You Owe Me, My Love Chapter 116 - 120

No matter how rational Bai Rong was, it did not change the fact of how sudden this occurred.

"How could there be someone who dies here so suddenly?" She clutched Gu Mingchen's hands, shaking in fear.

Gu Mingchen's eyes narrowed and hastily muttered "Someone is trying to harm you."

Ping! Ping! The doors outside burst open.

"Gu Mingchen, you better leave quickly. Otherwise, they will suspect that that person found out about our adulterous relationship. If it comes to that, we will be trapped and no amount of explaining will save us." Bai Rong said, clearly distressed.

"Rong, do you trust me?" Gu Mingchen asked coldly.

"I do." Bai Rong replied without hesitation.

The hotel security came barging in at that moment, making a beeline for the sky garden.

"Reporting to the chief, a dead body was found in the sky garden. The culprit is nowhere to be seen." The security captain barked into his radio communications.

He proceeded to scan the room, a frown adorning his face. "Search the room." He gruffly instructed his subordinates.

"What are you doing here?" Gu Mingchen's sharp voice accompanied him as he entered the room.

"There was a murder here, so irrelevant parties should leave." The security captain replied rudely.

Gu Mingchen narrowed his eyes as his hands gripped firmly around the security captain's neck while forcing him against the door.

The security captain did not bother putting up a fight.

"Who do you think you are that you can raise your voice at me? If there's really a murder here, it will not be up to the likes of you to handle it any ways." Gu Mingchen's tone cleanly sliced through the air.

The guard turned pale.

Gu Mingchen released him. He dialed a number and commanded the recipient, "Call Jinyang City's police department. There was a murder at the Jingyang Hotel, room 1829. Tell them they have three minutes to arrive here."

The security captain's face discolored further after hearing the contents of the call.

"Reporting to the captain, the guest of this room is nowhere to be found." His subordinate reported curtly.

He furrowed his brow. "Leave the room for now." He instructed his subordinates.

Gu Mingchen stood ramrod straight at the entryway. "It would be best to wait for the police to arrive and provide a detailed account then."

Ten minutes later, Bai Rong appeared, her hair was noticeably wet as she stepped out of the elevator and made her way over to the door. "What are you doing in my room?" She questioned, confused.

Upon seeing Bai Rong, the security captain's eyes widened as his gaze swung between her and the sky garden. His pupils flashed before he slowly bowed his head.

"What happened here?" The security chief joined the group at this moment.

"Chief, a dead body was found in Room 1829 but so far, neither culprit nor murder weapon have been found. This is rather unusual." The captain reported.

The security chief glanced at Bai Rong before giving the order, "Check the surveillance tapes."

Gu Mingchen's eyes narrowed once again, his icy gaze surveying the security chief. "The police will naturally attend to these matters."

The security chief immediately agreed in a low voice.

Half an hour later, Jinyang City's police chief, detective team, the hotel's managers, security chief and captain as well as Gu Mingchen and Bai Rong were all gathered in the surveillance room.

While checking the surveillance tapes, they noted that Bai Rong had entered the room at 8.12 p.m. while Gu Mingchen had entered at 8.20 p.m. but left 10 minutes later.

The tapes were empty between 9.10 p.m. to 9.40 p.m. It was at 9.41 p.m. that the security team had burst into the room and discovered the corpse.

At 9.51 p.m., Bai Rong returned to the room.

"Ms. Bai Rong, what were you doing between 9.10 p.m. and 9.40 p.m.?" The police questioned her.

"After Mr. Gu left, I went online and surfed the internet. I came to Jinyang City as a prosecutor, hence I wanted to gain a better understanding of the city's culture. You are welcome to check my browser history. At around 9.30 p.m., I got tired and saw that the hotel website mentioned a swimming pool in the hotel garden, so I headed down there." Bai Rong explained, unfazed.

"The surveillance camera near the swimming pool should be isolated, right?" The police asked the security chief.

"Yes, it is" He replied, adjusting the footage.

Bai Rong appeared at the pool at 9.42 p.m. but left after circling it twice.

"Why did you only walk around it twice?" The police asked her.

"The water was dirtier than expected. Sir, you have to find out who did this. How could this have happened in my sky garden? It is too peculiar." Bai Rong replied.

"We will follow up on the details soon." The policeman's face displayed slight disconcertion.

The security chief's expression mirrored that of the policeman, exclaiming, "How could something like this happen?"

"Did you not notice that the surveillance cameras were off for half an hour?" The policeman inquired of the security chief.

"One of our men was celebrating his birthday today, thus he had used my identification to book Room 1729 to hold a party. I had called the guy on shift to eat a slice of cake before returning to his post." The security chief explained.

"By the way, when we were in Room 1729, we did hear a woman's scream coming from Room 1829 so I sent someone over immediately who charged into the room." The security captain offered the piece of information up stoically.

"What time did you hear the noise?" The policeman asked, his instincts that had been honed after years on the force kicked in.

"I remember checking my watch, so I'm certain it was at 9.30 p.m.. Moreover, I am certain that it was a woman's voice and anyone in the room at that time can attest to it." The security captain continued as he cast Bai Rong an odd look.

Bai Rong turned to the security captain and challenged, "Are you trying to imply that it was I who killed that man?"

"Sir, let us suppose that the man came looking for Ms. Bai at 9.10 p.m., she would have finished him off in 20 minutes then screamed at 9.30 p.m.. We rushed in at 9.41 p.m., meaning she could have bolted to the pool at 9.30 p.m. in order to create her alibi."

Bai Rong chuckled, "Please, that man was as strong as an ox. You actually believe that I could have done the deed? I don't even know who he is, or why he came to find me, so why would I kill him?"

"What about if you have drugged him prior? It is possible that you could have stabbed him afterwards." The security captain retorted confidently.

Gu Mingchen drew his brows together, a glint flashing across his eyes.

The door opened and a member of the forensics team stepped in and faced the police chief while giving his report, "We found a bottle of xxxx in the room and will be going back to perform the autopsy to study if the cause of death is the stab wound or poison."

"See, I told you." The security captain jumped up in excitement.

"So, you meant she killed him, then attracted your attention by screaming?" Gu Mingchen coldly shot at him.

"She did it to deliberately fabricate an alibi." The security captain replied with certainty.

"If she has the time to create an alibi, why leave the poison behind? Furthermore, the noise I heard was at 9.39 p.m., not at 9.30 p.m. like you have said. Additionally, only about 1 to 2 minutes after I heard the scream did the sounds of you knocking on the door begin. Why did you lie? Could it be that you are the killer?" Gu Mingchen addressed the security captain pointedly.

The security captain's face turned white as he fumbled for an excuse. "Perhaps my watch is defective."

Gu Mingchen caught the security captain's wrist and checked the time shown on the watch. "Unfortunately, your watch is working fine." His tone was bitingly cold.

You Owe Me, My Love Chapter 117

"I did not lie. I did not." The security captain's eyes widened as he worked to assure the police.

He swung to face Gu Mingchen and accusingly declared, "I know why you want to drag me into this. It must be because you are having an affair with Ms. Bai but were accidentally caught by that man, so the both of you had no choice but to kill him off to protect your secret."

"Are you some sort of rabid dog? You seem to be acting like one right now, trying to bite anyone." Bai Rong rebutted angrily.

Gu Mingchen had been silent for some time but chimed in at this point.

"Please think about this logically. If this occurred out of impulse, there would have been no need for poison. Given my abilities, I could have handled him cleanly. Do you really think there would have been any evidence left for you to find?" Gu Mingchen said sarcastically.

"I got it. The both of you must have drugged him first, then stabbed him while he was still alive. Ms. Bai, who was the more timid one, then screamed in fear."

"After hearing her scream, it should only have taken you a minute to get here from the 17th floor. Yet, you took 11 minutes. Can I ask what you were doing during all that time? Also, besides me and the people in Room 1729, is there anyone staying near Room 1829?" Gu Mingchen shot back.

"I will check." The hotel manager quipped.

"Let three police officers follow you, and bring back anyone nearby so we can question them." Gu Mingchen suggested solemnly.

He looked at the security captain with a shrewd gleam in his eyes, cornering him. "Please open up an interrogation room. I think the killer has been revealed." He ordered the police chief.

"I am not the killer. Even if you hold great authority, you can't frame me as you please." The security captain countered defiantly.

The security chief's face was as white as a sheet. "Just confess everything you know. Stop trying to harm the innocent like Ms. Bai. Many people will be hurt because of you."

Gu Mingchen wrinkled his brow. His bony fingers rapped on the table as he turned his gaze towards the security chief. The corners of his mouth slowly curved upwards.

The security chief felt a chill go up his spine and his hands began to tremble.

Could it be?

The policeman brought the guests staying in Rooms 1727 and 1731 along with him.

"I cannot recall the exact time, but I did hear a woman's scream followed by the sounds of knocking on a door. There could not have been more than a 2-minute interval between both sounds." The guest from Room 1727 recounted.

"I remember, the knocking happened at around 9.41 p.m. and I've looked at my watch to confirm that. I heard the woman scream as well, but that happened at around 9.39 p.m.." The guest from Room 1731 added.

The security captain slumped in his chair; his head hung low. "Stop with the questions. I killed him. He was the curator of the cultural museum and I owed him two hundred thousand in gambling debts. We had arranged to meet in Room 1929 and when he had almost reached the hotel, I convinced the chief to call those working in the surveillance room over to have cake. I took the opportunity to leave and delete the footage. I first fed him poison but to seal the deal, stabbed him as well just to be sure. Afterward, I tied him up and lowered the body to Room 1829 then went to restore the surveillance footage before returning to the party. I had only just returned to Room 1729 when the scream came, so I brought a few men up to barge into the room, intending to push the blame onto the guests of Room 1829. While my colleagues went to find out what happened, I stashed the bottle of poison in the wine cabinet."

"What a seemingly flawless scheme. Bring him away." Gu Mingchen called out.

"Chief Gu, that was amazing. You cracked that impeccable and well-executed plan within the hour!" The police chief congratulated him heartily.

Gu Mingchen pressed his lips together, the deep abyss of his gaze surged with darkness.

The case was still unsolved. The security captain was merely a puppet. The mastermind was still at large.

"Ms. Bai, I still have some questions for you. Please follow me." Gu Mingchen ordered scathingly, heading for the door. His cold demeanor clearly meant that strangers were not welcomed.

Bai Rong trailed behind him; head lowered as she entered his Hummer.

Once they got into the car, Gu Mingchen anxiously urged, "Rong, this place is too dangerous for you."

"I am not afraid of danger."

"Do you still not see it? This trap today had been set for you. Both the security captain and chief were involved. We still have no clue who is behind all this! If I have not been present today, you would have been saddled with a murder charge." Gu Mingchen's eyes turned red with worry.

Looking back, Bai Rong admitted that she did feel a bit afraid.

It was lucky that Gu Mingchen had led her away from the sky garden and used a rope to lower her down.

If she had been caught at the scene of the crime, with the poison as evidence, her guilt would have been sealed.

"I will be extra careful in the future so as to not give them any chance to succeed." Bai Rong promised.

"Prevention is better than cure." Gu Mingchen shifted closer to Bai Rong and supported himself with one hand beside her head. She could feel every breath he drew as he held her gaze steadily.

"Tell me, Bai Rong, what is it that you desire? I will acquire it for you then you can leave. Whether it is continuing being a doctor or leaving the country, as long as you are safe, I no longer have to worry." Gu Mingchen implored her.

The air between them was heavy and the pressure made it impossible for her to reject him.

"Will you really be able to give me what I want, no matter what it is?" Bai Rong's response was laced with bitter hatred, as her eyes locked upon his intensely.

"Even if it costs me my life." Gu Mingchen calmly promised.

It was as though his words had pierced through her like a swift arrow, instantly dispersing the thick fog of buzzing negativity that had been building. Her heart gave a pang, and her chest started to throb painfully.

She did not want his life. She wanted him.

She planned to initially play her part as a prosecutor.

With Xing Bachuan and Song Xiyu backing her, all she had to do was accumulate any achievements she could and her position would rise exponentially.

She had to bet her life on it.

She wanted to gain entrance into the inner sanctum, wanted to gain immeasurable power.

It was only then that she could stand by his side without fear.

Even if she was not fit to be his wife, she had to at least attempt to narrow down that distance between them.

She knew such a day was still far off and that she would only get there after shedding immense blood, sweat, and tears.

It was going to be an extreme struggle, but it beat doing nothing.

She could go overseas, there she would be able to escape all her troubles, leaving him to clear up the mess after her.

If she was lucky, she could let him ride into the battlefield alone, and marry him afterwards, enjoying the fruits of his hard-earned rewards.

Alas, Bai Rong knew she was not the type to let that happen, and that such a person was not worth his affections.

If odds were not in their favor, he would fail, and fate would wrench them apart.

At that point, they would not even be able to meet, and watching over him from afar would be nothing but mere wishful thinking.

Regardless of what the future held, she knew she had to give it her all, lay it all out there so she would not have any regrets on her deathbed.

She could not let his affections go to waste.

"To live, whether with success or not, is fine as long as I am doing the right thing. Cowardice is not part of my vocabulary. If I were to die in the hands of those people, I ask that you avenge me using the law." Bai Rong choked out, tears streaming down her cheeks as she pushed the door open.

Gu Mingchen clasped her hands in his and pulled her into a tight embrace.

When their eyes met, Bai Rong could see his anguish and concern.

He, who was always cold, collected, and impenetrable actually had such a soft side, and she was the only one he exposed it to.

"Bai Rong, do you still have feelings for me?" Gu Mingchen asked as a sob escaped him.

You Owe Me, My Love Chapter 118

Bai Rong looked at him with tears brimming, reflecting the beauty of the man before her.

It was not mere affection. She loved him.

She had never felt this way about anyone before, to the point where she was willing to do anything as long as she could be together with him.

"Regardless of how I feel, it does not change our situation." Bai Rong replied rationally.

"So Rong, that means that you do have feelings for me, right?" Gu Mingchen pressed for an answer while clutching her hands tightly.

Her answer was more than just important to him. It was the only shred of hope in his otherwise miserable existence.

Bai Rong's eyes shone, but she remained silent.

In the spur of the moment, Gu Mingchen lunged over and pressed his lips to hers.

The kiss was deep and almost violent, and it seemed to engulf both of them. It was rough but emanated with all their unspoken feelings.

He tilted her chin upwards and continued to pepper kisses onto her.

She knew she was supposed to push him away, to strictly follow the plan she had laid out so meticulously.

Yet, she could not help but feel her heart soften.

Such desires were completely out of her control.

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Bai Rong gripped his hands even tighter and let her eyes fall shut, but did not kiss him back.

However, she did not push him away either, feeling the full force of his passion on her face.

It was fierce yet gentle.

She really, truly, liked him so outrageously much.

She liked how he favored her, liked his note for her on the wood, and even liked his kisses.

Unknowingly, her hands drifted over to the space left by his missing finger.

For some reason, it felt as though something had suddenly stabbed her heart. It hurt greatly.

She knew she could not let herself fall any further so she mustered up all her strength to push him away, and said to his alluring gaze that pulled at her very being, "I have to go in now."

"Will you still stay?" Gu Mingchen drew his brows together again while looking at her.

"Gu Mingchen, what kind of person is the Bai Rong whom you like?" Bai Rong asked, tears cascading down her cheeks.

He lowered his head in answer and kissed each pearly, salty tear.

He pressed her forehead against his.

Three years ago, he had met her, dug up information on her and understood her past.

His heart had broken for her and ever since then, she had remained etched on his heart.

Three years later, she had abruptly come to his mind.

She must be happy with her husband now.

She was so perfect, so strong, so independent and with intelligence to boot.

It was only a few months ago when he received the call for additional manpower from the armed forces.

They were not clear on the details, and he had thought that the hostage was Bai Rong, which led him to make a personal appearance.

It was only after arriving he realized that the hostage was not her but her husband's mistress.

He felt like Bai Rong was his responsibility. If her husband was treating her any less than she deserved, then he would gladly take his place.

The more they interacted, the harder he fell.

He never expected that his feelings would cause her another kind of trouble.

He wanted to become even stronger, so unquestionably mighty that he would be able to protect her against anything that came her way.

"You do not have to do anything. I want to become the kind of person you would like." Gu Mingchen said as his voice trembled with emotion.

Bai Rong looked at him tearfully saying, "Go and do what you have to, spare no thought for me. It is the only way that I would have the space to struggle."

"You will wait for me, right?" Gu Mingchen asked cautiously.

He was always so confident, overbearing and astute, except when it came to his feelings for her.

He feared that she would give up easily.

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"Time does not stop here. Even if you get married, you can still get divorced. The only everlasting confession is life. Do not make promises so easily, for I will not." Bai Rong said as she exited the car.

Gu Mingchen slammed his fist into the car door.

Time does not stop here. Even if you get married, you can still get divorced. The only everlasting confession is life.

Was she hinting at something?

Bai Rong returned to Room 1829.

Shying away from the situation was not an option.

If these people wanted to come after her, they would find a way to do so even if she changed rooms.

She needed this room to serve as a reminder for her to stay vigilant.

She needed to learn to protect herself.

It was obvious that someone meant to do her harm, that there was someone here that wanted to get rid of her, and that they could be colluding with people from the prosecutor's office.

Bai Rong's phone sounded with a text message alert.

She opened it and saw that it came from Gu Mingchen.

He texted: Tomorrow I will assign people to protect and assist you under the name of B City's Discipline Inspection Office.

This text message smashed into her heart like a heavy boulder.

She felt her heart begin to tremble vehemently.

After sending the text, Gu Mingchen made his way to the bathroom.

Since she was so adamant on staying, then all he could do was to support her to his greatest ability.

Gu Mingchen walked into the bathroom but heard a rustle from behind and spun around, then briskly changing course to the sky garden instead.

Bai Rong had just climbed over.

His eyes shone at the sight of her and he was rendered speechless for a moment before uttering, "Rong."

Bai Rong threw herself into Gu Mingchen's embrace as she wrapped her arms around his waist and started to heave with tears.

His text had torn down all the walls she had just spent the last two months building.

She actually really, really missed him.

Gu Mingchen returned her hug, squeezing her tightly as his eyes clouded over, pupils dilated.

The bedside lamp glowed dimly, shrouding the pair in a cloak of warmth and melancholia.

Gu Mingchen peppered kisses onto Bai Rong's body as she circled her arms around his waist, drawing him nearer to her.

When he entered her, she felt the pain pricking, and could not help but frown slightly.

His breaths became heavier as he lifted her chin and admired her in the light, continuing his assault on her lips.

It was a very effective balm.

She became more ardent, like an exquisite morning rose that had bloomed under his mindful care.

Afterwards, she remained in his arms, enjoying the afterglow. "Why are you here? Is it for business or for personal reasons? Where are Lieutenant Shang and the others?"

Gu Mingchen's hands rested on her stomach, patiently explaining, "I have business in the neighboring city but came here for personal reasons. I think Tangqian Village's massacre is connected to Lu Liangcheng. He used to be the town mayor and since that incident, he has been quickly moving up the ranks. There must be some unsavory tradeoffs happening behind the scenes. Director Chen of the armed forces here used to serve together with me so I asked him to help investigate. Hence, we had a meal at Restaurant del Luna. I never thought I would run into you."

Bai Rong turned to look at him, her eyes twinkling. "Were you planning on forgetting me?"

Gu Mingchen smiled as he looked at her amidst the light. "There were many times when I wanted to go and find you, but you said that you would not forgive me right? If I went to look for you, I was afraid of putting your life in danger. The best way I could keep you safe was to let you go."

"So, we should never see each other for the rest of our lives, right?" Bai Rong choked out as she turned away from him, tears flowing freely down her cheeks.

Gu Mingchen held her tightly, spooning her. "Bai Rong, I have already thought of a solution. Trust me, in less than two years, I will make you my one and only lawfully wedded wife."

You Owe Me, My Love Chapter 119

"Ok." Bai Rong replied softly.

After resting for a while, she returned to her room.

People were nosy. Gossip about them would be sure to arise soon given the recent attention they drew to themselves. It was best to stay wary.

Her back had only just hit the bed before another text came in.

She saw that it was from Gu Mingchen. He texted: What are you doing?

A smile played on Bai Rong's lips, the first real one in two months.

Bai Rong: Preparing to sleep, you?

Gu Mingchen: Same. Together.

Bai Rong fell asleep with her phone in hand.

When she opened her eyes, the sun had already risen.

She looked at the time. It was already 10 a.m., which meant that she was late.

She jumped out of bed and rushed through brushing her teeth, slapped on some makeup and changed her clothes before dashing out the door.

As she passed by Room 1827, she noticed that the door was shut tight.

He must have already left.

When she arrived at the lobby, Yang Yan was already waiting.

Bai Rong apologized profusely. "I am so sorry. I accidentally woke up late and made you wait for me."

"No worries. I heard about the murder in your room last night. I was shocked to hear that the hotel's security captain turned out to be such a person and that you almost went down for it." Yang Yan said coolly.

"The innocent will always be proven as so. Let's leave now." Bai Rong murmured, walking ahead.

When they entered the car, Yang Yan switched on the radio and the traffic news filled the air.

Bai Rong stared out the window.

"Ms. Bai, how long do you plan on staying here?" Yang Yan asked, testing her.

"I am not sure, but it probably will not be for long. After all, my family is in A City." Bai Rong replied, trying to ease their guard.

"There is something that has become the talk of the entire prosecutor's office. When you hear it later, please do not take it to heart." Yang Yan urged.

"What is it regarding?" Bai Rong asked, curious.

Yang Yan hesitated before answering, choosing each word carefully. "They are saying that you got in the CCDI using your connections, and are backed by someone with great power."

"I topped the written exam and with my image, I should not have had any issues passing the interview either. As for my endorsement, it was indeed by someone with sizable power." Bai Rong cryptically replied.

The color drained slightly from Yang Yan's face. "Nowadays, connections are everything. Without it, you would be condemned to be a bottom feeder for the entire of your life."

Bai Rong did not answer.

She used to think that Su Xuyan had only managed to clinch the position of Deputy Director in the Ministry of Health because of his capabilities; but now she knew it was due to his connection to the commander-in-chief.

If Gu Mingchen had not exposed him, Su Xuyan would have been able to continue climbing the ranks as planned and would have quickly become Minister.

Following that it would have been the vice mayor, then city mayor, vice governor, governor until he finally sat on the coveted seat as the aide of the commander-in-chief.

The car traveled for half an hour before arriving at the prosecutor's office.

Jinyang City's prosecutor's office was 27-storey high, and appeared to be glamorously modern.

"Is the prosecutor's office building newly built?" Bai Rong enquired as she followed Yang Yan in

"Yes, it was previously in the old city district and we only moved here last year." Yang Yan replied while glancing at his watch.

"Shall we go and introduce you to your fellow colleagues first? After that, it should be just about lunchtime. I heard that a prosecutor from B City will be arriving here today. Looks like our city has finally made it onto the map."

"There is no need for you to be nervous. It is merely some routine work." Bai Rong trailed behind Yang Yan as they entered the office and met the rest of their colleagues.

"What cases are you working on now?" Bai Rong asked, trying to strike up a conversation.

Her colleagues, afraid of saying something wrong, threw silent looks at each other for someone to make the first move.

"Prosecutor Bai, you sure are focused and responsible, diving into work the moment you arrive. It is almost time to eat and Yang Li went to fetch the prosecutor from B City. How about you join us for lunch and we can talk more then?" Yang Yan said placatively.

"That sounds good. Work is important but one cannot miss meals for it. That said, today cannot go by unproductively, else I would not be able to report to my superiors. I am

guessing that my performance yesterday was not up to standard and that prompted them to send someone from B City today." Bai Rong jokingly teased.

Yang Yan looked disturbed as he probed further. "I guess this means you already have a target?"

"Indeed. Let's go for lunch first. We can discuss more later in the afternoon." Bai Rong retorted with the same placative tone.

At lunch, she met the prosecutor from B City, Zhou Min.

She had dark skin, short hair and was petite. However, her eyes were sharp as a knife.

She was also a woman of few words. Even when she did speak, it was always direct and concise.

Bai Rong guessed that she was a member of the Special Forces whom Gu Mingchen had sent to protect her.

During lunch, there were more than a few slices of awkward pauses.

After the meal, Zhou Min said sternly to the director, "I came with the purpose of accomplishing my task. I hope to receive cooperation from all of you."

"Yes, yes of course. But what is your task?" The director asked with a smile plastered on his face.

"The superiors want someone apprehended. I am not able to disclose any details but all you need to know is to do as I say and provide any information I ask of you." Zhou Min replied coldly.

"Got it. Since the superiors are after someone, we will definitely do all we can to cooperate." The director nodded in promise.

Zhou Min turned her attention towards Bai Rong. "You must be the prosecutor sent by A City, right? I heard that you are currently staying in a suite at a six-star hotel. I will be moving over to stay there as well and look forward to working with you in the future."

The people around them paled in unison.

Seemed like their every move was being watched by these so-called superiors.

They would take note to ensure not to step even a toe out of line.

Yang Yan and Yang Li accompanied Zhou Min and Bai Rong back to the hotel.

Yang Li was enthusiastic and cheery on their ride back while Bai Rong occasionally responded with a smile or casual banter.

Meanwhile, Zhou Min stared at Yang Li with pursed lips, watching her like a hawk.

"Do the both of you share the same superiors?" Yang Li asked, grinning.

"Be serious. Both Ms. Bai and I were sent from the prosecutor's office and have tasks to complete. We are not aware if we have the same superiors and you should not be so nosy. If you are not careful, the first target might be you." Zhou Min chastised.

Yang Li's good mood instantly evaporated and she assumed stony silence for the rest of the ride and did not even exit the car when they arrived.

Yang Yan gave a dry smile. "Yang Li is still young and she can be quite chatty sometimes. I hope you can be understanding towards her."

"It is fine to be talkative unless it is brainless chatter." Zhou Min harshly spat out as she walked into her room.

"Don't worry. Ms. Zhou is just strict." Bai Rong patted Yang Yan's shoulders in comfort.

"I know. Please rest well and I will be back at 2.30 p.m. to fetch the both of you." Yang Yan nodded as he left.

Bai Rong entered Room 1829 and shut the door behind her.

Zhou Min fished an iPad from her luggage and turned it on.

It beeped to life and the screen displayed six glaring alerts.

Bai Rong frowned.

With the press of a button, Zhou Min changed the red alerts to green ones.

She set the iPad down and bowed respectfully to Bai Rong. "I am Agent 1666 from the Special Forces who's here to protect you and heed your every instruction. This room has been fitted with surveillance cameras and recording devices. Would you like me to get rid of them now?" Zhou Min asked expressionlessly.

"Oh, sure. Go ahead." Bai Rong replied, stunned.

Bai Rong's phone started to ring at that moment. She picked up immediately when she saw Gu Mingchen's name.

"Have you met her yet? Agent 1666."

Hearing Gu Mingchen's voice settled her nerves and she felt at ease.

You Owe Me, My Love Chapter 120

"Yes, I have, she is very stoic." Bai Rong responded, looking at Zhou Min.

Zhou Min combed the room meticulously and expertly, removing each surveillance device and replacing it with a new one. She had also installed counter surveillance equipment at the same time.

"Don't worry, Agent 1666 is extremely capable and will be able to take care of anything that you ask of her." Gu Mingchen gently replied.

"Yes, I know." Bai Rong responded, walking towards the sky garden.

"Do not approach anyone from the prosecutor's office to help you in your investigation because I suspect there is a mole amongst them." Gu Mingchen warned.

"I have the same suspicions. Yang Li and Yang Yan were rather nosy the whole trip back."

"It is normal for them to be curious. After all, both of your arrivals were abrupt and it is natural for them to be worried for themselves. On the contrary, I find the director to be the most suspicious. I have arranged a team for you and all you have to do is instruct Zhou Min and she will contact them to get any jobs you need done."

Bai Rong's heart warmed at these words.

On the wooden piece, he had carved his promise to take care of her and she could genuinely feel his presence every step of the way.

"Where are you now?" Bai Rong asked softly.

"I am in the neighboring city. I have already contacted Director Chen and he has agreed to lend you his strength in any way he can, so go ahead and move forward boldly. I will be here for you through it all."

"You should be careful too. Your mother mentioned that you are starting a dangerous mission again and I am worried about you."

"Please, it barely counts as dangerous, just some routine exercises. Do you still remember that soldier who lost his leg?" Gu Mingchen asked.

"I do. He is the one whose wife wanted to divorce him."

"He was injured during a military drill and although many others were injured as well, his injuries were the most severe. I have been looking into it for some time and have found the supplier for the weapons used during the exercise."

It was even more dangerous than what Bai Rong had anticipated. "Please be careful. I cannot live without you."

Gu Mingchen smiled. "With you here, I will never let anything happen to myself."

A blush spread across Bai Rong's cheeks.

They were both working hard towards their individual goals. It felt good. "I have to go back to work now. Good luck."

"Good luck to you too. I will see you in two days." Gu Mingchen's voice softened as he addressed her.

"You'd better not. It wouldn't be pleasant if your parents or Su Wanning finds out. I can wait two years." As Bai Rong worried for the both of them, the area where her pinky used to be started to throb with a dull ache.

If they were being found out again, the consequence would not be as simple as losing a finger.

Gu Mingchen's stormy gaze darkened as he ended the call.

"Chief." Lieutenant Shang exclaimed.

Gu Mingchen closed his eyes and responded, "Carry on."

The special effects makeup artist continued sticking on the fake beard on his face.

Bai Rong and Zhou Min returned to the prosecutor's office in the afternoon.

She flipped through the case files handled by the office in recent years.

They mostly consisted of financial disputes.

They targeted several state-owned enterprises and caught a couple of people each year in order to meet their quota.

These cases were of no help to them.

"Where are the complaint letters? Show me the ones from this year." Bai Rong looked towards the Head Commissioner, Zeng Shuying.

Zeng Shuying's assistant carried a large pile of letters over and dropped it in front of them after which Bai Rong and Zhou Min immediately dived in.

Those were mostly trivial matters, ranging from someone stealing their neighbor's cable to someone stealing their best friend's boyfriend to even someone complaining about their boss making them work overtime.

Bai Rong scanned the pile in two hours then turned towards Zeng Shuying and asked, frustrated, "Are these all?"

"Yes. It is rather peaceful here in Jinyang City and there are no major issues such as corruption." Zeng Shuying replied, smiling.

"Stop treating this so lightly." Zhou Min growled.

Zeng Shuying's face fell and she wilted on the spot.

Bai Rong smiled, trying to diffuse the tension. "Having no major problems is a good thing. You have quotas to meet but so do we. What I'm worried about is that the people might have grievances but are afraid to voice them. How about this, Commissioner, let's start placing anonymous complaint boxes around the city from tomorrow onwards."

"That does not seem like a good idea. It might make people anxious." Zeng Shuying opposed.

"Enough nonsense, just do as you are told. We are doing this for the sake of the community so who cares about causing anxiety. If you are unwilling to cooperate, could it be that you are the culprit?" Zhou Min stared down Zeng Shuying as she dared her to object.

The latter was successfully intimidated. "Okay, we shall proceed as you said."

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Bai Rong was worried that the prosecutor's office might prevent the citizens from submitting complaints.

She visited each town herself and supervised them as they put up the posters. She had also arranged for people to guard the areas near each complaint box.

Each complaint was personally collected.

After a day, over a thousand letters were received.

Bai Rong and Zhou Min went through each page, sorting through and placing aside any of interest.

"Ms. Bai, take a look at this. Someone is accusing the mayor of Jinyang City of colluding with real estate developers to try and force the villages to give up their valuables." Zhou Min pointed out.

Bai Rong took the letter from Zhou Min and her eyes lit up in eureka.

"We have finally found it. Lu Liangcheng is indeed dirty. The only reason he wanted to be mayor was so that he could steal artifacts and sell them or store them in his private collection. Murdering the curator of the cultural museum might have something to do with him as well."

"Do we head to Lu Liangcheng's home now to look through his things?" Zhou Min awaited further instruction.

"He would never leave the valuables at home. A complaint letter is hardly enough evidence for us to rummage through the mayor's home. Not only will we end up empty handed, we might even put him on alert. We should keep digging and secure more proof before moving forward."

Someone started knocking at the door and Zhou Min went to open it.

Yang Li carried two cups of milk tea in and beamed at Bai Rong. "Do you need my help?"

"No need. Return to your work." Zhou Min interjected, preparing to close the door.

"Please enjoy the milk tea that I specially brought you." Yang Li chimed as she placed the drinks on the table and gave the table a once over.

Zhou Min shut the door and threw the milk teas into the trash. "That was such an obvious tactic."

"Zhou Min, what do you think about targeting the antique store first?" Bai Rong enquired.

"Sure."

"We are already being watched, so we cannot leave. Let one of your teammates help." Bai Rong instructed.

"Understood."

After a busy five days of digging through the seemingly endless wave of complaint letters, Bai Rong made a mind map based on the information they had gathered from the letters.

It turned out that Lu Liangcheng had a team of antique experts who analyzed Jinyang City's history to search for possible locations of where treasures might be.

Xingzheng Construction Company was a construction company working closely with Lu Liangcheng.

Lu Liangcheng sold the possible locations of valuables to this company under the disguise of regular business transactions.

This company appeared to be developers but were actually treasure hunters.

Could Tanggian Village's hidden treasure map be in Jinyang City?

Bai Rong's head buzzed with questions as she headed back to the hotel while Zhou Min went shopping.

