked like Chu Da, but she couldn't remember her name.

'Miss have we met?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'No,' Li Lam said. 'We have bumped into each other occasionally, but I didn't get a chance to introduce myself. Mrs Gu, you can call me Li Lam.'

Qiao Tan Yuan hesitated before she shook Li Lam's offered hand.

'Hello Miss Li,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Mrs Gu, if there's nothing else, I'll take Xiao Bao and leave first,' Li Lam said.

'Miss Li, are you this little boy's mother?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'No,' Li Lam said. 'This is my big sister's son.'

'Miss Li, this little boy isn't Chu Da's son,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Chu Da couldn't have children.'

'Mrs Gu, you knew my big sister was sick,' Li Lam said. 'Do you feel guilty separating my big sister from Mr Gu?'

'Chu Da chose to leave,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Mrs Gu, you chased my big sister away before big sister could see Mr Gu one last time,' Li Lam said. 'Mrs Gu, do you own a conscience?' She looked at Qiao Tan Yuan's round stomach. 'Mrs Gu, how can you live happily knowing you stole

my big sister's happiness?'

'What right do you have to judge me?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

'Because I was with big sister during her final days,' Li Lam said. 'I witnessed how much she suffered before she died.'

'Miss Li, ask yourself if you're insulting me on behalf of Chu Da or is it because you love my husband but he rejected you,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan remembered the way Chu Da looked at Gu Jiao Wu on the night of Tong Shang Wen's thirtieth birthday party.

'Because of my big sister,' Li Lam denied.

'Miss Li, if you're going to lie at least make it believable,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Chu Da is an orphan, and she died of ovarian cancer. I don't know why you look like Chu Da, but I'm certain you love my husband. You thought my husband would love you because you had plastic surgery to look like Chu Da.'

'I... I don't love him,' Li Lam said.

'Your heart knows the truth,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew Gu Jiao Wu loved her. But she wouldn't let someone who looked like Chu Da affect her relationship with Gu Jiao Wu.

'Mrs Gu, stop acting like you're someone innocent,' Li Lam said. 'You wronged my big sister. You have no right to be happy.'

Li Lam thought it was unfair Qiao Tan Yuan wronged Chu Da, but Qiao Tan Yuan got to receive Gu Jiao Wu's love.

'Yes, I wronged Chu Da,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. She wasn't someone who was easily intimidated by someone else, Gu Jiao Wu was her exception. 'But it's between me and Chu Da. You have no right to insult me. Miss Li, don't delude yourself. My husband hates fake goods.'

It was a warm day, but Li Lam's hand that was holding Xiao Bao's hand was cold.

'Miss Li, you don't understand my husband,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'If you understood him, you would know he loved Chu Da for who Chu Da was as a

person, he didn't love Chu Da for her face. You have Chu Da's face, but you don't have Chu Da's heart. You can't compare to Chu Da. If I was you, I would stay away from Gu Jiao Wu.'

Qiao Tan Yuan didn't understand Gu Jiao Wu in the past. But she understood him before she accepted his proposal. She understood he drew a clear line between love and hate.

'Mrs Gu, are you threatened by me?' Li Lam asked. Although she knew Qiao Tan Yuan said the truth, she didn't want to lose to Qiao Tan Yuan. 'Are you scared if your husband spends time with me, he'll give into temptation?'

'Do you honestly think you can tempt my husband?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'I don't know where you found this little boy. If he is Chu Da and Gu Jiao Wu's son, I'll make him take responsibility and acknowledge his son. But Miss Li, don't mistake me for a fool.'

End of Chapter 159

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Chapter 160

Closure.

Li Lam's friend had asked her to babysit her friend's son. She didn't expect to bump into Qiao Tan Yuan. Her friend's son was five years old. It was impossible for Chu Da to have children, but she wanted to make Qiao Tan Yuan's life miserable by lying about her friends' son being Chu Da's son.

'Mrs Gu, don't act like you have a heart of an angel,' Li Lam said. 'If I told you this little boy is really my big sister and Gu Jiao Wu's son, I don't believe you will let Gu Jiao Wu acknowledge his son with another woman. You're not someone who can accept Gu Jiao Wu raising his son with another woman either.'

'Who said I'll accept the little boy?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. 'I said I'll make Gu Jiao Wu take responsibility. Miss Li, think carefully before you say this little boy is Gu Jiao Wu's son. Gu Jiao Wu isn't someone who would let his child run around wild. I'm Gu Jiao Wu's wife. If this little boy is Gu Jiao Wu's son, the little boy has to call me mum. I'm a loving mum. But I can't promise I'll be a loving step-mum.'

'Mrs Gu, how can you be such a cruel woman?' Li Lam asked.

'Yes, I'm a cruel woman,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Do you know how much Gu Jiao Wu loves my cruelty?'

Qiao Tan Yuan believed the way she was smiling, she was suitable to be cast to play the role of an evil step-mum on a TV drama.

‘Gu Jiao Wu is a blind man,’ Li Lam said.

Li Lam couldn’t believe Gu Jiao Wu went from loving someone with a good heart like Chu Da to loving someone with a cruel heart like Qiao Tan Yuan. If Chu Da was dead, and she looked like Chu Da then Gu Jiao Wu made a mistake. Gu Jiao Wu should have chosen to be with her over Qiao Tan Yuan.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t tolerate Li Lam insulting Gu Jiao Wu. Before she could curse Li Lam, a familiar arm wrapped around her waist.

‘Miss Li, do you think I need you to speculate about my blindness?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Gu Jiao Wu... don’t you know how cruel she...’ Li Lam said.

Li Lam didn’t know how much Gu Jiao Wu overheard her conversation with Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Miss Li, if you continue to insult my wife then I’m not going to be courteous,’ Gu Jiao Wu threatened. ‘If you don’t want your father’s company to be destroyed, I suggest you stay away from me and my family. It shouldn’t be hard for you not to appear in front of me and my family again.’

Li Lam ran away embarrassed with her friend’s son. She accepted Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t love her even if she had Chu Da’s face. When she saw a rubbish bin, she threw Chu Da’s necklace she still wore into the bin, because all her assumptions were wrong.

Behind Li Lam, Qiao Tan Yuan looked surprised to see Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Jiao Wu, what are you doing here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘What do you think?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. He carried the bags Qiao Tan Yuan was holding. ‘You said you would go out for bit. But you were gone for half the day so I went everywhere to look for you.’

‘You found me now,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. She hugged Gu Jiao Wu. ‘Jiao Wu, did you hear everything before?’

‘Guess,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘I don’t know,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I heard from the part you said you’re a cruel step-mum and you want to bully another woman’s son,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu squeezed Qiao Tan Yuan’s cheeks and he smiled.

‘It’s nothing unusual to be a cruel step-mum,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘It would be unusual for you to be a loving step-mum,’ Gu Jiao Wu teased. He caught Qiao Tan Yuan’s hand before her hand hit his chest. ‘Tan Yuan, how can you say you’ll make me acknowledge being the father of another woman’s son?’

Qiao Tan Yuan looked at Gu Jiao Wu confusedly.

‘Tan Yuan, you should have said even if the little boy is Gu Jiao Wu’s son, I won’t let the little boy into the Gu Household,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘If the woman demands you let the little boy in, you should say to the woman, you’ll turn the little boy into a servant and make the woman regret it for the rest of her life.’

‘Jiao Wu, you’re crazy,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘You’re going to corrupt me.’

‘I don’t mind corrupting you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Then no other man would dare to dream about being with you.’

‘Go to hell,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu’s sweet words made Qiao Tan Yuan smile like she was having a beautiful dream.

‘Tan Yuan, I’m serious,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Next time if another woman dares to dream about your husband, I don’t mind if you slap the woman, give her a beating and splash acid on her face.’

‘Jiao Wu!’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Tell me you’re joking. Do you want me to turn into cruel woman with no redeeming traits?’

‘But you can’t do cruel deeds right now,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He rubbed Qiao Tan Yuan’s stomach. ‘Because you’re carrying our little treasure. While you’re pregnant, you should let me do cruel deeds for you.’

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s cheek.

‘Tan Yuan, you’re wrong about one thing,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘What?’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I love you not only for your cruelty because I love all of you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘You sweet talker,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan knew Gu Jiao Wu said the truth, and her heart bloomed.

Gu Jiao Wu supported Qiao Tan Yuan to his car.

‘Mrs Gu, what do you want to eat for dinner?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Jiao Wu, I want to visit her,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Who...’ Gu Jiao Wu asked. He looked at Qiao Tan Yuan’s stomach, and he knew who she wanted to visit. ‘No need. Let’s go home.’

‘Jiao Wu, I have wronged her,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘It’s still early and it’s a warm day. Take me to visit her, and we can go home afterward.’

Gu Jiao Wu reluctantly drove Qiao Tan Yuan to the cemetery.

Later Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan stood in front of Chu Da’s tombstone. He looked indifferently at Chu Da’s smiling face. He had closure, and he no longer loved Chu Da even a bit.

Qiao Tan Yuan bowed in front of Chu Da’s tombstone.

‘Chu Da, I’m sorry,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was sorry she provoked Chu Da to leave Gu Jiao Wu. If Chu Da didn’t leave, perhaps Chu Da would have asked Gu Jiao Wu to stay by Chu Da’s side before Chu Da died.

‘Chu Da, it was wrong of me to provoke you to leave,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘But I don’t regret it. Perhaps you truly loved Gu Jiao Wu, but I love Gu Jiao Wu as much as you did back then.’

Qiao Tan Yuan was grateful to be alive, and to have Gu Jiao Wu’s love.

‘In our next lifetime, I hope I can compete with you fairly,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I believe I won’t lose to you.’

‘Tan Yuan, have you said enough?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Enough,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan wanted Chu Da to rest in peace knowing she and Gu Jiao Wu would live a happy life together for the rest of their lives.

‘Let’s go,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu supported Qiao Tan Yuan back toward his car.

‘Jiao Wu, don’t you want to say anything to Chu Da before we leave?’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Nothing,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘But...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘No but,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan was surprised Gu Jiao Wu didn’t at least say he hoped Chu Da would rest in peace.

Suddenly Gu Jiao Wu turned around, and he looked directly at Chu Da’s photo.

‘Chu Da, if you feel I owe you in this lifetime,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Then in the next lifetime we’ll be brother and sister, and I’ll compensate you. I’ll be a good brother to you. But we can only be brother and sister, we can’t be lovers. I won’t give you the chance to compete with Tan Yuan, because in the next lifetime I’ll love and marry Tan Yuan again.’

End of Chapter 160

Related

161 – 162 END



Happy Ending

Chapters 161 & 162 (End)

Happy Ending.

In Gu Jiao Wu's car, Qiao Tan Yuan was beaming.

‘Jiao Wu, I loved you,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Gu Jiao Wu hugged Qiao Tan Yuan and he kissed her forehead.

‘Jiao Wu, do you really want to be with me in the next lifetime?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Yes,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I want to with you in every lifetime.’

‘Why?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

‘Because I love you,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘In this lifetime I made you tired competing with another woman. In all our next lifetimes I don’t want you to be tired because of me again.’

‘I’m not tired anymore,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I waited for you to accept my love. It’s enough.’

Gu Jiao Wu kissed Qiao Tan Yuan’s lips gently. He owed Qiao Tan Yuan more than he owed Chu Da. He had made Qiao Tan Yuan suffer and wait for him for a long time. If her love for him wasn’t steadfast, he would be living in a void for the rest of his life.

‘Tan Yuan, I want to take you somewhere,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Where?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked.

Gu Jiao Wu silently drove Qiao Tan Yuan to a familiar road side.

‘Jiao Wu, why did you take me here?’ Qiao Tan Yuan asked. ‘I thought you wanted to take me to dinner.’

‘We can eat later,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. He pushed Qiao Tan Yuan’s chair down. ‘I want to eat you first.’

‘Jiao Wu...’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan couldn’t believe Gu Jiao Wu parked his car on the same side of the road like the first time he slept with her in his car.

‘Our first time together in my car was here,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘I want you again here.’

‘Jiao Wu, I’m pregnant,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘I know,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

If Qiao Tan Yuan wasn’t pregnant, Gu Jiao Wu wouldn’t need to be careful.

Qiao Tan Yuan closed her eyes, and she savored Gu Jiao Wu’s kiss. She thought he was crazier by the day, but she was happy to receive his heart.

Three months later, Qiao Tan Yuan considered the worms’ contribution to Gu Jiao Wu’s company so she didn’t throw them in prison. She fired all the worms. It was a warning to Gu Jiao Wu’s employees to show them who was in charge. If they wanted to keep their jobs at Gu Jiao Wu’s company then they should diligently perform their work duties.

At the hospital, Gu Jiao Wu took Qiao Tan Yuan to have an ultrasound. Du Lei Xin also took Gu Jiao Mai to have an ultrasound. Both Qiao Tan Yuan and Gu Jiao Mai were seven month pregnant. Except Gu Jiao Mai’s stomach was a lot bigger than Qiao Tan Yuan’s stomach, because Gu Jiao Mai was having twins. Everyone at the Du Household were overjoyed about Gu Jiao Mai’s good news. The Du elders wanted Gu Jiao Mai to take maternity leave, because they worried Gu Jiao Mai making weapons at work would affect the twins adversely. But Gu Jiao Mai refused, as long as Gu Jiao Mai and the twins were healthy, the Du elders didn’t force Gu Jiao Mai to take maternity leave.

Qiao Tan Yuan was envious Gu Jiao Mai and Tan Pan Ting got to have twins after being pregnant once. Whereas Qiao Tan Yuan had to give birth twice to have two children.

Du Lei Xin and Gu Jiao Mai didn’t ask the doctor the gender of their twins. They were happy their twins were healthy.

‘Big brother, big sister,’ Du Lei Xin said. ‘I’ll take Jiao Mai back to the Gu Mansion to eat dinner first. Jiao Mai and I will see big brother and big sister later at the Gu Mansion.’

‘OK,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

‘Mrs Gu,’ a nursed called.

Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan followed the nurse into the room, and the nurse prepared Qiao Tan Yuan for an ultrasound. While they waited for the doctor to arrive, Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan talked about the Du Household’s

twin news.

‘Tan Yuan, do you think we’re having twins too?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Jiao Wu, twins don’t fall out of the sky,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘Didn’t you say having Xiao Bao is enough?’

‘Tan Yuan, I’m just happy for Lei Xin and Jiao Mai,’ Gu Jiao Wu said. ‘Having another adorable child like Xiao Bao is a blessing. We don’t need to have twins.’

‘Jiao Wu, don’t forget this is our last child,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘I don’t care if we’re having a boy or a girl, I’m not going to have another child after this one.’

‘Yes, yes,’ Gu Jiao Wu said.

The doctor entered the room, performed an ultrasound for Qiao Tan Yuan, and showed the printed ultrasound photo to Gu Jiao Wu.

‘Mr Gu, this is yours and your wife’s baby,’ the doctor said. ‘Here is the baby’s head, arms and legs. The baby is healthy.’

Gu Jiao Wu looked at his and Qiao Tan Yuan’s baby. Their baby’s eyes were closed. Unlike Gu Ting Ding who looked like him, he thought their second child looked like Qiao Tan Yuan.

‘Doctor, is the baby a boy or a girl?’ Gu Jiao Wu asked.

‘Mr Gu, are you aware about the hospital’s policy not to disclose if a baby is a boy or a girl before birth?’ the doctor asked. ‘What era are we living in now? It shouldn’t matter if a baby is a boy or a girl.’

Gu Jiao Wu inwardly fumed. He would love his and Qiao Tan Yuan’s child regardless if they were having a boy or a girl.

‘Doctor it’s alright,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said. ‘It doesn’t matter if the baby is a boy or a girl. Can we keep the photo?’

‘Yes,’ the doctor said.

The doctor gave the photo to Qiao Tan Yuan. She smiled at her baby’s little hand in their mouth.

‘Jiao Wu, our baby looks like a hungry kitten,’ Qiao Tan Yuan said.

‘Mr and Mrs Gu, I hope you both understand in today’s society parents

shouldn't favour boys over girls,' the doctor said.

'Thank you doctor,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan got off the bed, and she walked outside with Gu Jiao Wu.

'Jiao Wu, look how adorable our baby is,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'I can't see anything,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Next time we'll go to a different hospital for your check-up.'

Qiao Tan Yuan kissed Gu Jiao Wu's cheek.

'Jiao Wu, don't be angry,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'What the doctor said was true. It doesn't matter if our baby is a boy or a girl. What's important is our baby is healthy.'

'I'm not angry,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'Tan Yuan, let me see our baby.'

'Didn't you say you can't see anything?' Qiao Tan Yuan asked. She hid the photo behind her back. 'Then you don't need to look.'

'Tan Yuan, let me see,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Gu Jiao Wu took the photo from Qiao Tan Yuan's hand to take a closer look. Their baby's small face was wrinkled and their baby's body was too skinny.

'Our baby is ugly,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

Qiao Tan Yuan took back the photo.

'Jiao Wu, you're too much,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

'Xiao Bao is beautiful,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'But why is our second child this ugly?'

Gu Jiao Wu remembered clearly how beautiful Gu Ting Ding looked when she was born.

'Jiao Wu, our second child is only seven months,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'When our second child is born at nine months of course our second child will be beautiful like Xiao Bao.'

'Are you sure?' Gu Jiao Wu asked.

'Yes,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Qiao Tan Yuan saw Gu Jiao Wu took back the photo, and he put it in his pocket.

She smiled, she knew Gu Jiao Wu would love their second child even if their second child wasn't beautiful.

Gu Jiao Wu speculated whether his and Qiao Tan Yuan's second child was a boy or a girl. He was looking forward to meeting, and holding their second child in his arms. Suddenly he worried their second child would be like Gu Ting Ding, and decide to come into the world in an elevator.

'Tan Yuan, I don't want you to work anymore,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'We'll move back to the Gu Mansion. I don't want your life to be at risk in a broken elevator again.'

'Jiao Wu, you don't have to worry,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'Last time was an exception.'

'Tan Yuan, we can't control fate but we shouldn't be complacent,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Jiao Wu, our baby is only seven months,' Qiao Tan Yuan said. 'It's too soon to worry about where I'll be giving birth.'

'Tan Yuan, at least promise you won't go out on your own,' Gu Jiao Wu said. 'If you want to go anywhere, you have to take me with you.'

Qiao Tan Yuan shook her head in disbelief, and she walked to Gu Jiao Wu's car. She didn't believe Gu Jiao Wu could follow her everywhere.

'Tan Yuan, promise me,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Yes,' Qiao Tan Yuan said.

Two and a half months later, Qiao Tan Yuan was wrong, Gu Jiao Wu followed her everywhere she went before she gave birth.

At the Gu Mansion, the heavily pregnant Gu Jiao Mai and Qiao Tan Yuan were eating dinner happily with everyone one moment, and the next moment the happy atmosphere turned into chaos. Gu Jiao Mai's water broke then Qiao Tan Yuan's water broke.

A while later, an ambulance rushed Gu Jiao Mai and Qiao Tan Yuan to the hospital.

Hours later, in Gu Jiao Mai's delivery room, Du Lei Xin was elated to hold their

baby boy and baby girl for the first time.

In Qiao Tan Yuan's delivery room, the doctor saw the baby's head coming out.

'Mrs Gu, take a deep breath and push,' the doctor instructed.

Gu Jiao Wu held Qiao Tan Yuan's hand that was as sweaty as her forehead. She was in too much pain to smile.

'Tan Yuan, if you're in a lot of pain then relax,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Jiao Wu...' Qiao Tan Yuan said and took a deep breath.

Qiao Tan Yuan was in a lot of pain. But she saw Gu Jiao Wu's anxious look, and pushed. Unlike when she gave birth to Gu Ting Ding, Gu Jiao Wu was worried about her because he loved her instead of worrying about her out of pity.

'Tan Yuan, you can bite my hand,' Gu Jiao Wu said.

'Mrs Gu, one more push,' the doctor said.

Qiao Tan Yuan bit Gu Jiao Wu's hand. She pushed, and another family member was added to the Gu Household.

Weeks later, Gu Jiao Wu resented his second child who wasn't adorable like Gu Ting Ding, because his second child wanted to be with Qiao Tan Yuan everywhere, and he rarely got alone time with Qiao Tan Yuan. It was a good thing he had a vasectomy after his second child was born, it meant there was no chance he would impregnate Qiao Tan Yuan a third time. He was counting down the days until his second child was weaned off breast milk so he could kick his second child to the Gu Mansion. Afterward he planned to take Qiao Tan Yuan to the island for them to be alone together for a few months.

End of Chapter 161

Chapter 162 – Side Story

Summary of Fei Yan Niao's Side Story:

Flashback scenes from Fei Yan Niao's perspective about when he shot Cheng Yi, and how he schemed to take revenge on Gu Jiao Wu by forcing Gu Jiao Wu to

choose between shooting Cheng Yi or saving Qiao Tan Yuan's life.

End of Chapter 162

Note:

The writer left it up to the reader's discretion to pick if Gu Jiao Wu and Qiao Tan Yuan's second child is a boy or a girl.

The End of The Reluctant Bride Book II.

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